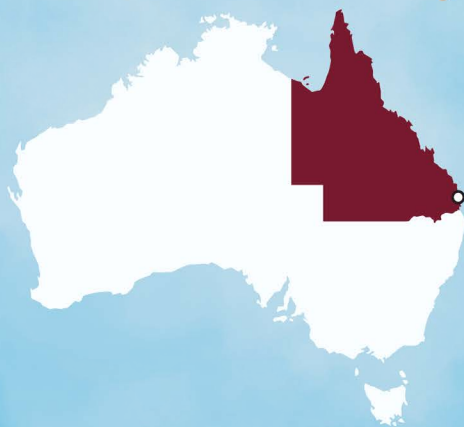


Sent Forth

from the

City Tabernacle



David Driver

Sent Forth from the City Tabernacle

The life stories of the men and women who were sent out from the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Brisbane as missionaries or pastors.

The City Tabernacle was formed in 1890 when the Wharf Street Baptist Church outgrew its premises and relocated to the present building in Wickham Terrace.

Since 1892, the church has sent-out over seventy five men and women to minister outside of Brisbane.

The vast majority of those who served as pastors ministered in Baptist Churches in Queensland. Some, however, served in other states or with other denominations, particularly the Presbyterian Church or independent churches.

Although a significant number of those who served as missionaries, did so under the auspices of the Baptist mission, a wide variety of other missions were served by the men and women from the Tabernacle.

On that great Judgement Day, they will all
gladly cast their crowns at their Master's feet.

Jesus said to his disciples: "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth".

The cover design depicts the sending forth, of Jesus' witnesses, from the City Tabernacle in Brisbane (their Jerusalem) to Queensland (Judea), Australia (Samaria), and to the ends of the earth.

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Foreword

Commitment to Jesus and His mission is the bedrock of local Baptist churches. The hallmark of the history of the Baptist movement over the last 400 years has been the understanding that the local church exists to share the Good News of Jesus by word and deed to those in their immediate locality and to those further away. It was out of this context that in 1792 William Carey began his missionary work in India and is credited with being the father of the modern missionary movement. Carey's influence had a major impact on Australian Baptist churches in engaging intentionally in mission beyond their own region.

It is this Baptist value, of a commitment to the Lord and His mission, that provides the reason for the fascinating personal narratives recorded in this book. Jesus' words recorded in John 20:21, "as the Father sent me so I send you", provides the foundation for the record of the Brisbane City Tabernacle's remarkable history of sending men and women into regions beyond metropolitan Brisbane.

Indeed, since the end of the 19th century, this local Baptist church has commissioned and sent out over 75 men and women to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to communities well beyond its own immediate geographical boundary. These men and women have served in regional Queensland, other parts of Australia, and throughout the Pacific with the majority serving in Papua New Guinea but also in Irian Jaya (West Papua), Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Asia has been a focus, initially on the Indian subcontinent and now Bangladesh as well as Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, China, and South Korea. Mission staff have also served in Africa in Niger, Sudan, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, and the Congo. A smaller number, often a single missionary or family has ministered in Cyprus, Romania, Ukraine, and Czech Republic in Europe as well as in Panama in Central America.

The book also records the crucial partnership of a local church with mission agencies, the most significant being the Baptist denominational mission Global Interaction previously known as Australian Board of Foreign Missions (ABFM), Australian Foreign Mission Board (AFMB), Australian Baptist Missionary Society (ABMS), and Wycliffe Bible Translators including Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). Other mission organisations partnering with the church include Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF), previously China Inland Mission (CIM), Sudan United Mission (SUM) and Sudan Interior Mission/Serving in Mission (SIM) Sudan Interior Mission/Serving in Mission (SIM) in Africa as well as APCM, SSEM, MECO, MEGM, and Crossview Australia (previously New Tribes Mission). In regional Queensland, the church has partnered with Queensland Home Mission and in Australian indigenous dedicated ministries with AIM.

The focus of the ministry of these men and women covers a broad spectrum from evangelism and church planting to Bible translation, medical services, Christian literature production and distribution, and a wide range of support services.

Part of the explanation for the response of men and woman from the church to offer themselves for mission service is detailed in the introductory chapters, including the importance of the introduction of Christian Endeavour as a youth focused ministry initiative in the life of the church and its long-lasting impact on encouraging young men and women to engage in full-time Christian missionary service.

The chapters that follow, which represent the bulk of the book consist of the record of the individual ministries exercised by the men and women sent out. A strength of these biographical records is the author's access to a variety of sources, including church minutes and annual reports, newspaper articles, prayer letters and personal reflections and comments.

My own connection with several men and women who were sent out in the more recent history of the church has had me reading those chapters with obvious interest and fresh insight.

I count it a great privilege to contribute this foreword and commend the author David Driver for his painstaking research in compiling this remarkable record of men and woman who have made an everlasting contribution to extending the Kingdom of God in regions beyond metropolitan Brisbane.

I warmly commend the book with the prayer that the Lord will use it to encourage other local churches to emulate the commitment of the Brisbane City Tabernacle to be intentional in calling out men and women to respond to the Lord's command to go and make disciples of all nations.

Rev Keith Jobberns

National Ministries Director

Australian Baptist Ministries

Author's Preface

Most of the material for this book has been obtained from published resources, such as newspapers and journals, written reports such as the City Tabernacle's Yearbooks and correspondence.

Particularly in the early chapters the language and writing styles of the original material has been used extensively in order to reflect the thinking of the various authors, many of whom are unnamed. The use of the first person and present tense have been consistently changed to the third person, past tense.

The chapters on more recent men and women, on the other hand, are often based on the oral or written reports by the subjects themselves or their children and have been written using more commonly accepted, current usage.

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Abbreviations

ABFM	Australian Baptist Foreign Mission
ABMS	Australian Baptist Missionary Society
AFMB	Australian Foreign Mission Board
AIM	Aborigines Inland Mission / Australian Indigenous Ministries
BAQ	Baptist Association of Queensland
BCV	Baptist College of Victoria
BTCQ	Baptist Theological College of Queensland
BUQ	Baptist Union of Queensland
BUV	Baptist Union of Victoria
BYF	Baptist Youth Fellowship
CE	Christian Endeavour
CES	Christian Endeavour Society
CEU	Christian Endeavour Union
CfC	Campaigners for Christ
CIM	China Inland Mission
EWS	Everyman's Welfare Society
GIA	Global Interaction
HMC	Home Mission Committee
ICE	Intermediate Christian Endeavour
JCE	Junior Christian Endeavour
MBI	Melbourne Bible Institute
MTC	Malyon Theological College
NZBMS	New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society
OMF	Overseas Missionary Fellowship
QB	Baptist Union of Queensland
QBC	Queensland Baptist College
QBI	Queensland Bible Institute
QBWU	Queensland Baptist Women's Union
QFMC	Queensland Foreign Missions Committee
QHM	Queensland Home Missions
SGMU	Senior Girls' Missionary Union
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission/Serving in Mission
SU	Scripture Union
SUM	Sudan United Mission
Tabernacle	City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Brisbane
TBC	Tahlee Bible College
VBU	Victorian Baptist Union
WBT	Wycliffe Bible Translators
YPSCE	Young People's Christian Endeavour Society

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the prompting of Jenny Austin to write this account. After reading *For God, King and Country*, Jenny suggested that something similar be done to recognise the service of those who had gone out from the Tabernacle for their Master. Many of the stories uncovered in researching this book are inspiring.

The support of various people in fellowship at the Tabernacle, who while remaining nameless, know who they are, is acknowledged. They have provided assistance and encouragement in a variety of ways.

Pat Barnden, archivist at the Baptist Union of Victoria and John Sampson, archivist at Global Interaction were both extremely generous with their time and granted unhindered access to their records. The archivists in a number of other organisations have also provided valuable assistance.

The men and women whose lives and service have been recorded here, and their children and grandchildren and other relatives, have been extremely helpful in providing information and photographs and checking the manuscript for accuracy. Without this assistance the work would be neither as complete nor as accurate as it is. Any photographs, for which the source is not provided, have been supplied by the missionary or pastor themselves or their immediate family, or are in the Tabernacle Archives.

Any persisting errors, however, are totally the responsibility of the author.

Introduction

In his introduction to *The Acts of the Apostles*, Luke wrote: “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.”¹

Before His ascension, Jesus said to His disciples “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”²

This book records the results of the Holy Spirit’s working through those who were sent forth from Brisbane (their Jerusalem) to various regions of Australia: Queensland (Judea); New South Wales, Victoria, and the Northern Territory (Samaria); and beyond Australia’s shores (the ends of the earth). We have not recorded here the efforts of those who remained in Brisbane even if in full-time service. Rev William Pope often referred to Spring Hill as “our Jerusalem”.³



City Tabernacle Baptist Church,
(Sketch: *The Queenslander*, 1894)

This book has been written to provide a historical record the efforts and results of those who were sent, to bring glory to the One who sent them, and to encourage and inspire others to follow their example, in obedience to scripture.

The City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Brisbane is renowned for nurturing, training, commissioning, sending, and supporting people in full-time service as pastors and missionaries.

Although the men and women whose service is documented here were sent from the Tabernacle, they were not sent by the Tabernacle. Their commission was from God and they went as His ambassadors or apostles, in a similar way to Jesus’ commissioning of

¹ Holy Bible, *New International Version*, Acts 1:1,2, New York International Bible Society: 1973.

² Holy Bible, *New International Version*, Acts 1:8, New York International Bible Society: 1973

³ RD Smith, 1972. *The Evangelical Outreach of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Wickham Terrace Brisbane, with particular reference to its function as a mother church*, p. 11.

His 12 disciples when He sent them out in pairs, as recounted in Luke 9:1–6 and elsewhere. Jesus said: “As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you.”⁴

Some went directly from the Tabernacle to foreign mission fields. Others spent time in training either for missions before going abroad, or for pastoral ministry. For some, the training included Home Mission work before entering theological college for formal training.

The Queensland Baptist Missionary Society was formed in 1885 and in 1913 merged with the other state missionary societies. Rev AE (Ted) Smith was the first missionary sent forth from the Tabernacle under the auspices of the ABFM in 1925.

The missionary background of several senior pastors at the Tabernacle impacted on the number of members of their congregation who entered full time service. In outlining the church’s requirements for a minister, two of the requirements were that he must be filled with a missionary spirit and that he had to be an enthusiastic Endeavourer.

Rev Pope had many years of missionary service among Muslims. During his term of ministry (1916–26), Will Holmans (1920–59); Ted Smith (1920–69); Oswald Lahey (1921–65); Albert Chisholm (1921–59); Elsie Ham (later, Mrs A Scott) (1922–46); and Alf Brooks (1923–65) commenced ministry. Rev Pope was Chairman of the state’s Home Missions Committee(HMC) for a number of years.

During his ministry (1927–34), Rev William Hurst also strongly encouraged home and foreign missions, fields in which he was personally very actively involved at denominational level.⁵ His ministry as pastor coincided with Margery Bush (1929–77), his son Norman Hurst (1930–64) and Jack Bartlett (1931–45) commencing their training or ministry.

Rev Albert Butler was also intensely interested in Overseas. During his ministry (1935–47) or the first year thereafter: Joe Leggett (1945–72); Keith Bowen (1946–54); Lloyd Kent (1947–96); Norm and Joan Chenoweth (1948–50; 1957–64) and Neville Kirkwood (1948–80), commenced missionary service or pastoral training.

The Tabernacle frequently engaged missionaries on furlough to preach. Ted Smith recounts that it was during the closing prayer following a sermon by Rev Allan Palmer, representing the Belgian Congo Mission (BCM) in 1919, that he offered himself for his Master’s service. No doubt other young men and women similarly responded following the call from other missionaries to surrender themselves to their Lord’s leading. Norman Hurst later served with the BCM.

⁴ *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, John 20:21, New York International Bible Society: 1973.

⁵ L Ball, 2005. *Grow the Vision: The Sesqui-Centenary History of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1855–2005*. City Tabernacle Baptist Church: Brisbane, p. 31

Introduction

The Queensland Baptist Home Mission Society was established on the initiative of Rev William Poole of the South Brisbane Church who notified his intention of moving at the next meeting of the Baptist Association of Queensland (BAQ) for its establishment. The constitution adopted in 1883 included the objectives of the Society which were to: assist weak churches; establish new interests; provide evangelists for the bush; and educate young men for the ministry.⁶ The role of Queensland Home Missions (QHM) Superintendent was undertaken by Rev AH Brooks from 1948 until 1957. In 1955, the Society merged with those in the other states to form the national Home Mission Board. The Queensland Society became a committee of the new board.

Possibly the first involvement in the work of missions at the Tabernacle, was in December 1893, when a three-day midweek Missionary Exhibition and Fair was held. The principal object was to raise funds for home and foreign missions. Speakers included Martha Plested, the first Queensland Baptist missionary. Martha was one of the first five Baptist missionaries from Australia who went to Bengal in 1885.

The Tabernacle's support of the fledgling Queensland Baptist College (QBC)—later known as the Queensland Baptist Theological College (QBTC) and now Malyon Theological College began in 1904. The church supported it financially and in kind through the provision of academic staff, and facilities in the Tabernacle's tower room where the college met for 34 years. Consequently, future pastors were closely associated with the church.

The influence of the church's Christian Endeavour (CE) Societies on young people, leading to their following the call of their Master to full-time service is detailed in the following chapter.

A number of other organisations within the church also promoted the church's missionary zeal. A Young Women's Mission Class was formed in July 1885 as a result of Martha Plested's visit to Queensland, with the object of promoting an interest in general Church work among the young women of the church and the congregation and providing funds by the making and sale of articles of needlework in aid of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)—that Society having undertaken to send two ladies as missionaries among the women of India. The meetings were held every Tuesday, from three till nine pm and tea was provided for the members. From its foundation until 1893, about 110 members had been recorded on the roll. In 1893 it had a membership of 32 with an average attendance of 30.⁷

⁶ JE White, *A Fellowship of Service: A History of the Baptist Union of Queensland 1877-1977*, no date. p. 91.

⁷ M Plested, 1893. *City Tabernacle Mission Fair and Exhibition, Programme*, December, p. 13.

At various times, a, SGMU (Senior Girls' Missionary Union), Baptist Missionary Union (BMU), Missionary Committee, Queensland Foreign Missions Committee (QFMC) and Young Men's Missionary League also met at the Tabernacle. All of these groups had as their objective, the support of missions and the promotion of missionary work.

Although the Tabernacle had provided substantial financial support to individual missionaries and various missionary organisations previously, in the early 1920s, a system of "duplex envelopes" was introduced. This system allowed worshippers to split their offering, designating part of it to general church funds and a separate portion to home and foreign missions.

In 1932–33, when Australia was still suffering from the great depression, with 32% unemployment, a minimum wage of £3/3/- per week, it was reported that they had again proved a steady source of income to the Home and Foreign Missions Enterprises of the denomination. Mr Arthur Praeger reported that £147/1/10 had been given to Home Missions and £133/7/11 to Foreign Missions, which was over 51% of the total of contributions through the Duplex Envelope. This evidence is testament to how valuable the duplex envelope system had proven in maintaining systematic giving for the support of the Church and the Missionary Enterprises of the denomination.⁸

In 1922, the Tabernacle reported that not every church could rejoice when it lost its young men. The church rejoiced, however over six of its young men who had already left, or were leaving shortly, for the active service of the ministry. They included Ted Smith, Will Holmans, Albert Chisholm, Oswald Lahey and Alf Brooks. The identity of the other young man, who had arranged to leave for study at Dr Torrey's Bible Institute (now Biola University) in Los Angeles, is not known. Those losses to the church were considered gains to the denomination, and the Tabernacle considered itself blessed in scattering its membership in wider service for the King.⁹

In his 1982 Pastoral Letter, Rev Murray Sinfield wrote, "Over three years ago we accepted a challenge from God to pray for ten new missionaries from our fellowship in five years. Both young and more mature among us should be seeking the face of God and His will in this."¹⁰

The number of men and women sent forth from the Tabernacle each decade is illustrated graphically below.

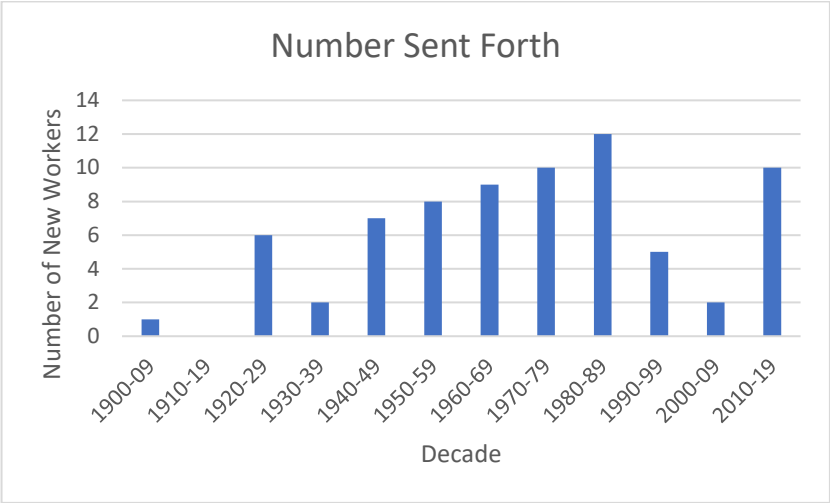
From 1940 until 1989, at least seven workers were sent forth from the Tabernacle each decade, and this number steadily increased each decade.

⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1932–1933*, pp. 7–8.

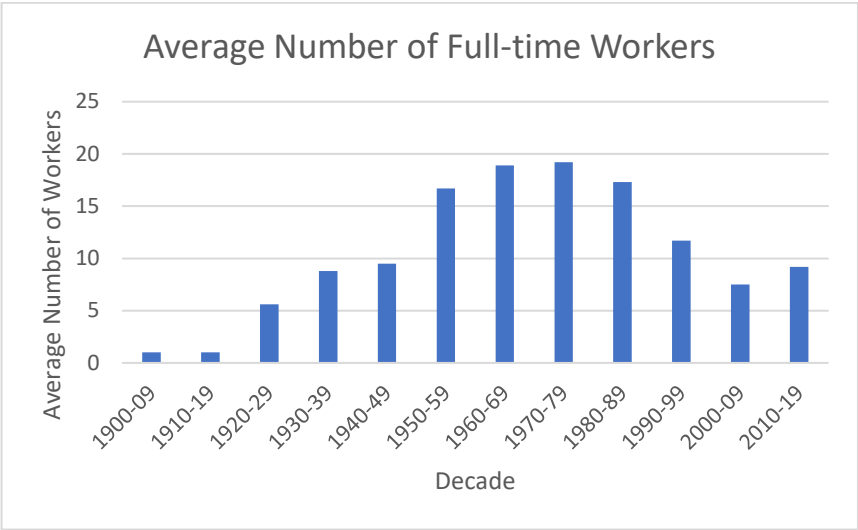
⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 March 1922, p. 8.

¹⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1981–1982*, p. 7.

Introduction



The decrease in the number sent forth in the 1930s can, in part, be attributed to the great depression, when young men would be reluctant to enter mission service, leaving their parents with reduced financial support.



In the 1950s, through to the 1980s there were, on average, at least 17 full-time servants of their Lord. This number peaked at 23 in 1961 and there were at least 20 in 1958–64 and again in 1974–77 and 1986.

Since Arthur Tyson commenced working with first nations people in 1889, at least 77 members or adherents of the Tabernacle have entered into full-time service as missionaries or pastors. In two case, having completed courses in missiology or theology, their role was restricted to supporting their husbands in their ministry. These numbers do not include men and women who were members of the church but had been commissioned by other churches prior to coming into membership at the Tabernacle or were supported both financially and in prayer by that church while in full-time service.

The church has always been a strong financial supporter of both missionaries and missionary societies, especially GI and its forerunners. Although this contribution has been quite substantial, it is not documented here, except where individual missionaries, whose life stories are described, have been the recipients of designated gifts.

In addition to financial support from the church, several individuals within the church provided direct support to servants of their Lord. An outstanding example of this is Mr Kenneth Lethem. Kenneth was born in Brisbane in 1882. He and his parents and sister were all in membership at the Tabernacle, and Kenneth and his father both served on the diaconate.

The influences which the Lord uses to prepare, train, and call men and women to full-time service vary, but their local church—its pastor, members, and various organisations—invariably play a role. These influences are clearly described in a chapter from Graham Roberts' personal memoirs, in which he wrote:

I am deeply grateful for my parents' choice of the church family that became our church home – the City Tabernacle Baptist Church close to the centre of Brisbane.

Church is people – brothers and sisters in God's family who share a common faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. It is also people with a wide variety of spiritual gifts including some who are gifted to nurture the faith of children and young people.

Church is also made up of Christians at varying stages of spiritual growth. I was most impacted in my spiritual growth as a child and teenager by people whose lives radiated God's love.

The second treasure I received through my home church was sound instruction from God's Word. God's church, wrote the apostle Paul, is "the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15).

Each Sunday many seeds of truth were sown in my young mind and heart by our pastor, the Rev FT Smith, and others in the church. Like the continual dripping of water leaving a deep impression in the ground, so the continual teaching and preaching I received Sunday by Sunday left a lasting impression upon my young mind of the truth and truthfulness of God's Word.

Because our home church was the central Baptist Church in Brisbane, this meant that from time to time, I sat under the ministry of well-known guest speakers like Corrie Ten Boom and Oswald J Smith. Their ministries added yet more spiritual blessings.

Another treasure – the third treasure I want to share with you – was the training I received in Christian service through my home church.

This training began through the ministry of an interdenominational organisation called CE which was active in my home church. I began in JCE and then advanced to the ICE class.

Introduction

It was a highly effective training ministry. Our Sunday morning meetings trained us in leading meetings, praying in public, reading the Bible, giving short papers on an assigned topic, playing the piano (or an old pump organ!) to accompany the singing and collecting and counting the offering money. The leaders' role was guiding and encouraging us in exercising our varying assigned duties – and also encouraging us in our walk with God.

Another youth ministry at our church which laid a strong foundation for my future was the BYF which met late Sunday afternoon. Our BYF group was led by a dynamic couple whose lives oozed with love for us and a visible devotion to Christ.

These weekly BYF gatherings weren't just another fellowship meeting. An integral part of each Sunday's programme – weather permitting – was going out with our leaders into the tough, inner city neighbourhood around our church to hold open-air meetings.

A fourth and final treasure I received through the ministry of my home church was the gift of friendship.¹¹

A number of full-time workers who had extensive involvement at the Tabernacle have not been included in this book because their involvement in the church commenced after they had commenced full-time service. Thus, they were neither commissioned by the Tabernacle, nor strongly influenced by its ministries prior to their responding to their Lord's call to service. This group includes: Rev John Alexander, who was a pastor at Petrie Terrace from 1890 until 1899; Rev Rupert Frewin, who was a home missionary in Northern New South Wales and Nambour before undertaking studies at the QBTC; Miss Marjorie Peters, who served in India before coming into fellowship at the Tabernacle; Rev Victor Barnard, who grew up in the Newmarket Church and was a home missionary on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts before coming into membership at the Tabernacle; Pastor Sydney Ritchie, who was the pastor of the Norman Park Baptist and Forbes Assemblies of God churches before transferring his membership from the Jireh Church to the Tabernacle; Ormond Porter, who was commissioned by the Hurstville Brethren Assembly to serve with the Children's Special Service Mission before coming to the Tabernacle; Rev Joshua Williamson, who trained, in England before coming to Brisbane and John and Joyce Martin, who served in Thailand with Global Interaction in Thailand from 1974 until 1977.

Other potential inclusions have also been omitted. They include: Mary Gerler who married Rev Ralph Morton, minister of the West Street Ipswich Baptist Church; Rev John Downing of Melbourne, who was in membership briefly in the 1870s following training at Spurgeon's College and prior to taking up a pastorate at Fortescue Street; Rev William Moore who was a member of the Wharf Street Church, but joined a break-away group in 1864, before establishing the Petrie Terrace Church in 1870¹²; Rev Alfred Weller who trained at Spurgeon's College in London before migrating to Australia; Rev Reginald Plows, who was in membership for a few years in the 1910s

¹¹ G Roberts, (Undated). *Treasures of Great Value*.

¹² RW Hughes, 2015. "The Gardener" Pastor William Moore 1826-1906, Xlibris.

after migrating from England and prior to becoming a home missionary pastor in South Australia; Charles and Margaret Cameron, who established the Bethel Mission in Wynnum and the Greenacre Park Gospel Chapel after leaving the Tabernacle; Mary Creedy (née Fraser) who went to Bible College in New South Wales but did not enter full-time service; Terry and Robyn Collins who although members of the church, did not enter full-time service until some 20 years after leaving the Tabernacle and were commissioned by the South Toowoomba Church; and Eugene and Roseanne Gienger who were in membership at the Tabernacle briefly before entering Bible College, but were in full-time ministry for only a short time in Brisbane before resuming secular employment.

John and Joyce Martin served with the Australian Baptist Missionary Society in Thailand from 1974 until 1976. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to obtain consent to publish the details of their service or Christian walk.

Ronald and Beth Smith served in the Baptist Church in Roma, Queensland, and then in Tiom, West Irian from 1971 until 1975. It has not been possible to reach a consensus as to what details of their lives and service should be included.

All these servants have in various places, times and ways prepared the soil, sown the seed, watered the young shoots, and gathered in the harvest—a result of God’s working through them. Only their Lord knows the impact, either directly or indirectly, of their commitment, and He has reserved for them, their reward.

Many of these witnesses either grew up in the Tabernacle or spent some of their formative teenage years there and heard and responded to their Lord’s call to service. Others joined the church only shortly before their commissioning and the commencement of their service and may have responded to the call before coming to the Tabernacle and saw the church as a welcoming home with a vision for mission and a church who would readily adopt and support them. Still others grew up, were converted, and nurtured in the church, but then transferred to another church before responding to their Lord’s call.

Some who had spent time as young people or young adults in the church and trained for service, married full-time workers, and supported them in their ministries. As Rev Dr Blackburn commented; “Ministers’ wives had no career or job, they were part of the team”.¹³ These women have been included in Part 1.

To provide historical continuity, the biographies have been arranged chronologically according to the date when the believers commenced training for the ministry or mission field, or were commissioned for service, whichever was earlier.

¹³ *The Victorian Baptist Witness*, November 1999, p. 24.

Introduction

The efforts of those who came to the Tabernacle after commencing service while in fellowship elsewhere are summarised in Part 2. Although their work was supported by the Tabernacle, they are considered to have been sent forth from the churches where they had previously been in fellowship. In some cases, where no record has been found of their commissioning for service, it is presumed to have been the church from which they came to the Tabernacle. Despite this, in many cases, their ministry was supported in prayer and financially by the church.

Part 3 looks at those who are thought to have entered training with a view to service, but for whom no record has been found of their completing their course of study or entering full-time service. It is probably not coincidental that at least three of these young people's preparation for service followed shortly after the Billy Graham Evangelistic Crusade of 1959. Their willingness to go, if called, and preparation to serve was all that their master required of them. Whether they went or not is irrelevant. The fact that they were willing to go, in obedience, if called, is critical.

More recently, a number of church members have been involved in much shorter-term ministries of between a week and two months. These mission trips are treated in Part 4.

It is the author's prayer that as you read this book, you will be encouraged by what has been achieved, through the outworking of the Holy Spirit, by those who were sent forth and supported by the Tabernacle and challenged to follow their examples.

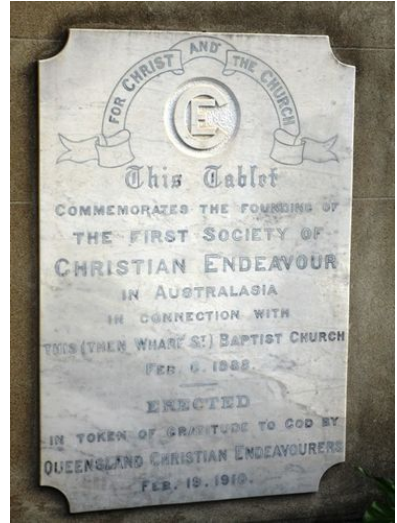
The impact of the Christian Endeavour movement

A large number of young people offered themselves as full-time servants of their Master as a direct result of their involvement as children, teenagers, and young adults in the Christian Endeavour Movement.

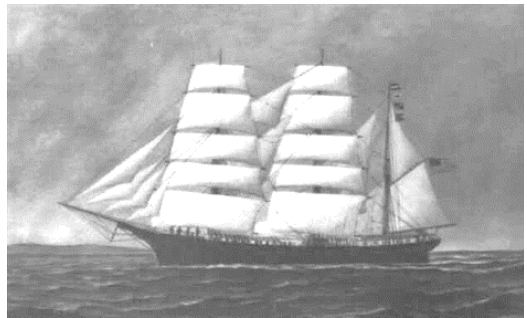
The first CE Society in Queensland was commenced in 1888 at the Wharf Street Baptist Church which became known as the Tabernacle in October 1890. Several other Congregational and Baptist churches quickly commenced CE societies and a State Union was formed in 1891.

There was an earlier group established in Australia at the Hope Street Church of Christ, Geelong in 1883, that went by the name *The Young Ladies Society of Christian Endeavour*.¹⁴ It was established by Mrs Antoinette Thurgood, the wife of the minister, Rev Charles Thurgood, who came to Australia from the United States where they had been in a Boston Church which had commenced CE in the rapid follow-on from Rev Francis Clark's new CE movement.¹⁵

CE originated in Brisbane directly from the arrival, on 6 October 1887, of the barque *SV HG Johnson* under the command of Captain Isaac Colby, whose son George was a member of the Young People's CE in a Baptist Church near Boston, United States



Christian Endeavour Commemorative
Plaque
(Photo: John Huth)



The American Bark *H G Johnson*
(Source: Solon Francis Montecello Badger)

¹⁴ J Spicer, 2010. Christian Endeavor in Australia and the Pacific, in *A Brief History of Christian Endeavor*. in T Kroeck and G Campbell (eds). *Generous Freedom on Solid Foundations: Principles of Christian Endeavor from a Worldwide Perspective*. World's Christian Endeavor Union, Kassel. p. 19.

¹⁵ R Evans, 2005. *Evangelism and Revivals in Australia, 1880 to 1914* (unknown publisher)

The Impact of the Christian Endeavour Movement

Isaac attended the Sunday morning service at the Wharf Street Church, and was welcomed by Mr George Buzacott, who with his wife, invited him home to lunch. During the afternoon, Isaac remarked on the number of young people he had noticed in the church service and suggested the formation of a Society of CE. Upon returning to the evening service Mr Buzacott brought the matter to the notice of Rev William Whale, and it was decided to send to Rev Dr Clark, the Founder of the Society of CE in Boston, through Mr Isaac Colby, for a supply of literature and instructions concerning the formation and conduct of the Society. As soon as the information arrived, a meeting was held in the Sunday School under the Church, on 6 February 1888, presided over by Rev Whale, and a CE Society was formed from the members of the Pastor's Bible Class.¹⁶ The meeting was somewhat a social event, with vocal and instrumental music items, and efficiently rendered literary items. Rev Whale explained how a CE Society would work and at the close of the meeting twenty-five were enrolled as members.¹⁷

By the end of 1891, the Tabernacle's CE Society had 60 members who had taken the active member's pledge. The group met on a Monday evening at 7:45. A Junior Society met at 6:30. In 1893, the CE Societies had 64 active members and was forcing its vitality into all branches of the church's work.¹⁸

From 1895, members of the society were actively involved as district collectors for the missionary appeal. In 1899, £5 was raised in "missionary pennies" and these were distributed to foreign and home missions. In addition, the young people, by virtue of hard work raised £9, from the sale of work.

By 1900, a missionary committee had been formed within the YPSCE, and during the year, several Missionary meetings were held, which were reported to "have been very interesting and instructive, and doubtless had strengthened the missionary zeal in our hearts."¹⁹ The pastor, Rev Whale wrote in his preface to the church's yearbook, that: "the CE Society is important as supplying the training of the devotional



CE Pioneers in 1922
(Photo: *The Telegraph*, 1935)

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *The Brisbane Courier* 7 February 1888, p. 5.

¹⁸ *Official Handbook of the City Tabernacle Mission Fair and Exhibition*, 1893, p. 5.

¹⁹ *City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1902*, p. 7.

exercises, and in that way to supplement and to sustain all other departments of work and service.”²⁰

The 1901 annual report of the auxiliary to the BFMS stated that: “In our Endeavour Society we try to keep the Mission cause to the front, encouraging Mission Prayers at home and subscribing a penny a week to the Mission Fund. It is surprising how pennies grow when given regularly and heartily. In one year they gave 1,920 pennies (£8)”, an average of about 40 pennies per week.²¹ Each month, the Missionary Committee of the YPSCE gave the Society a special topic for prayer.

Each year, various members of the society corresponded with missionaries from the Tabernacle and their replies outlining the work they were doing, were read with interest.

In December 1908, the members of the YPSCE considered it a pleasure to bid Mary Abbott, one of their active members, Godspeed, prior to her departure for the foreign mission field under the auspices of the Poona and Indian Village Mission. Mary remained an honorary member of the Society and was welcomed home on her return from India. Mary was the first CE member at the Tabernacle to obey her Master’s call to full-time service.

Subsequently, the 10th Australian CE Convention held in Brisbane in September 1909 incorrectly acknowledged the Wharf Street CE Society as the first in Australasia. A commemorative tablet was affixed as a token of gratitude to the front of the Tabernacle in February 1910 by the Queensland Endeavourers.²²

The events leading to the formation of the Tabernacle society were described in the church’s centenary booklet.

Rev Mursell was elected President of the State CE Union and attended the World CE Convention in Sydney in 1911.

At a CE pre-Convention rally in 1913, shortly before leaving for the mission field, Oswald Lahey stated that it was chiefly through the training he had received in the CE movement that he was able to take up the office of missionary.

In a similar vein, in 1999 Rev Dr Geoff Blackburn, speaking at the Annual Assembly of the BUV, on behalf of the eight men (which included Lloyd Kent) who had been recognised for either 50 or 60 years of Christian service as ordained ministers, said:

In many ways the church has changed tremendously. Worship patterns are so different. Worship used to be at 11 am on Sunday with a gospel service at 7 pm and Sunday School

²⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1901*, p 5.

²¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1901*, p. 13.

²² *Witnessing for Christ Throughout a Century: The Story of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church*, 1955. p. 21.

The Impact of the Christian Endeavour Movement

in the afternoon. CE was the great youth movement of the church then and it was here most of us received our leadership training.²³

In their capacities as Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of the Junior and Intermediate CE Societies, Will Holmans and Ted Smith were delegates to the Convention in Ballarat in 1918 and returned enthused to continue their work. When Will relinquished his position on entering QHM service, he was “remembered with others at the Throne of Grace, at the Junior CE meetings every Sunday morning.”

Miss Esther Malyon, daughter of the Rev Thomas Malyon, who had been a member at the Tabernacle since 1919, was elected as the National Intermediate Superintendent. She was a co-author, with the Rev Alf Driver, of the 1922 CE Topic book *Better CE Meetings* designed to help leaders plan good meetings and to create the right spirit for active service in a Society. It included subjects for fifty-two meetings and daily readings on the weekly subjects, with topics for all grades: Young People; Intermediate; and Junior and sold for three pence a copy.²⁴

The Intermediate Society, in 1923–24, reported that the Missionary Committee had kept in close touch with their missionaries abroad in India and China, and with those at home. To stimulate this interest in Mission work, one Sunday each month had been set apart for a Missionary topic, when a missionary gave the address.”²⁵ The missionary committee wrote letters to various home missionaries, including Albert Chisholm, and Miss Gladys Collins, a missionary from Pabna, India spoke to the society and presented a lantern lecture while on furlough. Miss Collins was responsible for a CE society in Pabna as part of her duties and was supported by the SGMU at the Tabernacle.

In September 1925, both Rev EA Smith and Pastor Holmans addressed the ICES. At their regular meeting, when they were joined by members of the Junior Society, each member gave information about the work being carried on at various QHM stations throughout the state.²⁶ Pastors Holmans and AJW Chisholm were both serving as home missionaries at the time. Miss Abbott visited the ICES in October 1926 and gave an interesting address.

At the Tabernacle, the monthly consecration meeting was usually addressed by the pastor. In their report for 1926–27, the Intermediate Society commented that they appreciated greatly the monthly visits of Rev James Mursell, and the talks he gave on the pledge struck a deep note and would long be remembered by them.²⁷

²³ *The Victorian Baptist Witness*, November 1999, p. 24.

²⁴ D Driver, 2018. *A Fisher of Men: The life and ministry of Rev Alf Driver*, unpublished manuscript, p. 15.

²⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1923–1924*, p. 13.

²⁶ City Tabernacle, *ISCE Minutes*, October 1925.

²⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1926–1927*, p. 17.

Two special trains, packed with delegates from Sydney, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia, left Sydney's Central Station early on 10 October 1935 for Brisbane, where the 20th Convention commenced on Friday 12th.

A special Convention church service was held at the Tabernacle on Sunday the 14th. The preachers were Rev AC Hill, State President, South Australia, whose subject was *Contact with Christ*, and Rev Donald McNicol, National Vice-president, with the subject *The Small Man Who Did a Big Job*.²⁸



CE Train, Sydney
(Photo: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1935)

The stated objectives of the YPSCE Missionary Committee were:

Every Endeavourer should be a Missionary—a home and overseas Missionary rolled into one. The missionary committee should be composed of Society members who are especially interested and extra keen on missions. Its work is to arrange missionary meetings, spread missionary information, circulate missionary books, promote systematic giving to missions, prepare missionary boxes, encourage daily prayer for missionaries, and seek to secure a regular correspondence with missionaries on the field. The personal touch and the personal interest and intelligence in missions means a great deal to the missionaries and missions. The Missionary Committee should get in a few minutes on missions at every prayer meeting. The great branches of missionary enterprise are overseas, home (outback), and metropolitan. The watchword of missionaries is “prayer”, and the power of the Missionary Committee is prayer.²⁹

In conjunction with the 1935 National Convention, *The Telegraph* reported, about the members of the first CE Society in Australia and published a photograph of the inaugural members taken in 1922 on the steps of the Tabernacle. By this time, the Rev Whale, Mr Buzacott and John McKenzie had passed away but their photographs were inset. Those in the front row from left to right, were Miss Sophia Martin (later Mrs Sophia Marriott), Georgina (Gertrude), Joyce (later Mrs Joyce Prideaux), Mrs Helen Buzacott (née Woodyatt), Martha Prideaux (later Mrs Martha Smith), and Sarah

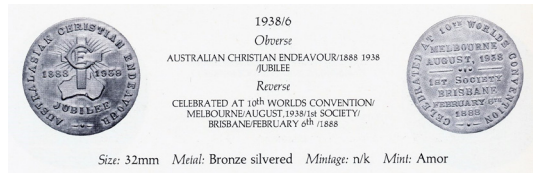
²⁸ CE Convention Opens today: Special Trains to Bring Delegates, in *The Courier Mail*, 12 October 1935, p. 3.

²⁹ City Tabernacle, *YPSCE Minutes*, (Undated).

The Impact of the Christian Endeavour Movement

McLaughlin (later Mrs Sarah Hicks). In the back row were Mr William Martin, Mr Buzacott, Mr Jeremiah Horsfall, Rev Weller, Mr McKenzie, William R Smith, Theodore G Dewar, and Rev Whale.³⁰ All of these CE members were members of the church. Messrs Buzacott, McKenzie and Smith all served as deacons.

The CE movement grew strongly in both city and country churches throughout Queensland and by 1935 there were 721 Societies with 15 125 members in the State.³¹ Rev Whale became the first President of the Queensland CE Union.



(Photo: LJ Carlisle, 1983)

On 8 February 1938, seven of the original members of the CE Society at the Tabernacle met again in conjunction with jubilee celebrations, to watch a re-enactment of the first society in Queensland, by current members of the Tabernacle CE Society. In keeping with the CE Active Members' Pledge, to send a Scripture reading if not present at a consecration meeting, six other CE pioneers sent greetings and a Scripture reading, for the roll call.³²

A medalet was struck to commemorate the celebrations.

The CE Societies had a significant role in the commitment and training of many of the men and women sent out from the Tabernacle. This would have been fostered, in part, by the monthly consecration service, when members recited the active members' pledge:

Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do; that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day, and to support the work and worship of my own church in every way possible; and that just so far as I know how, throughout my whole life, I will endeavour to lead a Christian life.

As an active member I promise to be true to all my duties, to be present at and to take some part, aside from singing, in every Christian Endeavor meeting, unless hindered by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. If obliged to be absent from the monthly consecration meeting of the society, I will, if possible, send at least a verse of Scripture to be read in response to my name at the roll call.

Over the ensuing 70 years from 1888, many of the Tabernacle's young people went as a result of the training received through the Society and other church activities into avenues of active service for the Master, in the church and the community.

³⁰ Christian Endeavour Pioneers, in *The Telegraph*, 16 October 1935, p. 13.

³¹ <http://monumentaustalia.org.au/themes/culture/religion/display/102628-christian-endeavour-society>.

³² Past Scenes Recalled: Christian Endeavour Jubilee, in *The Courier-Mail*, 8 February 1938, p. 18.

The weekly meetings of each Society usually included a missionary news item, when one of the members brought news from various mission fields and missionaries, especially those who had an association with the church. In addition, in 1948, the Young People's CE Society at the Tabernacle agreed to have a missionary meeting at least once a quarter, conducted and arranged by the missionary committee.³³ By this means, the work of missions both in Australia and overseas was constantly brought to the attention of the endeavours. Les Duncan, for example, was the guest speaker at such a meeting while on furlough in 1951. Rev WK Holmans was a guest speaker in late 1952, and Rev AH Brooks the QHM superintendent sent regular home mission news.

In the church's centenary year, 1955, all three grades—junior, intermediate, and young people—of CE were flourishing and making a worthy contribution to the work and worship of the church.

In March 1990, the Junior and YP CE Societies were each asked to act out a short play, during the missionary weekend, on the life of a missionary or missionary work in a country where ABMS was working, with one member of the group doing a narration so that the actors would not be required to learn any words. Miss L Brooks who was a member of the church's missionary committee and Miss L Hadley were to assist the Juniors and young people by writing their scripts and Mr N Bernard was to prepare a script for the Youth Group.



Christian Endeavour logo and motto
(Source: CEworks)

Endeavourers from the Tabernacle who went on to full-time service between 1906 and 2013, include Mary Abbott, Will Holmans, Ted Smith, Oswald Lahey, Albert Chisholm, Jack Bartlett, Lloyd Kent, Les Duncan, Norm Barker, May Brooks, Arch MacNicol, Don Hume, Bruce Haste, Don McGregor, Dell Halling, Val Halling, Graham Roberts, Lorraine Hughes, Jan Hagan, Ron Smith, Barbara Dean, Elizabeth Johnson, Max Shaw, Judith Stephenson, Lois Brooks, Neil Chenoweth, Graeme and Coral Johnson, Julia King, Brendan Henry and Laurel Preston. Many of these continued their involvement and support of the CE movement while in ministry, including the establishment of CE Societies in the churches where they ministered.

³³ City Tabernacle, *YPCE minutes*, 1 March 1948.

Arthur Tyson

Arthur John Tyson was born in 1863 in Launceston, Tasmania, the son of William and Christiana (Annie) Tyson. His father and mother had migrated from Manchester and London to Launceston in 1855 and 1843 respectively. It is not known when William, Annie and Arthur moved to Queensland.

Daniel Matthews and his aboriginal friend "Paddy Swift" from the Mologa Mission in New South Wales, addressed large audiences in March 1889 in the interests of the Aborigines' Protection Association of Queensland (APAQ) at the Wharf St Baptist Sunday School, where teachers and scholars listened attentively. A collection was taken up on behalf of the association. Paddy Swift, Daniel, and Arthur were present to take part in the Salvation Army meeting the following night. Paddy shared his experiences and told of the changes in his life from the work of the APAQ. Mr Matthews told of some of his experiences and said that the successes achieved had made him more determined to persevere with the work. Arthur appealed to the people for their prayers and help. Captain Denet asked for a collection and received about £2. (About 1.4 times the average weekly wage, or the equivalent of about \$2350 in today's money). A gentleman referred to in *The Week* as 'an army aborigine' also gave his testimony.³⁴

An interesting gathering took place at the Congregational Church, Bowen Hills, in December in connection with a school for South Sea Islanders. Arthur had been operating the school for fourteen months, and he invited his class and a number of their friends to tea, with the church placed at their disposal for the occasion. Thirty-six islanders were present, and they formed a most interesting group. Whilst the boys were enjoying tea, quite a number of friends gathered until the church was full, and a very pleasant evening was spent. Rev A Sutherland presided and addressed the meeting. Arthur supplied a very interesting account of the rise and progress of the school, after which two presentations were made—copy of Sankey's hymns with music, to Mrs Sutherland, as a token of their gratitude to her for the interest she had taken in teaching them to sing, and to Mr Styles, their teacher—on behalf of one of the classes that had not long been formed. Two hymns were sung by three of the Maré Islanders (who had come from New Caledonia) in their own language, and one in English by the everyone there.³⁵

³⁴ Salvation Army Aborigines, in *The Week*, 16 March 1889, p. 7.

³⁵ *The Brisbane Courier*, 17 December 1889, p. 4.

Arthur came into membership at the Tabernacle in late 1890. It is likely that he initiated the classes for South Sea Island boys which commenced at the Tabernacle in 1896 and taught both secular and religious education.³⁶

Initially Arthur served amongst the aborigines on Bribie Island as the superintendent of the Mission Station there. In a letter to the editor of *The Brisbane Courier*, he wrote:

Sir, As your columns have been so kindly placed at the disposal of the APAQ on several occasions by reports of proceedings, etc., I venture supplying you with a few particulars connected with the work of the association and will be thankful if you can find space for them, as they may prove acceptable to such portion of your readers who take interest in the welfare of the dark races of Queensland.

After encountering many difficulties, the establishment of the first aboriginal mission station, under the auspices of the association, assisted by Government, may now be safely regarded as an accomplished fact.

We have now under our care 13 children—namely, three boys and ten girls, varying in age from 2½ to 15 years, also four adults—three men and one woman—making a total of seventeen. This number will shortly be considerably increased, several having expressed a desire to avail themselves of the privileges of the station. An aboriginal who has been at Bribie for the past three months is with me on a visit to Brisbane, assisting to induce aboriginals of the city and suburban parts to accompany us on our return.

We have enlisted the sympathies of several Christian ladies, who have formed themselves into an auxiliary of the association. Their duties will consist of collecting funds, materials, and making clothing for the children and such supervision of the station as is most suitable for ladies to undertake. Any of your lady readers who may be willing to help in this department will greatly oblige by sending their names either to Mrs RP Adams, Sandgate, Rev James Stewart, or myself, care of YMCA, Brisbane.

We are sadly in need of funds. The Government have granted us the reserve of ten square miles, erected school and cottage, provided boats, nets, necessary working tools, rations, and secular education for the blacks. It is entirely on the generosity of the public we are dependent for the maintenance of superintendent, matron, wages for two or three capable working aboriginals, and clothing. Contributions will be thankfully acknowledged if sent to Mr W Steele, hon. treasurer, Elizabeth Street.

Arthur Jno. Tyson,
Superintendent Mission Station, Bribie Island.
Brisbane, 2nd March.³⁷

The Tabernacle CE Society had a South-Sea Boys evening early in 1892. The entire program was presented by the boys following a tea given to them by the Society.³⁸ It is not known if Arthur was a member of CE at that time.

Arthur was farewelled by the church in 1892 to work as an evangelist amongst Aborigines in North Queensland and resigned his membership in April 1892. (This may have been a condition of his working with the Church of England).

³⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1896*, p. 7.

³⁷ Mission to the Blacks, in *The Brisbane Courier*, 6 March 1891, p. 6.

³⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1892*, p. 9.

Arthur Tyson

Australian Baptists, at that time, had not undertaken any missionary work focused on the indigenous people, so Arthur served under the auspices of the Church of England. It was not until the late 1940s that the ABHM (Australian Baptist Home Mission) Board established its first mission station at Yuendumu in the Northern Territory. The Rev Alf Driver was secretary of the ABHM at the time.

The Tabernacle roll has the unusual annotation that Charles Mack, who became a member in July 1892, was an "S.S. Islander". He was presumably one of the islanders introduced to the church by Arthur.

Before leaving Brisbane, Arthur wrote another letter to the editor of *The Brisbane Courier*:

Sir, It was with interest I read your correspondent's letter in the *Courier and Observer* re "Aboriginal labour for plantations" signed by Captain John Strachan, as I form one of Rev Gribble's party, under the auspices of the "Church of England Australasian Board of Missions," who leave Brisbane on the 10th of next month for our scene of labour amongst the aborigines of Cape Grafton and Bellenden Ker districts. The Government have made a reservation of 51 200 acres for the use of the aboriginals, on which reserve the headquarters of the mission (school, church, and mission house, etc.) will be forthwith erected. ... Both Mr Gribble and myself have seen aboriginals at work in the North engaged at tropical agriculture, and their employers speak well of them, their remuneration consisted merely of "ki-ki" (white man's food). Mr Gribble has for some time past been advocating the claims of this new mission enterprise in the Southern colonies and has met with much encouragement. The Government of Queensland are doing their part nobly—thank God for the liberality of the State. Now, sir, I trust the Christian colonists will not be content to allow our brethren in the sister colonies to alone be partakers in this Christlike work, for if our labours are successful (and my faith is strong enough to believe they will) it will be the people of Queensland that will reap the benefit. There are numbers of both able men and women willing and anxious to devote their time and energies to this work like true missionaries, with little or no future worldly prospects. I do pray that all who are professedly interested in the aboriginal question will rise to the occasion and will do all they can to secure the future success both spiritually and temporally of this new undertaking. I am, sir, etc.,

Arthur John Tyson,
Missionary to the Aborigines.
Brisbane, 23rd April³⁹



First Aborigines at Yarrabah Mission, 1892. (ReseachOnline@JCU)

³⁹ Aboriginal Labour, in *The Brisbane Courier*, 26 April 1892, p. 6.

In May 1892, *The Brisbane Courier* reported on the Farewell ceremony to Rev JB Gribble and Arthur.

Arthur served only briefly in North Queensland. In December 1894, he was appointed Superintendent of the Myora Mission Station Industrial School, Dunwich, under the Colonial Secretary's Office. He continued in this role until the mission was closed by the government in late 1896.



Myora Mission, Dunwich, 1891
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)

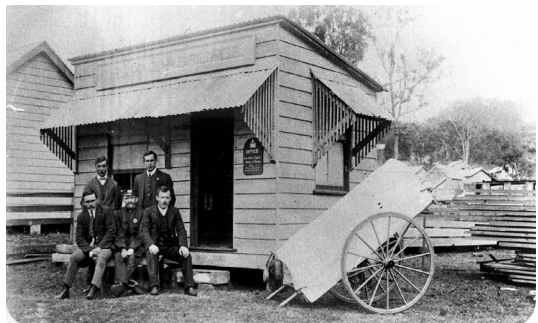
It is not known when Arthur ceased full-time missionary service; however records show that it was after the visit of Mr Horace Tozer, the Colonial Secretary, to the Myora Mission in November 1894. By 1898, however, Arthur was an honorary member of the Ambulance Brigade in Brisbane.

In 1903, Arthur was again living with his parents in Clayfield, working as a labourer. By 1905, he had secured employment as an ambulance bearer. Arthur married Margaret Tonks in Katoomba, New South Wales in 1906. Arthur and Margaret transferred to Canungra by 1909 when he worked as a mill hand.

By 1914, Arthur was both the secretary and senior bearer (officer-in-charge) of the Beaudesert Queensland Ambulance Transport Board (QATB).⁴⁰

In 1917 Arthur was the senior bearer and officer-in-charge, of the QATB sub-centre at Terror's Creek (Dayboro) when he took ill and the Ambulance motor conveyed him to the Mater Misericordia Hospital, suffering from asthma and internal troubles. He subsequently passed away at the Mater Hospital. He had been in the QATB for 23 years.⁴¹

Arthur's remains were interred in the Toowong Cemetery. All brigade bearers who could be spared from



Canungra QATB Brigade, c. 1915
AJ Tyson second from right
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)

⁴⁰ *The Beaudesert Times*, 12 June 1914, p. 2.

⁴¹ *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 29 November 1917, p. 7.

Arthur Tyson

duty marched as a bodyguard, the general secretary walking immediately behind the hearse. Mr William Bell (the brigade's solicitor) who was a member at the Tabernacle also attended the funeral. His coffin was draped with the QATB flag.⁴²

The secretary of the Executive Committee of the QATB reported the death of Arthur at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, and it was decided that a letter of condolence be written to Margaret.⁴³

Margaret moved to New Farm after Arthur's death, and died in 1939.

⁴² Ambulance Man's Funeral, in *The Telegraph*, 29 November 1917, p. 6.

⁴³ *The Telegraph*, 18 December 1917, p. 5.

Miss Mary Abbott

Mary Beatrice Abbott was born in 1879 in Queensland, the daughter of John and Annie Abbott, the youngest of five children. Her siblings, who were all born in Queensland between 1865 and 1876, were John, Alexander, Annie, and Margaret. Mary's father is thought to have died in 1895. The Tabernacle church records are confusing as they frequently refer to Mary as May.

Mary was received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1898. Her mother, Annie, had been a member since 1894. Her sisters Annie and Margaret also became members. They were all living in Leichardt Street in the 1890s and in Stanley Street, South Brisbane in 1902 at which time Mary was working as a dressmaker. In 1903, Mary was awarded 12th prize in the Senior Sunday School Teachers' examinations. She relinquished her role as a Sunday School teacher in 1904. She gave her occupation as confectioner in 1905 and 1908.

Mary was a member of the CES for many years before moving to Melbourne in 1906 to study in preparation for mission work. While she was in Melbourne, the CE sent her a letter every three months.

The Brisbane Courier reported in December 1908, that there was a fair attendance in the Tabernacle's lecture room, when the members of CE and the church bid Mary farewell, after her training. Winnifred Young (vice-president of the CES), said that Mary had been a member for nine years, and had been a very active worker both in the Junior CES and Sunday School. She now had the honour of being called to the foreign mission field in India, and they wished her Godspeed and every success in her work. Winnifred presented her with a purse of sovereigns on behalf of the CES and wished her every blessing in the foreign field. (A sovereign was approximately equal to the minimum wage for three eight-hour days.) In her brief response, Mary said there were 36 missionaries at the Poona and Indian Village Mission (PIVM)⁴⁴ which had been established in the area around Pandharpur about 570 km south-east of Mumbai in the 1890s. She was the first full-time worker to be sent overseas from the Tabernacle.

The PIVM was established in Australia by Charles Reeve, a charismatic and autocratic Tasmanian farmer and Baptist evangelist and later ordained Baptist minister, in 1893. It was one of the first Protestant overseas missions established in Australia by Australians and mostly staffed by Australians and New Zealanders.⁴⁵ Reeve supported the idea that missionaries went on the basis of faith, looking only to God for their

⁴⁴ *The Brisbane Courier*, 16 December 1908, p. 5.

⁴⁵ <https://openresearch-repository.anu>

Mary Abbott

support and not a missionary organisation, public appeals for money, or debt underwritten by a missionary society.

The specific nature of the work Mary undertook with PIVM is unknown, but the mission was involved in evangelism, often using indigenous women as Bible teachers, and undertaking medical work amongst lepers and orphans and education.

In 1914 the YPSCE organised a welcome home social for Mary, who had been an honorary member of the Society during her absence. Mary also spoke at the Mothers' Meeting – an outreach group for mothers.

A YPSCE missionary meeting was held in the Taringa Union Baptist Church in October, where Mary described her work in India. Misses Warner, Sanderson, and Shaw were dressed in cultural garb of the time, to represent Indian women. Mary brought a number of curios, which those present had the opportunity of inspecting. As a result of the meeting, a substantial sum was handed to Mary to assist her in her work.⁴⁶ Mary also visited the Tabernacle ICE and gave an interesting address.



A PIVM Biblewoman (Source: openresearch-repository.ANU)

Mary addressed a meeting of the Girls' Auxiliary of the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union in St. Andrew's Hall in June 1915, illustrated by exhibits and vividly portraying the life, customs, and work among the villages in the Bombay Presidency.⁴⁷

PIVM merged with the Ceylon and Indian General Mission in 1968 to form the International Christian Fellowship, which since 1992, has been known as SIM International.

It is not known when Mary returned permanently to Brisbane but from Tabernacle records, it was most likely during 1918. She was living with her mother and sister Annie in Boundary St, Brisbane in 1921. The church yearbook, list of members, gave her address as India up until 1917–18, but South Brisbane from 1918–19 onwards. The 1919–20 Yearbook when reporting that she gave the whole Sunday School a talk on foreign missions, which very much interested the scholars, refers to her as a former

⁴⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 November 1914, p. 3.

⁴⁷ *The Brisbane Courier*, 10 June 1915, p. 9.

Missionary in India.⁴⁸ She was a part-time (two days per week) deaconess at the Tabernacle, who undertook visitation work in the Spring Hill area in 1919.

As deaconess, her work continued to show good results as through the area had been brought from darkness into our Lord's light, and her help to the Sunday School was much appreciated.⁴⁹ In the following year, it was reported that a much larger proportion of mothers from the area were attending Tabernacle church services as a result of her work.

At a Mothers' Meeting social in 1933–34, a record 150 were present, when a token of love and esteem was presented to Mary, for all she had done and was doing to ease the mothers' burdens and give them inspiration and joy in the Saviour.⁵⁰ She gave her occupation as deaconess in 1936 when living at *Weldon* in Mallon Street, Bowen Hills.

Mary was the first president of the Tabernacle branch of the SGMU when it was established in 1926.

Mary led in prayer at a meeting of the women's auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in the Albert Street Methodist Church in 1938 to celebrate the fourth centenary of the placing of the Bible in the churches in England.

During 1938–39, Mary, who had served the church for nineteen years, asked to be relieved of the responsibility due to her health. The church was sorry to lose her and they told her so in a very practical way.⁵¹

Mary's sister Annie is thought to have remained in membership at the Tabernacle until her death in 1950. She had never married. Her funeral service was conducted at the Tabernacle.



Aged Christian Women's Home, Bowen Hills

Mary was still living in Brisbane in 1950. She had been living at the Aged Christian Women's Home in Bowen Hills, but it closed in 1948. She moved to Maryborough but returned to Brisbane and renewed her membership at the Tabernacle in May 1956 but died on 15 May 1956.

⁴⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1919–1920*, p. 9.

⁴⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1920–1921*, p. 7.

⁵⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1933–1934*, p. 9.

⁵¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1938–1939*, p. 6.

Elsie Scott (née Ham)

Elsie Beryl Ham was born in Brisbane on 2 Sep 1888, the fourth of six children of Alfred and Anna Ham. Her mother, Annie Silvester came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1877, and her father came into membership in 1892, ten years after their marriage in Brisbane in 1882. Alfred and Anna both died, while she was in India, in 1935 and 1925.

Elsie came into membership in 1898-99, when she was living in Narangba. Her sister Annie (Hilda) and brothers Frederick and Frank were also in membership. Her involvement at the Tabernacle is unknown. Elsie's great-grandfather, John Ham was the first minister of the Collins Street Baptist Church, Melbourne.

Elsie was living with her parents in 1913-15 at Chelmer, but transferred her membership to Flinders Street South Australia, on 5 December 1915, aged 27, to undertake either missionary or nursing training. So although she was not sent out from the Tabernacle, it seems most likely that she felt the call to missionary service as a young adult, while in membership at the Tabernacle.

Her brother Thomas served in the Australian Infantry Forces in World War One and his life and service are outlined in *For God, King and Country*.⁵²



Elsie Ham (left) with her parents Alfred and Anna and siblings in 1919 shortly after Thomas' return from war. (Photo: Jeff Ham)

At a weekly meeting of the Queensland Evangelisation Society (QES) in 1918, Evangelist George Dempsie gave a talk on his work in Korea. Elsie, who had just been accepted for work in India by the Ceylon and India General Mission (CIGM), gave a brief message at the invitation of the chairman, Mr WJ Tunley.⁵³ Throughout the 1920s and 1930s there was a strong relationship between the CIGM and QES.

The CIGM began in 1893, after a Scottish pearl trader, Benjamin Davidson started working among Buddhists and Hindus in Ceylon, which is now known as Sri Lanka. Ten years later, a Christian convert from Poona travelled to Australia, searching for mission workers to help him share the gospel in his home region. Charles Reeves and ME Gavin answered the call, and in 1893 the Poona and Indian Village Mission (PIVM)

⁵² D Driver and H Colegrove, 2018. *For God, King and Country*, City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Brisbane.

⁵³ *The Brisbane Courier*, 27 July 1918, p. 7.

was born. The CIGM and PIVM joined in 1968 to become the International Christian Fellowship (ICF). ICF became part of Serving In Mission (SIM) in 1989.

In 1918-19, the Tabernacle was given £10/5/- for Miss Ham's travelling expenses. It is unknown whether this was for Elsie or one of her sisters.

When Elsie commenced her service in Penukonda in 1919, Miss Newlon, from America also joined the staff, which also had responsibility for two out-stations. The continuing workers were Miss JM Legg, three preachers, two Bible-women, and four teachers; The mission at Kalyandrug had one out-station. Its workers were Mr A Scott, three preachers, one Bible-women, and two teachers.⁵⁴ Until she was fluent in the local language, Elsie accompanied the preachers and Bible-women to the shandy in Penukonda every Sunday. She passed her second language examination in early 1921.

Elsie sent regular reports to the CIGM which were published in the mission's prayer newsletter, *Darkness and Light*. In Elsie's first report, printed in mid-1919, she described her first impressions. She noted the crumbling condition of the Hindu temples, the respect and love which children showed to their parents and wrote that the most beautiful thing of all was seeing the people come out of heathenism, bow before God in prayer, and tell others of Jesus and His love.

In early 1920, Elsie wrote:

There is a High School in Penukonda, with some two or three hundred boys attending it. The students in the higher classes are being taught English literature, and Shakespeare's plays, and now they are having historical lessons from the Bible. The other week they were asked to write an essay on the first four chapters explained to them. This brought about a big run on our Bibles. Day after day one after another would come to the bungalow for the loan of a Bible. But they had no light on what they read, and wanted it explained! It was lovely to see these heathen lads reading God's word. Some younger lads, catching the desire, also came regularly, and it was a glorious opportunity to tell them the Gospel. From conversation with different ones, we find there are many here who would like to embrace Christianity and have lost faith in their own religion. She requested prayer that God's Holy Spirit will enter their hearts and make it possible for them to accept Christ as their Saviour.⁵⁵

Elsie married Adam Scott on 7 December 1920, in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu, India. Adam, who was born on 22 April 1874 in Roxburgh, Scotland, the son of Alexander and Helen Scott, was 14 years her senior. He is listed on the Missionary Roll of the Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh, which has been an evangelical Baptist church since its foundation in 1808 by Christopher Anderson who was inspired by reports of William Carey's missionary work in India.

⁵⁴ *Darkness & Light*, May-June 1919.

⁵⁵ *Darkness & Light*, January-February 1920.

Adam had moved to Edinburgh and joined the Chapel in 1906. He loved open-air meetings and continued as a member when he went to the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, in 1911, for training. It was in the Chapel that he was led to offer for missionary work, and the CIGM accepted him in December 1912. He sailed in January 1913, after a farewell service on 13 January.⁵⁶ Adam married Helen Parker in 1915, but she died in 1917 after less than three years of marriage. His mother died in 1917, aged 81 while he was in India.

When a disciple said to Jesus, “Lord let me first go and bury my father”, Jesus replied :Follow me and let the dead bury their own dead”:⁵⁷

Elsie and Adam were both engaged in missionary work in South India, under the CIGM when their marriage took place in the Union Church, Coonoor on the Nilgiri Hills, South India. The Rev A Gulliford, of the Wesleyan Mission officiated and he was assisted by the Rev H Merriweather, of the CIGM. The bride was given away by Mr Coultas of Ceylon and wore a pretty dress of soft white crepe de Chine, with an overdress of ninon, trimmed with Maltese lace and small Pearl beads, with a beautiful veil and orange blossoms from Queensland, and carried a sheaf of arum lilies. Miss Annie Gardiner, who had recently arrived from London, acted as bridesmaid, and Mr P Rostad was best man. The church had been beautifully decorated with arum lilies and coloured foliage. After the ceremony Mr and Mrs Scott, and 40 wedding guests, were entertained by Mr and Mrs Kirby at *Brooklands*, whose large dining-room was decorated with white lilies and other flowers, interspersed with ferns and foliage of different hue. Great interest was taken in the wedding, both parties being members of the mission whose annual conference was being held at Coonoor at the time. Adam and Elsie left by rickshaw for Kotagiri, about 20 km higher up the hills. Their future home was to be at the mission station in Kalyandrug, South India.⁵⁸

Elsie's letters were regularly printed in the *Charlotte Chapel Record*. She received parcels and wrote letters of thanks, but never went to Edinburgh, because they took their furloughs in Australia, and Adam never returned to Scotland after his first furlough in 1919-20. While on furlough, he gave two lectures at the Chapel. He was grateful to the Chapel, when he retired, for keeping his name on the missionary list and supporting him all those years.

Their letters tell of the difficulties encountered in spreading the gospel due to superstition, indifference, the caste system, and the absence of any conviction of sin and the need of a saviour. There were some successes resulting in baptism of the new

⁵⁶ *Charlotte Chapel Record*, 1911, p. 130; 1913, pp 17, 50.

⁵⁷ Matthew 8:21, 22. NIV

⁵⁸ *The Brisbane Courier*, 5 February 1921, p. 15.

believers and the establishment of small local churches, however, this often resulted in persecution of the young believers.

In 1922, they were able to begin the building of a bungalow as a residence, using tools provided by the mission. Before this, they had been living in “native houses”.

They were transferred from Kalyandrug to the Kadiri Station, which serviced a much larger population, in late 1923. A girls’ boarding home was built here in early 1924 with accommodation for up to fifty girls. There was a serious outbreak of Cholera in 1924 in the Kadiri district, which along with a severe drought made evangelism very difficult. Fortunately, there were no deaths amongst the Christian community throughout the district.

Elsie but not Adam was again “living” with her father in 1925 at Chelmer. This address may have been primarily for the purposes of the electoral roll. She had returned home early for furlough due to her poor health and the poor health of her father. Her mother had died earlier that year while she was in India. While Elsie was in Australia, Adam went to Kalyandrug and then joined her in September. They did not return to India until December 1926.

Adam gave an interesting lantern lecture in the Blenheim Baptist Church in February 1926 on missionary work. He pointed out the need for young men and women in the mission field.⁵⁹

While in Brisbane in 1926, he also addressed the QES and the United Christian Workers Band in Wynnum where his lecture was illustrated by lantern slides with views of Colombo, rubber, tea, and rice industries, weaving, spinning, pottery, etc, and the primitive methods of agriculture were also explained. He detailed the difficulties of travelling in the native districts and emphasised the good work which was being accomplished among the poorer native classes of Southern India, by the mission, which was interdenominational.

Shortly after her return to India, Elsie wrote:

Dear Friends, I want to tell you about an interesting case of conversion we had last month. A young woman, about 17 years of age, came to us for instruction in the Word of God from her heathen village over 24 miles away. Her aged father brought her in, walking all the way, and left her with



CIGM Church and Headquarters, Bangalore,
(Photo: *Darkness & Light*, May-Jun 1930)

⁵⁹ *The Queensland Times*, 13 February 1926, p. 14.

us and went back to his village. We put her with the Boarding girls in the Home to live, and she seemed a fish out of water at first, because she was a heathen girl and they were Christian girls. But she got on quite well with them, and no doubt their influence over her was helpful. She came to me morning and evening each day for lessons. She did not know a thing, had never heard Christ preached, and her mind was as dark and dull as could be. I just had to tell her over and over again the Gospel story, and illustrate it with pictures, till her mind began to take it in, and her face brightened up, and one could see the message was taking hold. We prayed together, she praying after me, and the Spirit of God opened her heart to receive the truth. So we continued day after day, until she seemed ready to be baptized in Christ's name. The day before her baptism her old father walked in again to bring her home. I told her to tell him the things she had been learning about Christ. So she told him, and the Bible Woman spoke with him and others of the Christians, with the result that the light dawned upon his soul, and he came up early on Sunday morning saying he wanted baptism too that day. But Adam felt it best for him to receive more teaching and to confess Christ in his own village. When we were at the baptismal service, and Adam had got into the water, the father began to walk in too, so anxious was he to follow his newly-found Saviour. Elsie sought pray for this father and daughter that they would make a good confession in their own village. The girl had a heathen name, so we changed it to Anandamma, which means 'Joy'.⁶⁰

In late 1929, the new Mission Church was opened in Kadiri and then in early 1930, Elsie and Adam were transferred to Bangalore.

In 1930, the CIGM, which was conducted on faith lines, was responsible for a population of 1 000 000. It had 42 missionaries who, assisted by 153 native workers, had responsibility for 51 day schools, 85 Sunday schools and five children's boarding homes.

In 1933, Adam was the field superintendent of the CIGM, when he spoke at the missionary rally of the QES's Easter Convention.

During a subsequent furlough, Elsie spoke on behalf of the CIGM at the Bundamba Methodist Church, on Good Friday 1941 and at the missionary group of the Presbyterian Girls Fellowship in St Andrew's Hall, Creek Street. Adam had the opportunity to assist Rev Albert Butler at the funeral of Elsie's aunt, Winifred Ham, who was a foundation member of the Wharf Street Church.



CIGM Church, Kadiri
(Photo: *Darkness and Light*, 1930)

⁶⁰ *Darkness & Light*, September-October 1927.

When ill health forced his retirement in 1946, after 34 years as a missionary, Adam stated that he believed that Hindus and Moslems would never compose their differences. He was reported to have said that if ever British influence were fully withdrawn from India he could not see a happy India. It was impossible for Moslems and Hindus to agree and although the opposing factions had freely criticised British policy, he feared for the future of India when British government of the country ceased.⁶¹



CIGM General Conference participants, 1930
Adam Scott (3rd from left, back row) with Alfred,
Margaret and James Scott,
Elsie Scott (2nd from left middle row) with Hilda.
(Photo: *Darkness and Light*)

Adam and Elsie and their family planned to settle in Maroochydore. They were, photographed aboard the inter-State passenger vessel *Ormiston*, after a seven week journey from India.

The 1947 convention of the QES was held in the City Tabernacle lecture room on 4 and 7 April. Missionary speakers on the 4th included the “Rev A Scott”, of the CIGM.⁶² Although he was frequently referred to as Rev Scott, by the CIGM from about 1942 onwards, the use of the term Reverend was probably used as a mark of respect for him as a revered man, even though he had not been formally ordained.

Tributes to Adam’s service by fellow missionaries Mr Keith Jones, Rev WHW Paget, Mr Doug Neilson and Miss Agnes Ellwood were published in the Nov 1947-Jan 1948 issue of *Darkness and Light*.



James and Margaret’s baptisms alongside four girls
from the Kadiri Boarding Home Girls.
(Photo: *Darkness and Light*)

⁶¹ *The Telegraph*, 8 August 1946, p. 4.

⁶² *The Courier Mail*, 22 February 1947, p. 5.

Elsie Scott

Adam and Elsie had five children, who were all born in India and lived their entire childhood there.

Margaret was born in 1921 and remained in Australia when Adam and Elsie returned to India in early 1942 following furlough. She married Lester Cutlack

James was born in 1923, in Bangalore, Karnataka and died on 20 August 2001, in Townsville. He returned to Australia in late 1940 and was living in Townsville by 1949 where he married Gloria Kingston in 1950.

Alfred was also born in Bangalore, in 1928 and married Judith (Judy) Horsburgh of Maryborough. Their engagement was announced in 1954.

Hilda, commonly known as Patsy or Pat, was born on 2 July 1929 and married Ronald Jones in 1957.

Ellen, commonly known as Rosalind, was born in April 1931, and was working as a nurse in Maryborough in 1958. She married David Inglis in 1963. In 1954, Elsie and Rosalind sailed from London to Sydney on the SS *Strathmore*.

Patsy narrated that during all their time in India, the folk from Charlotte Chapel supported their large family. “We all owe them a lot for their generosity and joy with boxes of goodies at Christmas time not only for the Scotts, but gifts made by the wonderful congregation for every child in the girl’s orphanage that mum and dad cared for in Kadiri, South India. It was years before the children realised that there was no Santa. The folk from the Chapel yearly sent such lovely things for us which mum and dad put in our stockings, things we never saw in India and we never knew where they came from.”⁶³

Following Adam’s death in 1947, Elsie moved frequently, living in Townsville, 1949 (about 2 km from



Adam Scott, 1932
(Photo: Charlotte Chapel)



Adam Scott with Rosalind and Patsy, Ootacamund (Udagamandalam), India, 1942 (Photo: Karen Allis)

⁶³ Letter to Charlotte Chapel from Pat Voysey.

James and possibly close to Alfred); Scarborough, 1954 (living with her daughter Margaret and son-in-law Lester Cutland); Nambour, 1958; Red Hill, 1963; Margate, 1963; Petrie, 1972; and Taigum, 1977.

In December 1947, Elsie wrote to Rev Dr J Sidlow and Mrs Baxter at the Charlotte Chapel, saying:

It has come to my mind that I should write and inform you of the death of my dear husband, Mr Adam Scott. So many times he and I have enjoyed your letters, and he always has replied. Now he is no more, for God took him. He enjoyed one year of retired life over here and was free from frequent attacks like he had in India. He passed away in the early hours of September 6th, his work finished, his life nobly lived and his body quite worn out with so much suffering of the past years. Although we miss him so much, we feel God was merciful in releasing him from further pain, which would have been his portion had he lived. We have learned to say: "God's will be done."

My husband was ever proud of his church and used often to speak of the early days at Charlotte Chapel. My regret is that he didn't return for a visit and meet all the church friends again. His work in India seems fully done, and God used him in a big measure in the work of the Ceylon and India General Mission, and he was always equal to any task. I am realising more now what a good and rare sort of man he was. I trust his children will follow in his footsteps.

I trust you will keep a place for me and our five children in your prayers.

With Christian regards.

Yours in Christ Jesus – Elsie B Scott.⁶⁴



Adam and Elsie Scott with Rosalind and Patsy
(Photo: *The Telegraph*, 1946)

Elsie so strongly respected Sabbath rest that she would walk miles if necessary, to get to church rather than use public transport and cause somebody else to work on the Sabbath.⁶⁵

In 1968, Elsie was living at the Bethshan Mission in Wyee as a retired missionary. She died on 18 March 1986 in Maryborough, aged 98.

Elsie's grandsons, Geoff and Neil Scott commented that Elsie lived the life of the Lord in everything she did and every path she walked. She did not miss the opportunity to tell others of the joy of the Lord. She had great admiration for her husband's senior role

⁶⁴ *Charlotte Chapel Record*, 1946, p. 78; 1947, pp. 154, 189.

⁶⁵ Personal communication, D Ham, 2021.

in the mission. If bad health had not intervened they both would have served in India for many more years.⁶⁶

Elsie's granddaughter, Sally recalls that "grandma" would come to visit the family in Maryborough every couple of years, usually in the winter, as she didn't like the cold. Probably in the early 1970s when the family lived in a big Queenslander in Ann St. Along with her brother Tim, when they came home from primary school, mum, Judy would have afternoon tea ready for them, and they would take it to the lounge where Grandma would have prepared a session of biblical teachings for the two of them. She used a large easel that their father, Alfred had made for her, and butcher's paper. This would last for an hour every afternoon. Judy said the preparation of these teachings would take up most of Elsie's day. They weren't allowed to go outside to play until the sermon was over.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Personal communication, G Scott, 2021.

⁶⁷ Personal communication, S Scott, 2021.

Rev William Holmans

William Kirby Homans, who was born in Paddington, London in 1899, the son of William and Elizabeth Holmans, was commonly called Will. He migrated to Brisbane in 1911 aged 11, on the *Themistocles*, with his parents, older sister Amy (later Mary Larkin) and younger brothers Alan and Hugh. The family settled in Taringa, where he worked as a bookbinder. William Snr and Elizabeth became members at the Tabernacle in 1912. Amy joined the church in 1914 and Will became a member in 1915 following his baptism. Will was involved in the Sunday School (as secretary), CES (as Superintendent of the Junior Society), the Junior Diaconate (as secretary) and the Lookout Committee who followed up and supported members who had been absent from CE meetings.

He laboured faithfully for nine months in Coleyville (a German Baptist Church) in 1920–21 and reportedly achieved a lot under difficult circumstances. He was appointed to the new charge of Woodford, where he met with encouragements and discouragements usual to the pastoral role. He started a Sunday School and encouraged volunteers to assist as teachers.⁶⁸

Will was in charge of the QHM stations at Wamuran and Woodford and whilst there, commenced his studies at the QBC in 1922. A church site was purchased and by mid-March 1922, a small bachelor's quarters 7.3×3.7 m at a cost of £54/7/5 had been erected by Will and his helpers.

It is likely that Charles and Elsie Wise, who were members at the Tabernacle, but living in Wamuran in 1923, having recently moved from Taringa, were among his helpers.



Wamuran Baptist Church, 1925
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)

In his report at the Home Mission Demonstration of the BAQ, the committee chairman, Rev William Pope, introduced the speakers with 'graphic word pictures of how to reach their spheres of labour'. Will piloted them, in happy vein, to Woodford and Wamuran. They attended the inaugural meeting at Woodford, twelve people including four officials from Brisbane. Within twelve months, the two preaching stations had increased to seven, with varying congregations, but all above the original twelve.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 January 1922, p. 4.

⁶⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 October 1922, p. 10.

William Holmans

Will took up duties at the Park Avenue and Clifton Street mission stations, North Rockhampton, in 1923 and was encouraged by the attendance at the services. Albert Chisholm, of the AIM, was present at his welcome.⁷⁰

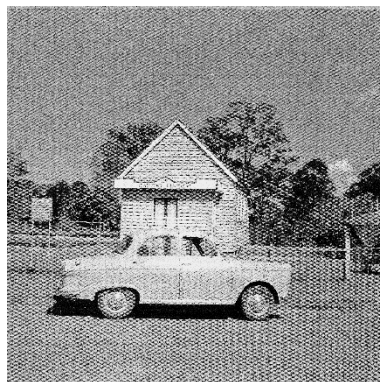
Will relocated to Mt Morgan in late 1924. This was about three years after the gold mine had closed down and the town and church had suffered significant loss of members.

He subsequently served in Torquay from 1926. In June 1927 he told of preparing a baptistry in the grounds at the Torquay church. "A large company of white and coloured folk watched three aborigines follow their Lord in the waters of baptism".⁷¹ Later that year, the HMC gave Will charge at the Nambour and Yandina churches to bring him closer to Brisbane, and the Bible college, tutors, and students, for his final year of study. At a farewell social in his honour, a couple of volumes recorded the tangible expression of the church's feelings.⁷² Will transferred his church membership from the Tabernacle to Nambour in 1929.

Rev Benjamin Hewison, QHM Secretary recounted:

And now we start the descent to the settlement below. It is here our admiration for the District Home Missionary, Pastor Holmans, received a fillip, as we note the waterlogged wheel-mark of his motorcycle along an almost impassable track, in the endeavour to prepare the way for our visit.

The Mission hall is reached at last. Already motor and buckboard and riding hack are in evidence, all bearing the stains of travel. Some worshippers have come without their coats, but it does not strike one as out of place. It is a quaint little building we look upon, vastly improved to what it was a few months back, when all and sundry regarded it as a general



Woodford Baptist Church
(Photo: Rev Ken Steer)



Yandina Baptist Church, c. 1947

⁷⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 16 January 1923, p. 9.

⁷¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 24 May 1927, p. 7.

⁷² *The Australian Baptist*, 10 May 1927, p. 10.

storeroom. Its seats are not of the latest type, being planks with box or stump to support one end, and an inside stud the other.

Its pulpit is simply a flat board on legs, the preacher having the opportunity to grow good by standing throughout the service. A lovely bunch of flowers gives a pleasing touch of beauty, and when the young gentleman who takes up the collection in his hat, empties its contents beside the flowers, there is certainly a savour of a sweet smell. This "holy of holies" does not lack ventilation, for, with doors open back and front, and shutters levered out with handy sticks along two thirds of the upper part of each wall, admission can be obtained by every breeze that blows. The spirit of reverence is well in evidence as young and old occupy all the available sitting space. The precentor, one of those wholesome men whose presence adds to the glory of the bush, leads the service of song with a hearty swing. Altogether it is good to be here, and one feels more than ever what a tremendous part the little bush church has played, and will yet play, in this wide North land of ours.⁷³

In 1928, Will married Evelyn, the only daughter of Harold and Evangeline Tomes, of Park Avenue, Rockhampton, with Rev Charles Luton officiating and Mrs A Chisholm presiding at the organ.⁷⁴

In April 1929, the Tabernacle was comfortably filled for Will's ordination service. The President of the Baptist Union presided, receiving five young men, who were presented by the Principal of the College, Rev William Bell. As the President received each one with a hearty handshake, he gave to each words of encouragement, chosen from appropriate Scriptures, and an individual token.⁷⁵

In June 1930, it was reported that Will was driving his own car.⁷⁶ After almost four years with the Nambour and Yandina churches, Will accepted an invitation to the pastorate of Blenheim and Tent Hill. An outstanding feature of his QHM ministries for the previous ten and a half years had been his splendid pastoral work.⁷⁷

The Blenheim Church transferred its affiliation from the German Conference to the Baptist Union of Queensland (BUQ) in 1930. In May 1931, Rev Hurst, President of the BUQ, visited Blenheim to take part in the annual celebration on Ascension Day, and to welcome Will and Evelyn to the pastorate.⁷⁸

Rev Hurst took a break at Nambour to preside over a function to welcome Mr and Mrs RF Smith who had succeeded Will. The Anglican and Presbyterian ministers while

⁷³ B Hewison, Always Ready Home Missionary, *The Australian Baptist*, 29 March 1927, p. 12.

⁷⁴ *Morning Bulletin*, 13 March 1928, p. 5.

⁷⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 May 1929, p. 3.

⁷⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 June 1930, p. 4.

⁷⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 24 March 1931, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 26 May 1931, p. 11.

sincerely welcoming the newcomer, paid tribute to the high esteem in which his predecessor had been held by the other Christian communions.⁷⁹

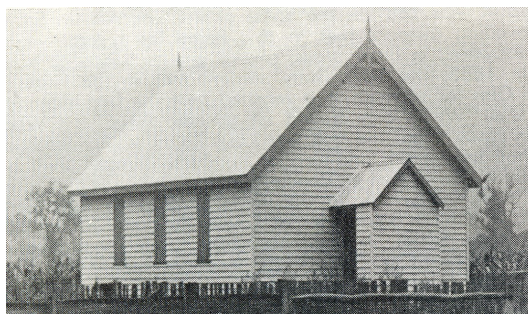
Rev Hewison, QHM Secretary, later wrote:

It was certainly unique in our experience of meetings and the tricks of thunder-storms. We were located at the Blenheim manse with a meeting due that evening at Tent Hill, nine miles distant, over the mountains, but twenty miles by the easier road. The audience would consist largely of folk coming 10 or 12 miles from Mt Sylvia, in one direction, and eight miles from Lilydale in another. About noon the clouds massed, and the thunder rumbled. We began to consult timetables about the return to Brisbane, as a postponement seemed inevitable, for black soil flats would not be negotiable in the wet. However, not a drop of rain fell in our neighbourhood, nor in the localities from which the hearers would come. So original plans were adhered to.

All went well for 16 miles or so. Then ominous pools of water showed here and there. We had turned the last corner, with a straight run for the church, when troubles multiplied. Within a radius of half a mile all-round the church the storm had burst. All the ingenuity of Rev Holmans, combined with sundry shoving and grunting by the passengers, could not persuade the car to go beyond a certain point. Lights from the opposite direction that became stationary told of similar trouble there. The manse party eventually took to the track, "skidding" with all the adeptness of the car itself; becoming "weighty" personages by reason of clinging mud; occasionally fishing in the dark for a "wayward" galosh and finding generally the pastor's promised 200 yards stroll seemed more like 2000.

When the church was reached the attendance of between 60 and 70 was an immediate heartener. Whilst mud and slush were in measure removed, the brass band made the spirits rise still higher with lively selections out of doors. Later, indoors, it joined with a strong choir, a willing company of artists, and an enthusiastic speaker, in submitting a programme that lacked neither quality nor quantity. The fervour of the gathering seemed to shorten the tramp back through the mire, and put new spirit into the stranded car, whereby she extricated herself and bounded homewards with zest. Though 2 am saw the minister and his guest diligently washing chains and galoshes, there was a sense of satisfaction about it all. The remarkable thing was the confined church area in which the storm raged. Had it burst at Blenheim, Mt Sylvia or Lilydale no happy gathering would have marked that evening at Tent Hill.⁸⁰

In September 1932, Will baptised nine Sunday School scholars. Another baptismal service in July 1933 saw a further 10 believers follow their Master. Five more were baptised in November and another two in late 1934. He reported an



Tent Hill Church (Photo: QB Archives)

⁷⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 July 1931, p. 7.

⁸⁰ B Hewison, A Thunder-storm Struck, in *The Australian Baptist*, 8 December 1931, p. 3.

interesting baptismal service in the local creek at Gatton, where he immersed eight candidates.⁸¹

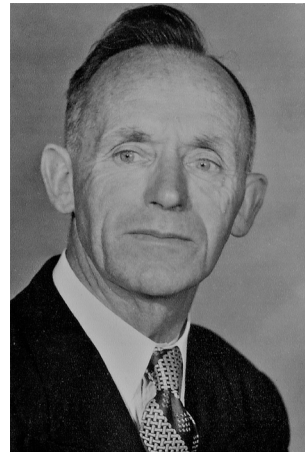
During Will's absence for his annual holidays in 1933, the services were conducted by members of the CES, suggesting that a vibrant local society had been established.

Will was a keen and tireless worker amongst the flock of God and many testified to having been converted as a result of his many visits to their home or farm.⁸² It was probably during the great depression that on one occasion at least, to help with car travel, the church presented him with a drum of petrol.

A fine spirit was shown by Will in May 1935, when he asked for and received the sanction of the Tent Hill Church to start a church in Gatton. The work in his district had grown beyond the control of one man. He voluntarily undertook to cut his district in two, and chose the new centre, leaving the easier task of the established work to the new man. He had proven himself a man of true missionary spirit, and it was agreed it would be surprising if he did not make good in his new undertaking.⁸³ When Rev Samuel Newell was officially welcomed to Blenheim, Will preached on the topic *I will make you fishers of men*.

The formation of the Gatton Church took place in the Shire Hall in July 1937, with 21 foundation members. The adoption of the official constitution of the church was followed by a Communion service, when Rev George Haughan, President of the BUQ, gave the right hand of fellowship to Will. Rev Sayce called the names of the members one by one, and the pastor received them into membership.⁸⁴

All the timber and requirements for the building had been donated—the seats and furnishings were cut from one very large silky oak tree. The spacious grounds were crowded with members of the Baptist community from various parts of the State, ministers and members of other denominations, and the general public, when the building was officially opened by Rev John Latimer, President of the BUQ, in November 1937. The building was a fine structure, built at a cost of about £300, with a considerable amount of labour given voluntarily. Will, as



Rev WK Homans,
(Photo: QB Archives)

⁸¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 1 October 1935, p. 4.

⁸² Personal communication, J Neuendorf, 2020.

⁸³ *The Australian Baptist*, December 1935, p. 3.

⁸⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 August 1937, p. 9.

chairman, expressed delight in welcoming such a representative gathering, handing Rev Latimer a gold key, and asked him to officially open the new church.

Then followed a dedication service, conducted by Rev Latimer. Rev Albert Butler gave a Bible reading and Revs Sayce and Newell, of Blenheim, led in prayer. The dedication sermon was preached by Rev James Mursell.

Following the service, afternoon tea was served in a marquee outside the church. Rev Butler said their pastor was a Tabernacle boy, and it was a great joy to them to know that he was doing such splendid work at Gatton. He made particular mention of Will's mother and father who were present, remarking that to them it must be a particular solace to know that their son was putting his life to the service of God and the spreading of His kingdom.⁸⁵

Will conducted open-air meetings every Saturday night in the main street of Gatton opposite the Federal Hotel. A large Sunday School functioned and children were collected from home every Sunday when a one-horse sulky came by. Will was a keen worker doing much of his travelling on a bicycle, often covering over 30 km each way to visit folk in their homes. He regarded visitation as a very important aspect of his work.⁸⁶ Reports from the 1937 Baptist Young Men's Camp at Currumbin were distinctly encouraging. The attendance was not large, but the spirit of the camp was the best ever. Will proved a capable camp padre, and quickly won the confidence of the boys. One definite decision for Christ was made, and several boys signified their decision to be baptized and join their respective churches.⁸⁷

In July 1939, Will accepted a call to the Wondai church.

There was a large gathering at Gatton in January 1947, when opportunity was taken to make a presentation to the Holmans family in recognition of the work they had done. The presentation was from the church and the town folk. Mr Davey spoke on behalf of the Congregational Church and wished them God's richest



Wondai Baptist Church, 1921
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)

⁸⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 December 1937, p. 11.

⁸⁶ J Mutzelburg, 2005. *Gatton Baptist Church*.

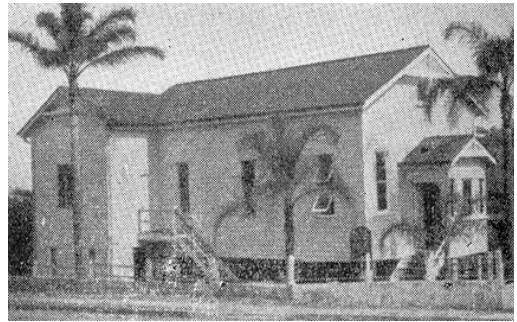
⁸⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 January 1937, p. 7.

blessing in their future work. He also spoke on behalf of the town folk.⁸⁸

Will had transferred to Nanango, where he baptised two young men in February 1941 and a married couple in April. He was also in charge of the Wondai Church, where he baptised a married couple in February 1942 and a young lady in 1944.

Will saw service in World War II as a Welfare Officer with Campaigners for Christ (CfC). He served in this capacity for 14 months in Albury and when he concluded his service in 1946⁸⁹ he accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Newmarket-Grange Church and commenced his ministry there soon after.⁹⁰ He was inducted by Rev Thomas Warriner in September 1946.⁹¹ Will was all smiles at the various committee meetings he attended in the third week of June 1948. All appreciated the smiles when it became known that the Newmarket manse had been blessed with a daughter as company for the boys.⁹²

Will was the first committee secretary of the Clifford House retirement home and was the chaplain in early 1950. On Christmas Day, he and Evelyn conducted a Christmas service for the residents.⁹³ He was also one of the Presidents of the Queensland State Christian Endeavour Union in 1950 and vice-chairman of the Queensland Baptist Evangelistic Committee. Evelyn was one of the city vice-presidents of the QBWU in 1954.



Newmarket Church, c. 1919
(Photo: QB Archives)

In 1953, after a ministry of six years in Newmarket, Will accepted a call to Graceville. He was the editor of the State CE paper at the time.⁹⁴ The people at Newmarket were very appreciative of the loyalty, devotion and the spirituality of his ministry, and the number of young people in the church augured well for the future of the church. While Will was pastor at Graceville, Les Duncan transferred his membership from the Tabernacle in 1955, during a short interlude between periods of service in Asia.

⁸⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 28 January 1947, p. 11.

⁸⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 23 July 1946, p. 2.

⁹⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 August 1946, p. 2.

⁹¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 September 1946, p. 2.

⁹² *The Australian Baptist*, 22 June 1948, p. 2.

⁹³ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 January 1950, p. 4.

⁹⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 18 March 1953, p. 20.

At the 1954 Assembly of the BUQ, Will was the sole nominee for Vice-President and was inducted as Vice-President and President-elect. Delivering his presidential address to the Assembly, he spoke on the necessity to pioneer with Pentecostal passion and power, under the title *Pentecostal Pioneering*.⁹⁵

As president, in addition to numerous official openings, inductions and farewells, Will and Evelyn returned to Tent Hill, as guest preacher at the 78th anniversary of the church, and preached at both services.⁹⁶

Queensland is a place of vast distances, and this becomes apparent when the Presidential office sets out to visit the churches. Will had already learnt something of these great distances as he had not spared himself in serving the churches of the State. Accompanied by Evelyn, he undertook the task of visiting the most distant churches of the far north. He was absent from the city for about a month, during which time he also had some much-needed relaxation from official duties. A reunion with his only sister provided part of this relaxation. He visited Mackay, Innisfail, Cairns, Charters Towers and Townsville, and probably the churches of Rockhampton and district. In those visits he was the ambassador of fellowship and goodwill on behalf of the Union.⁹⁷

At the BUQ annual assembly's President's Reception in the Tabernacle, the retiring President reported that during his term of office, he had travelled more than 20 000 km



Farrington House, Alderley, c 1932
Later known as Clifford House
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)



Warwick Baptist Church, 1950s

⁹⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 August 1955, p. 6.

⁹⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 May 1956, p. 4.

⁹⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 June 1956, pp. 8–9.

outside the capital city. Will served the Union with devotion throughout his term of office, ably supported by his wife and his church at Graceville.⁹⁸

Will was respected for his faithful attendance to Union Committee meetings and was well loved at a denominational level. He was regarded as a conciliator and a peacemaker. He was not one for taking sides and sought the common ground if at all possible, whilst also being forthright, prepared to say what needed to be said.⁹⁹

The Holmans family were farewelled at the Graceville Church in April 1958.¹⁰⁰ The General Secretary, Rev Frank JC Stone, inducted Will into the Warwick pastorate in May 1958.¹⁰¹ It was a change for which he had been prepared. The letter of call was dated 25 January 1958, and the letter of acceptance was dated 6 February 1958. He explained the prompt reply as follows:

My decision which is recorded in this letter is, I assure you, not as speedy as it may seem. It is twelve weeks since I first found myself disturbed by the possibility of movement and bound to give consideration while never dreaming of the Warwick Church. Your invitation received on Tuesday of last week, with various other circumstances in the past few weeks, seemed to indicate an open way which God would have us walk in.¹⁰²

Will was described as a very caring man who enjoyed the company of his people. He was more at ease with older members of the church than youth. He spent considerable time with the church's "shut ins" and the residents of the Mill House Home for the Elderly. He was greatly assisted by Evelyn who was a gracious and caring lady. She had a particular ministry with young mothers with small children.

Will's time at Warwick was far from easy. It was a time when major social changes were generally taking place in the Australian community. These changes placed pressures on the Christian church being particularly evident amongst the young. The established practices and beliefs of the church adopted the positive view that this challenge to the church should be dealt with in a way that did not alienate its youth and drive them away from the church. In



The unveiling of the Warwick Baptist Church, foundation stone

⁹⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 3 October 1956, p. 4.

⁹⁹ JF Churchward, 1986. *By Thy Sovereign Grace: A history of the Warwick Baptist Church, 1911–1986*.

¹⁰⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 May 1958, p. 14.

¹⁰¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 May 1958, p. 4.

¹⁰² JF Churchward, op. cit.

practice this problem was not easy to handle but the church remained committed to this approach.

Early in his time at Warwick, he listed as one of his goals, the building of a new church. Four and a half years of work began in 1960 and culminated in the laying of a foundation stone in February 1964 and opening of the new building in August 1964.¹⁰³ The official opening was performed by Rev AJW Chisholm, President of the BUQ.

Will was committed to inter-denominational work at a time when the mood of the church was very sectarian. He was on the founding Committee of the Blue Nursing Service.

In 1964, Will resigned from the church and full-time ministry. After long prayerful deliberation, he wrote submitting to the church his resignation as their pastor as of 31 May. He offered his services in an interim capacity and he was prevailed upon to remain until the new church building was opened. He preached his final sermon on Sunday morning, 9 August. When he began his ministry in 1958, the membership was 81. During his ministry, there were 17 baptisms and a total of 34 members were added to the Church.

William and Evelyn had four children, Dudley, Ivor, Noel, and Jennifer.

William and Evelyn moved to Lota on Brisbane's bayside. It is not known which church they attended in retirement. William lived to be 100 and died in July 1999. Evelyn died in 2000.



Warwick Baptist Church, Official Opening
Rev W Holmans in the background

¹⁰³ RW Hughes, 2011. *Honouring the Past Empowered for the Future: A Centenary History of the Warwick Baptist Church 1911–2011*.

Rev Albert Smith

Albert Edwin Smith who was born in Berkshire, England in 1898, the son of Edwin and Emma Smith, was commonly called Ted. He arrived in Brisbane as a 14-year old aboard the SS *Perthshire* in 1913, with his parents and siblings. They took up residence in a teacher's cottage in Spring Hill, an 850-metre walk from the Tabernacle. It is likely that he was invited to the Tabernacle by deaconess Sister Ethel Hiron.¹⁰⁴

Ted was converted under the ministry of his Sunday School teacher, Kenneth Lethem. After attending baptism classes led by Rev Archibald Brown, he was baptised in July 1915 and became a member at the Tabernacle in September, during the ministry of Rev WG Pope. Ted was the only member of his family to join the church.

Prior to his commissioning for service in East Bengal (Bangladesh), Ted was a long-term member of the ICE (including as Assistant Superintendent, 1918–20); the Junior Diaconate (to which he was appointed in 1918–19); and was one of the three members of the ICE who joined the Local Preachers' Staff

In his application for service with the ABFM, Ted wrote:

In 1919 Rev Palmer representing the Congo Mission preached at the Tabernacle and at the close of the service made a powerful appeal to the congregation to consecrate their lives to the service of Christ for the extension of His Kingdom on foreign shores. In the prayer that followed I felt the call of God to offer myself for service and in spirit I answered: "What wilt you have me do?" I read of the needs of India, of the work being done there and the desperate need for more workers on the ABFM Field of East Bengal, and though I felt utterly inadequate to fill any gap, I resolved to offer myself for this field.¹⁰⁵

Ted was appointed to assist at Newmarket, where his efforts were much appreciated. He was admitted to the first year of studies at the QBC in March 1920. He ministered at Wondai for a few weeks and then in the Murgon district, where he assisted Rev Thomas McColl in a series of tent evangelistic missions throughout the Burnett region in November–December 1920. Margaret Forbes was working as a midwife in Murgon at the time, having transferred her membership from the Tabernacle in 1914. Although a few



Pastor AE Smith, a Home Missioner
(Photo: Marie Lines)

¹⁰⁴ M Lines, 2005. The Lad from Spring Hill, in *Queensland Baptist Forum*, No. 60, August 2005, p. 5.

¹⁰⁵ M Lines, op. cit., p. 6.

Ted Smith

years older than Ted, she would probably have remembered him from their time together at the Tabernacle.

Ted continued in membership at the Tabernacle until 1926 while a Home Missionary at Newmarket and Murgon, and while studying at the Baptist College of Victoria (BCV). While a student he gave a bright message at the Richmond (Victoria) JCE anniversary service.¹⁰⁶

The missionaries in training with Ted in Melbourne in 1924–25 were Ernest (Ern) Watson, Austin Rogers, Cyril Baldwin, Doris Prest, Caroline (Vera) Bavington, and Mary Lord.¹⁰⁷ Ern was a gifted linguist who was Principal of the Bengali Language School and developed a life-long friendship with Ted. After her return from the field, Mary Lord married the widowed Rev Pope.

Ted was ordained by Rev Pope during the BAQ Assembly. At the Foreign Mission Demonstration at the Tabernacle in September 1925, Ted, ready for his God-appointed work in India, was welcomed by Rev W Bell. Their prayer was "God bless him and make him a mighty winner of souls in India". His reply was one of the finest missionary utterances heard in the Tabernacle. He had come to realise the value of Christ, the need of India's perishing millions, and the call to do his part.¹⁰⁸

The BCV Principal, Rev WH Holdsworth, speaking with emotion and passion, delivered Ted's Ordination Charge. Highlights of his address were the statements, "Learn to look through the eyes of Christ—don't lose your vision," "Take a kind heart, a broken heart, to India. Insist on always carrying with you a Christlike disposition—don't let your heart grow hard," "You think of the difficulties that face you, and I can imagine you asking, 'Who is sufficient for these things?'"—remember that you have a



ABFM missionaries in training at BCV in 1924–25
Back: Albert Smith, Ernest Watson, Austin Rogers, Cyril Baldwin,
Front: Doris Prest, Vera Bavington, Mary Lord
(Photo: Five Barley Loaves)

¹⁰⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 August 1925, p. 10.

¹⁰⁷ KR Manley, Mission policy and leadership at home, 1913–1957, in LA Cupit, RM Gooden and KR Manley, (eds), 2013. *From Five Barley Loaves: Australian Baptists in Global Mission 1864–2010* Morning Star Publications, Northcote, Victoria. p. 181.

¹⁰⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 October 1925, p. 4.

wonderful Saviour," and "The secret of David Livingstone's life is seen in his death—called home while kneeling at his bedside pleading for Africa."¹⁰⁹ At one point during the service all the lights were put out and candles lit as a symbol of Ted and Ern Watson going as lights to India.

At the Victorian Annual Assembly's Foreign Mission Demonstration, Ted and Ern told of their surrender to Christ and yielding up their lives to the service of Christ in India. All felt that both men had heard the Master's imperative and personal "Go ye."

Ted was the first missionary sent from the Tabernacle under the auspices of the ABFM.

He wrote several lengthy articles from India for *The Australian Baptist* including one in 1926, in which recounted his first impressions as a missionary on the field.¹¹⁰ He was also the editor of *Our Bond*, which regularly reported to the Australian Missionary Convention.

The news of Ted's engagement to Ruth Loft, of Newport, called forth hearty congratulations. They met when Ted was studying in Melbourne and was invited to her parents' home after preaching in the Newport Church. He was 24 and she was 16 at the time. Mrs Loft's was pleased that Ted was a minister but appalled to know he was planning to go to India.

In 1928, the AFMB received word that the Ted had passed his final Bengali examination and he was recommended as a missionary in full status.¹¹¹

At a missionary designation service of the annual assembly of the BUV, the outgoing missionaries included Ruth Loft, who was referred to as Ted's fiancée.¹¹²

Ern Watson, in reporting on the Brahmanbaria Missionary Convention, wrote:

The Convention was not lacking in a spirit of romance, especially for the Rev Smith and Miss Loft, whose marriage was solemnised by the Rev Wilfred Crofts in the presence of a happy band of Australian and New Zealand missionaries on 11 December 1928. The church had been tastefully decorated by friends, and the tables which had been adorned with flowers and greens



Ruth Smith (née Loft)

¹⁰⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 October 1925, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ AE Smith, Seedtime and Harvest, in *The Australian Baptist*, 27 April 1926, p. 4.

¹¹¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 October 1928, p. 4.

¹¹² *The Australian Baptist*, 30 October 1928, p. 3.

Ted Smith

groaned beneath the spread of goodly viands. With renewed vision and fresh zeal many of the happy party took their departure for their respective stations and toil.¹¹³

Ruth, then aged 21, took her wedding dress and wedding cake, packed in trunks, with her to Bombay. At her wedding to Ted, Mary Lord was her bridesmaid.

Due to the difficulty of sending money to India, as a result of the Great Depression, Ted and Ruth spent much of 1932–33 in Australia on deputation, while Ted served as interim minister of the Ipswich Church. They were welcomed to Brisbane by Rev Hurst.

A report of the welcome home was written by Rev Benjamin Hewison.

The Lecture Hall at the Tabernacle was bright with flowers and greenery on the occasion of the welcome social to the Rev and Mrs Smith. Poinsettias, Brisbane's civic emblem, were much in evidence and their brilliant colouring would doubtless, forcibly remind the guests of the evening of the field of service from which they had come.

Rev Hurst, who was chairman of the Queensland Foreign Mission Committee, presided over the gathering. It became evident that it may prove costly to indulge in too many "Teds" for the home comer recalled Mr WR (Bill) Smith laying down a penalty for anyone substituting that cognomen for the more dignified "Rev AE". It instantly meant a shower of shillings from the platform. One got his own back in some measure, however, for when "Ted" referred to "Bill," one of his former chums, the latter at once appealed to the umpire (umph! he should have said Chairman) with the result that Ted's shilling swelled the silver horde.

For Rev Holmans the evening was full of happy memories, for the platform had been the ICE meeting place and he and "Ted" had often gathered there. Their shared early efforts at preaching, followed later by QHM service, and the reminiscent mood contributed to the brightness of the evening.

Mr Lethem also received a warm welcome, for he was the "fairy Uncle" to promising lads like AE Smith, AJW Chisholm and N Hurst, enabling them to secure the advantages of college training. In happy fashion he gave expression to the joy he felt in seeing boys of his earlier care turn out so well.

Rev Smith told the gathering that when he went to India his passport was marked "no encumbrance;" but when he returned it bore the significant phrase, "one encumbrance." Contradictory as it may sound it is perfectly plain that the encumbrance does not encumber.

But the Rev Smith was not the only person of moment on the platform. There might be a grain of truth in Mrs Smith's naive remark that in Melbourne the welcomes



Rev AE and Ruth Smith
(Photo: GI Archives)

¹¹³ EE Watson, Spirit of Romance, in *The Australian Baptist*, 15 January 1929, p. 6.

were to Mrs Smith and the Rev Smith, but in Brisbane to the Rev "Ted" Smith and Mrs Smith.¹¹⁴

Although he was affectionately called Ted in Brisbane, he was always referred to as Rev AE Smith in his adopted home, Melbourne.

While on furlough, Ted spoke at numerous missionary meetings. The published reports invariably stated that his addresses were interesting, stirring, inspiring and informative. Frequently his address was supported with mirrorscopic views, displays of Indian handcrafts or moving pictures.

Their daughter Gwenyth (commonly called Gwen) was born in April 1933, while they were on furlough. They returned to India shortly after.

In another lengthy report to *The Australian Baptist* in 1935, Ted outlined the opportunities presented by the fact that Bengal was taking an increasing interest in the education of her people. He emphasised that this provided exciting opportunities for missionaries in India.¹¹⁵

After returning to the mission field, Ted was elected as President of the Mymensingh Convention. He wrote about the impacts of the Indian caste system on Hindus, the challenges this presented for missionaries, and the competition from other religions, for the hearts and minds of the 60 million "outcastes" in India.¹¹⁶



Ruth and Gwen Smith with Grace Collins

Ted reported the Mymensingh Baptism of Miss Usharani Chakravarty as follows:

This girl came to us from a Hindu home and has grown up among our Christian girls in Mymensingh. The time came when she became very conscious that she must make the greatest decision of all, and after a great mental struggle, with Christ on the one hand and her home and loved ones on the other; this charming girl gave her life into His hands, from which none can take her away. She publicly confessed her Lord in the waters of baptism, and it was one of the most impressive services I have ever had the privilege of conducting. Usha remains with us as a teacher on the staff of our Mymensingh Girls' School, and our hope is that she may be instrumental in leading her parents and brothers to the feet of her

¹¹⁴ B Hewison, A Queensland Missionary Welcome, in *The Australian Baptist*, 14 June 1932, pp. 2–3.

¹¹⁵ AE Smith, The Challenge of Opportunity, in *The Australian Baptist*, 30 April 1935, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ AE Smith, Ultimatum of the Untouchables, in *The Australian Baptist*, 14 January 1936, pp. 5–6.

Ted Smith

Lord and ours. Here is an answer to many prayers offered by friends in India and Australia.¹¹⁷

In December 1938, Ted baptized three women and five men in the Mymensingh District. They were the first fruits from people of the fisher-caste—direct converts from Hinduism.¹¹⁸

In 1939, Ted made an impassioned call for reinforcements for the work in India and a photograph of Ted and Ruth was hung in the vestibule of the Tabernacle.¹¹⁹ Ted returned briefly to the Tabernacle in 1941 and gave a splendid missionary discourse.¹²⁰ He also provided first-hand missionary information with his moving pictures and interesting sidelights of idol worship.¹²¹

In response to numerous requests, the Garo Historical Pageant, presented by the Concord Baptist Church, was repeated at the Central Baptist Church, Sydney, in April 1941. Several missionaries including Ted, who told the inspiring story of fifty years of gospel ministry in Garoland, participated in the pageant.¹²²

In Queensland, he conducted services in Kalbar, Warwick, Toowong, Rockhampton, Tarampa, Taringa and Murgon.¹²³ His visit to Queensland was an inspiring success, and the churches had seen mission work from another angle through the illuminating



Rev AE Smith in India



Currumbin Camp, 1940. AE Smith and KJ Lethem (eighth and ninth from left in the back row)

¹¹⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 19 July 1938, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 April 1938, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 13 June 1939, p. 12.

¹²⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 February 1941, p. 8.

¹²¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 March 1941, p. 7.

¹²² *The Australian Baptist*, 15 April 1941, p. 4.

¹²³ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 May 1941, p. 3.

pictures and the stirring appeal of a gifted and devoted missionary.¹²⁴

In November 1941, his furlough was extended to allow him to undertake pastoral oversight in Williamstown prior to his return to Bengal.¹²⁵ The church farewelled him with deep regret the following April. They prayed that his labour of love for the Master would be blest as it had been there. In March he baptized four women and received them into church membership.¹²⁶

On his way back to India, Ted undertook further deputation work in Western Australia. As a reward for his previous representation of the missionary cause, they gave him a more strenuous and prolonged itinerary. There were special meetings with the Baptist Women's Missionary Union (BWMU), the BMA, and the SGMU. He contacted all the country churches, and missed few, if any of the outstations. In the city there was a Sunday service and a weeknight meeting in each church. The slides and moving pictures attracting good attendances. Ted's addresses were illuminating and convincing.¹²⁷ As a result of Ted's deputation, the churches in the West contributed more than their quota to the national foreign mission's budget.

Ted was back in Victoria in early September when he spoke to the BWMU in Balwyn and Kerang. He served the Auburn (Victoria) church for twelve months, pending more assuring news from India.¹²⁸ He transferred his church membership from the Tabernacle to Auburn at this juncture. He was farewelled and proceeded on deputation service, expecting to return to India at the end of 1944.¹²⁹ Before leaving Auburn, he baptised seven believers.

He undertook a two-month deputation tour to Tasmania commencing in March 1944, including a boys' and a very successful SGMU Easter camp.¹³⁰ Rev Albert Roberts, the reporter from Tasmania, wrote:

This week's notes must of necessity have a distinctly missionary flavour, since for the past few days we have spent much time with Rev Smith in our district, and also in Launceston. At Ulverstone we had an opportunity of proving to our own satisfaction that reports of his lectures had not been exaggerated. His Indian Travelogue proved such an effective advertisement that some folk had to be turned away from the service on the Sunday night, when the lecture so effectively paved the way for an appeal for consecration. We have not

¹²⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 June 1941, p.4.

¹²⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 16 December 1941, p. 5.

¹²⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 19 May 1942, p. 7.

¹²⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 16 June 1942, p. 2.

¹²⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 15 September 1942, p. 4.

¹²⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 March 1944, p. 4.

¹³⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 18 April 1944, p. 2.

Ted Smith

previously seen anything to equal these movies and stills shown by Mr Smith, and the same applied to his unique lecturing technique.¹³¹

Ted returned to Brisbane in June for further deputation work.¹³² He was again congratulated on the lantern lectures he delivered. Apart from the broad scope of the vision presented, and the beauty of the slides and films, it was a treat to listen to his oratory. The Tabernacle had a special claim to Ted when he was in Queensland. He had greatly impressed all who heard him by his masterly presentation of the case for the East Bengal Mission.¹³³

The Greenslopes Church were delighted to have him at a fellowship tea and church service. In a powerful address, Ted showed the response to the Gospel, and the great need for more workers.¹³⁴ He also spoke at Kalbar, Silkstone, Nundah, and Rockhampton.

At the meetings of the ABFM Board in August, it was decided that Ted should return to India at the end of the year, with the question of the return of Ruth and the children to be determined subsequently.¹³⁵ Before returning, he spent more time in Victoria, where he screened the film *Broken Pots*.

Ted was part of the party which finally left for India in July 1945, only a week after the conclusion of World War II which had forced their earlier evacuation. Ted had endeared himself to the churches during his furlough. He had the qualities of an excellent minister and a sympathetic pastor. He was greatly esteemed. Ruth was likewise held in high esteem.¹³⁶

India was granted independence from England in 1947 and fairly turbulent times followed. The British missionaries returned home and the circumstances under which the Australian missionaries work and the workload became very difficult. At the annual meetings of the ABFM Board in Adelaide in August 1947, considerable time was given to discussion about the work in India. The Board was stirred by a letter from Ted, written on 15 August, the day of India's freedom. He wrote: "Do not fear for us, who do not fear for ourselves". The General Secretary added that, "India was free, but India will never be free until she understands the truth that makes her free."¹³⁷

¹³¹ AF Roberts, Itinerant Par Excellence, in *The Australian Baptist*, 9 May 1944, p. 8.

¹³² *The Australian Baptist*, 27 June 1944, p. 8.

¹³³ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 July 1944, p. 2.

¹³⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 8 August 1944, p. 7.

¹³⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 August 1944, p. 4.

¹³⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 July 1945, p. 4.

¹³⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 September 1947, p. 3.

In September 1948, Ted's mother was laid to her rest. Rev Holmans, Ted's contemporary at the Tabernacle and lifelong friend, conducted the funeral service.¹³⁸

Ted secured a berth on the steamer SS *Masula* sailing leaving Calcutta in mid-January 1949. He expected the passage to be a fairly slow one. He was back in South Australia by June when he was entertained at the Christian Club. He addressed the gathering in a lucid and enlightening talk on the position on the field, and its probable effect on mission work.¹³⁹ He was to preach and lecture in many of the churches that month.

A thousand people were present at the New South Wales Annual Foreign Missions Demonstration in May 1949, in Sydney. The program included a film of the new field in Goalpara. The colourful views of the people of that area, the native Christian workers, and the missionary staff at work, proved intensely interesting. Rev Victor White gave a very clear and helpful commentary as the films proceeded. Rev Smith was congratulated on the quality of his cinematography.¹⁴⁰

The presence of Ted and Ruth also added life to the missionary session of the half-yearly Assembly of the BUV. His addresses and his fine contribution on *The Distinctive Christian Contribution to India and Pakistan*, gave impressive evidence of the impact of the missionaries upon the life and thought of the people through the years. He also screened the film, *Pioneering in Assam*.¹⁴¹

Ted was an especially welcome visitor to Queensland, where he was regarded affectionately by his contemporaries, and by all who knew him. He was worked hard by the committee, who regretted he would not be there for a longer period, so that he could bring his message to all the churches.¹⁴²

Ted accepted a call to East Camberwell in 1949,¹⁴³ and in July he baptised his daughter Gwen. The Induction Service was conducted by the Rev John Morley. At the Communion service which followed, the Senior Deacon, Mr Genat, received Ted, Ruth and Gwen into fellowship and gave a welcome to Barry.¹⁴⁴

Ted addressed several meetings of the Queensland Assembly in the interests of Foreign Missions. He also showed his film *From Crescent to Cross* at the Tabernacle in

¹³⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 14 September 1948, p. 3.

¹³⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 14 June 1949, p. 4.

¹⁴⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 May 1949, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 31 May 1949, p. 3.

¹⁴² *The Australian Baptist*, 21 June 1949, p. 13.

¹⁴³ *The Australian Baptist*, 16 August 1949, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 October 1949, p. 13.

September.¹⁴⁵ He had filmed it in various villages, written the scripts, edited the films and added the soundtracks with his own voice.

At the annual meeting of the Queensland SGMU, Ted told of the *Cost of Foreign Missions*. He held everyone's attention as he told of the spiritual dividends secured as a result of the investments in Foreign Missions.¹⁴⁶ At an inspirational rally at the Tabernacle, Ted told of *Women of India—from a man's point of view*.¹⁴⁷ He also addressed the SGMU on the subject of *Spiritual Dividends*. Foreign Missions, he said, are the costliest things in the world, but they return spiritual dividends in the souls of men, women, boys, and girls, who have been won for Christ.

The story of the founding of a church amongst some fisher-folk in Mymensingh was then told. Unimaginable persecution came to this group of 25—three died, 12 went back to their old ways, but 10 were baptized, and those 10 had since grown to 20, 30, 40 because the Spirit of God was working in their hearts.

Ted also undertook deputation work in Tasmania in 1951.¹⁴⁸ In late 1953 he was appointed chairman of the Victorian Baptist Ministers' Fraternal.

Ted spoke at the Victorian Assembly meeting in 1953, emphasising that believers within the Baptist Church in Victoria had demonstrated stronger stewardship and responsibility for missions than encountered before. Ted reminded them of the cost of missionary service to people's lives and belongings but emphasised the benefits of these costs to bring people to saving faith in Christ. *The Australian Baptist* reported that, "Suddenly the intensity of a Carey, and the splendour of a Spurgeon was poured out in an ever-rising tide of heart-throbbing conviction. Never could a congregation be more aware of God's presence, and His call than in those pulsing paragraphs of a preacher's personality."¹⁴⁹

The East Camberwell Church developed a warm fellowship under Ted's ministry. The Smith family were held in affectionate esteem. He later became the pastor of the Essendon Church which faced a new era with high hopes and prayerful anticipation.¹⁵⁰ The manse family won its way into the affections of the people.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 September 1949, p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 September 1949, p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 October 1949, p. 4.

¹⁴⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 20 June 1951, p. 8.

¹⁴⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 30 May 1951, p. 15.

¹⁵⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 1 September 1954, p. 4.

¹⁵¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 15 September 1954, p. 6.

At the annual BUV assembly in 1957, Ted, was received with affection as the Vice-President.¹⁵²

At an eight-day mission held in the Warnambool Church led by Ted, six adult decisions and some by children were recorded for Christ.¹⁵³

In his notes from Tasmania in *The Australian Baptist*, Rev Watson sent greetings, and wrote that Victoria's incoming President, AE Smith had walked into college the same day he had. Ted had come from the far North while he was from the pleasant sunny south. They had been together for four years, sailed for India on the same day, worked together for a year in Mymensingh, and sat their Bengali exams at the same time. Ted was best man at his wedding, and he had the honour of giving Ted's bride away. He congratulated Ted on his election to the office of President, adding that the ties that bind the two States had always been strong and for a year at least, there would be an additional connection..¹⁵⁴

In his presidential address, Ted took the subject *Christ in the Crisis*. He referred to the crises: in the world of science, precipitated by the development of the atomic bomb; among the nations, 700 million people had won freedom from domination; in the church, where there was decline in attendance and moral and spiritual weakness of so-called Christian countries; and the Baptist Church which had become engrossed with the errors of other churches and had neglected its own tensions. Ted concluded with a reference to the crisis among the people: men and women had lost their way. He reflected that aimlessness was a characteristic of the times and that people did not do what is right because they could not see what is right. He believed that the coming of Dr Billy Graham would be a magnificent spiritual adventure in Australia and he called Victorian Baptists to partner in the great Crusade.¹⁵⁵

In preparing for Billy Graham's visit, Ted, remarked that the Baptists of Victoria were one hundred per cent behind the campaign, as they would be always at the forefront of any evangelistic enterprise. He took opportunity to stress that every congregation needed to take to heart, even though it is self-evident, that if



Rev AE Smith

¹⁵² *The Australian Baptist*, 30 October 1957, p. 4.

¹⁵³ *The Australian Baptist*, 30 April 1958, p. 16.

¹⁵⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 8 October 1958, p. 10.

¹⁵⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 November 1958, p. 9.

there were to be any lasting success, churches must prepare themselves both for Dr Graham's campaign and for the reception of those who would be gathered as a result. He warned that converts would not survive unless they were nurtured and nourished by the Church. It seemed desperately easy for Christians to adopt the attitude: "Just wait till Billy Graham comes, then we will see things happen", thus shelving their personal day by day responsibility to be a witness and an evangelist.¹⁵⁶

Ted was one of the speakers at the launch of the Baptist Youth Fellowship (BYF) in Victoria. Comments were made that, "On the other hand it has to be remembered that amongst the hoary preliminary speakers was one who created a big impression. Everyone wanted to talk about the President of the BUV's own "BYF". But Ted had a unique way with young people. He said: "BYF—Build Your Faith in BYF, Bring Your Friends to BYF, Base Your Future on BYF."¹⁵⁷

Ted gave himself wholeheartedly to his presidency, bringing many gifts and skills. He was a shrewd observer and upheld his office with dignity and irrepressible wit. He was always a first-class platform speaker, giving to each occasion exactly what was required, not least brevity when needed. Not one invitation to visit a church was refused.

His wit was shown when, with an array of ex-presidents behind him, Mr Sleep beside him, and a large and expectant congregation before him, he said that he was tempted to preach a sermon on a composite Old Testament text accompanied by four dramatic and sweeping gestures. "And he" (pointing to himself), "having served his generation" (the sweep of his arm embraced the congregation) "fell on sleep" (his hand rested on the shoulders of the incoming President), "and was gathered to his fathers" (the array of ex-presidents was indicated).

Another of his phrases which became a classic for all Presidential terms was voiced at a welcome to Dr Gardner Taylor, when he said he would soon, "return to the obscurity from which I emerged!" Yet Ted kept his humour wisely disciplined. The ex-President reviewed his year under the headings: The President and the People, the President and the Press, the President and his Program, and the President and the Pastors. With insight, he drew the interesting conclusion that almost without exception whenever a church had a problem, the problem bore a marked resemblance to the problem of every other church—it turned out to be a two-legged one.¹⁵⁸

Ted was the preacher in December 1960, at the commissioning, ordination, and farewell to Miss Katherine Wells and Rev Charles Storie, for missionary service. Charles had requested that Ted preach because of the inspiration Ted had become to him. Ted spoke

¹⁵⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 November 1958, p. 9.

¹⁵⁷ GM McAdam, B.Y.F. Launched, in *The Australian Baptist*, 29 July 1959, p. 4.

¹⁵⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 October 1959, p. 9.

from rich experience on the foreign field and at home; he spoke with deep conviction and moved the large congregation deeply. It was commented that, “His practical advice as well as his pastoral theology ought to live long in the memory of the ordinands and be of great benefit to their future ministries”.¹⁵⁹

Ted later served the churches in Elsternwick (1961–64), Ormond (1964–67), and Rosebud (1967–69).

Gwen, Ted and Ruth’s daughter, married Alexander Fairbank, who became a Baptist pastor.

Barry was born in India in November 1938 at the Gauhatti American Mission Hospital and was dedicated on Christmas Day.

In retirement, Ted and Ruth lived in Kew. Ted died on 7 August 1980 and Ruth died on 7 December 1993. Her funeral was held at Canterbury Baptist Church.

¹⁵⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 December 1960, p. 10.

Oswald Lahey

Oswald was born in Brisbane in 1889, the son of David and Jane Lahey, of French Huguenot (Calvinist) ancestry. David and Jane both had a strong Christian faith, and among other things donated a block of land in Canungra, in 1916 with the proviso that a church be built on it. In 1918 they gave £50 in memory of their son Noel who had died of wounds in France the previous year, to establish a building fund. St Luke's Anglican church was eventually built in 1936.¹⁶⁰

Oswald's first connection with the Tabernacle was through his

attendance at a Sunday School, as a ten-year old, in the home of the Misses Grimes, in Yeronga. This could have been any two of Minnie, Lucy, Eleanor or Maude.

At age 17, Oswald and one of his sisters, Vida, became members at the Tabernacle in 1907, following Oswald's baptism by Rev George Rice. Vida's membership was transferred from the Vulture Street (South Brisbane) Church.

In 1910, the CE picnic was held at *Greylands*, Indooroopilly, the home of Oswald's parents, who were not in membership at the Tabernacle. Vida and Oswald and four of their brothers were still living with their parents.

His parents owned and operated sawmills in Sherwood, Beaudesert, and Canungra. Oswald was employed as a joinery machinist, in the family mill.

Oswald developed a keen interest in missions, and in particular the Mourbhanj Evangelical Mission (MEM). He received their newsletter and regularly attended their prayer meetings.



The Lahey family
(Oswald third from right middle row)



Greylands, Indooroopilly
(Photo: *The Queenslander*, 1932)

¹⁶⁰ S Lahey, David Lahey 1858-1942: His background and his life, 1996: Brisbane, p. 16.

An exhibition, in connection with the CEU of Queensland took place in Ipswich in December 1913. There were displays of native “curios” from the fields of operation of the various Christian missions. Oswald, assisted by local members of the union, had charge of the exhibits from the Solomon and other Islands, and Papua.¹⁶¹



SMBC College Students, 1920
Oswald is 2nd from the right in the middle row
(Photo SMBC)

Another missionary exhibition and sale of work was held at the Jireh Baptist Church in February 1914.

The exhibition was opened by the pastor, Rev Arthur Jarvis, who had in his hand the hammer used by William Carey in his cobbling days, kindly loaned by Rev James Mursell. Oswald was one of seven who assisted at the exhibition.¹⁶²

When he was 24, Oswald, who was living at Corinda, and employed by the Brisbane Timber Company Limited at Sherwood, caught his arm on a band saw when at work on Saturday morning 8 November 1913, and almost severed his wrist.¹⁶³ As a result of the accident, Oswald’s left hand was amputated.

Only a year or so after his accident, Oswald met his future wife, Ada Charles for the first time. He had been asked to meet her at the railway station and escort her to a Mourbhanj Council meeting.¹⁶⁴

Shortly after his accident, Oswald applied for admission to the Moody Bible Institute, in Chicago, but the outbreak of war prevented his attendance. During the war, the family business needed every available worker, so Oswald resumed work in the family sawmill. Subsequently he completed a diploma course at the Sydney Missionary and Bible College (SMBS) in 1920-21. For several years after commencing missionary service, Oswald sent regular reports of his work to the SMBC.

In either 1921 or early 1922, Oswald read a plea in a Baptist newsletter from two women missionaries in India. They needed someone to teach them how to drive a T-model Ford that had been given to their mission by a congregation in Australia. The two women

¹⁶¹ *Queensland Times*, 25 August 1913, p. 4.

¹⁶² *The Brisbane Courier*, 7 February 1914, p. 16.

¹⁶³ *The Telegraph*, 10 November 1913, p. 11.

¹⁶⁴ RJ Cameron, *He Spoke of Trees: A Tribute to Mr Oswald Lahey, 1889-1987, A faithful servant of Jesus Christ*, no date.

Oswald Lahey

were Ada Charles and Miss Allenby. Oswald decided that this was an opportunity for something practical which he could do. He travelled to India on the same ship as the car.

It is possible that Charles heard Ada speak on behalf of the MEM at Eastwood in September 1921.

A farewell meeting was tendered to Mr Lahey, a student of "Croydon College", who had often worshipped at the Burwood Baptist Church, in September 1922, prior to his going to India with the MEM, where one of the church's members, Ada Charles, was already serving.¹⁶⁵

In Brisbane, in September 1922, a pre-CE Convention rally in the Ann Street Presbyterian Church filled the church with Endeavourers from suburban churches. During the evening, opportunity was taken to bid God speed to Mr Lahey, who was leaving immediately for active work on the mission field in India. In responding, Oswald stated that it was chiefly through the training he had received in the CE movement that he was able to take up the office of missionary.¹⁶⁶



Oswald Lahey, date unknown

Oswald married Ada Charles in Kolkata (Calcutta), in 1930 while on the mission field. Ada came into membership at the Tabernacle on 19 June 1940, following visitation. It is presumed that they were in Brisbane on furlough at the time. Ada was born in Goulburn in 1888, the daughter of Herbert and Mary Charles and baptised there. Her parents both died after she had commenced missionary service. They were both members of the Goulburn Baptist Church.

In 1913, Ada, her sister Annie, and brother Herbert were all working at Weemala, the Royal Rehabilitation Hospital in Ryde as a housemaid, domestic and gardener.

Oswald and Ada served with MEM in Batipada, Mayurbhong (Mayurbhanj), Orissa, India from 1922 and 1915 respectively, until 1965. Orissa had been one of the first spheres of missionary activity in India in the 1830s. The leprosarium was started in 1896

¹⁶⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 19 September 1922, p. 9.

¹⁶⁶ *The Brisbane Courier*, 2 September 1922, p. 9.

by the Evangelical Missionary Society. The mission gained worldwide notoriety when Graham Staines and his two sons were martyred in 1999.

In 1928, while Oswald was on furlough in Brisbane, he spoke at meetings conducted by:

the Tabernacle Senior Christian Endeavour Society at the Sunset Home for Aged People in Normanby;¹⁶⁷

the Brisbane branch of the Women's Auxiliary of Mission to Lepers, where he gave an account of his work among the lepers in India;¹⁶⁸

the Tabernacle branch of the Senior Girls' Missionary Union which was designed as a missionary pageant entitled *The Lady with the Lamp*, to show the value of medical missions, and how faith and science cooperate in the great mission of healing;¹⁶⁹ and

a weekly prayer gathering of the Queensland Evangelisation Society.¹⁷⁰

He also undertook deputation work in Tasmania and northern New South Wales during this furlough.¹⁷¹

The executive council to the MEM tendered a farewell in January 1929 prior to Oswald's return to India. Meetings were held in the afternoon and in the evening. Mr Mathewson, of the CIM, referred to his own visit to Mayurbhanj, and recalled the devoted work being carried out there by Misses Allenby, Charles, and Muirhead. He also spoke about the work being carried on amongst lepers.

The Rev Hurst also spoke, stating that in going back to India, Oswald was taking on great responsibility,



Herbert and Mary Charles and Family,
c. 1897. Ada is second from the left.

¹⁶⁷ *The Brisbane Courier*, 9 June 1928, p. 12.

¹⁶⁸ *The Brisbane Courier*, 20 July 1928, p. 22.

¹⁶⁹ *The Brisbane Courier*, 21 July 1928, p. 7.

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁷¹ *The Australian Baptist* 16 October 1928, p. 16.

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which all should share with him. In replying, Oswald thanked all those who had shown such interest in the work of the mission.

James Caulfield (president of the mission) referred to their hearty appreciation of the work accomplished by Oswald.¹⁷²

Despite his physical handicap, Oswald was quite a versatile handyman. The mission owned a T-model Ford, and Oswald was kept busy keeping it in running order.

The difficulties of touring were made evident in a forcible manner when we were setting out for Rairangpur with Miss Taylor, to get Mrs Lahey to go with us on a week's tour, the object of the tour being to see as much of the State as possible, and to give the visitor an insight to what touring work is. A range of mountains covered with dense jungle has to be crossed on the journey to Rairangpur, and as we came around a sharp bend in the road we found a wild elephant confronting us. Miss Taylor was pulling up the car when she felt she was given the command, "Go on, he will maul you!" There was just room to pass, and as we came opposite him the elephant put his tusk into the side of the car and tipped it over the bank. The car turned upside down and we underneath it, with broken glass and the ruins of the hood about us. The elephant made off immediately, and after the debris was lifted of us by Mohi, who was in the back of the car, we got our practically unhurt, but realising that we were in an unpleasant position, with mile of jungle to walk through, and the danger of meeting other wild animals. Feeling very thankful for our preservation and for the absence of panic and fear, and the ability to walk and not be weary, we walked for 14 miles before being picked up by a car. Mr Lahey and Mr Wakeman brought the car to Rairangpur the next day, and Mr Lahey worked for days, repairing the hood, the steering gear and doors. During Christmas week while at Baripada, all his available time has been sent in overhauling, further repairs, and making new frames for a second-hand windscreen. Mr Wellwood, who is State Engineer and Superintendent of Public Works, says that if it had not been for the care and skill that Mr Lahey has exercised in regard to the car, it would have been on the scrap-heap long ago. In addition to this, the Mission has, from time to time, been saved heavy expenses for overhauling and repairs by Mr Lahey. The fact that the car can still be used after eight years of work, which has often lain over the roughest of country roads with continual fording of rivers and creeks, tells of the care which has kept it in going order. Now the car is a continual source of worry and trouble, often having to be pushed a considerable distance before it will start, which means that Muss Allenby has to assist in the pushing. To



The Effects of leprosy (Photo: The Asian Age)



1920s T-model Ford

¹⁷² *The Brisbane Courier*, 5 January 1929, p. 20.

go on tour (sometimes 60 or 80 miles distant) with a worn out car means that the ladies are often placed in very difficult and dangerous situations when trouble arises with the car. To obtain help, Miss Allenby has had to travel all night in a bullock cart through a lonely jungle, infested with tigers, leopards and elephants. In event of attack she would have been absolutely defenceless, as the Indian attendants have not thought but of nimbly removing themselves to a place of safety. Courage, endurance, an utter disregard of personal comfort, are essential to touring in Mayurbanj.¹⁷³

The year after the events just described, the Mission purchased a new A-model Ford, but this consisted only a chassis and motor. Oswald made the timber body from locally available resources, which looked like an upturned boat. He also built a caravan to provide some comfort when touring. As a result of Oswald's workmanship, the A-model Ford continued active service until 1968.

Oswald was given the responsibility for the design and construction of the mission house in Rairangpur. The construction was completed in time for Oswald and Ada to move in following their wedding. Unfortunately, Miss Allenby passed away in 1931 and Oswald and Ada returned to Baripada where Oswald was appointed Field Secretary.

Oswald and Ada were two of the speakers at the Third Annual Missionary Conference, held in the Baptist Church, Sandgate on 28 September 1935. It is interesting to note that the newspaper advertisement included details of the departure times for trains from Brisbane before the event and from Sandgate after the meeting, along with the return fare of 1/4s. The news articles also indicated that hot water would be provided for the basket tea during interval.¹⁷⁴

While Oswald and Ada were in India, both of Oswald's parents had died. During their stay in Queensland they had a reunion in Canungra with their near relatives able to be in Brisbane at the time.¹⁷⁵ They had a subsequent furlough in Sydney in 1959.

Throughout their time in India, Ada was a consistent subscriber to *The Australian Baptist*, but that journal contains no details of their service, because they were not serving with a Baptist missionary society.

In 1965 and 1966 Oswald and Ada sent reports to the Tabernacle of their work in India. They sent greetings on the 110th anniversary of the church. They thanked



The Mission House in Rairangpur

¹⁷³ J Western, *A Wild Elephant*, Missionary Bible College Quarterly, April 1931.

¹⁷⁴ *The Courier-Mail*, 21 September 1935, p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ *The Beaudesert Times*, 30 July 1948, p. 1.

God for every remembrance of the church and for its fellowship in the Gospel. Although the location of their work had changed, they continued active service on the field back in Australia, being on furlough and about to begin deputation work. Their eyes were focused on the Lord's leading regarding their future.¹⁷⁶

Although they had returned from Mayurbhanj, India, their hearts were still there, and they believed that they could still play an important part, even though they remained in Australia. They had been praying for some time concerning a home, and that the Lord would show them what He would have them do in His vineyard.

After 43 years in India, Oswald and Ada retired in Ipswich, at the Baptist retirement home, Colthup Home, God had remarkably provided for them and they were delighted with the way He had answered their prayer. Unfortunately, this cut them off to a large extent from the fellowship they had been enjoying at the Tabernacle; but they intended, God willing, to attend Sunday morning worship and fellowship with the church at least once a month.¹⁷⁷

Oswald kept himself busy by making toys using scraps of timber and selling these at Christmas to raise funds for missions.

They were still in membership at the Tabernacle, receiving regular videos of services at the Tabernacle, when Ada died in 1973, and Oswald in 1987.

In his tribute to Oswald and Ada, Pastor Ralph J Cameron, titled *He spoke of Trees* wrote: "the Lord had chosen an unlikely person to go to an unlikely place to do unlikely work among unlikely people with unlikely prospect so that the Lord, not the man, would get the glory."¹⁷⁸ Probably as a result of his childhood experiences, Oswald had a life-long interest in trees. At Rairangpur, he planted an extensive garden of trees on the six acres of land given to the mission by the Maharajah. In retirement he spent lots of time walking among the trees from India in Queen's Park, Ipswich.



Colthup Home, Ipswich (Photo: Carinity)

¹⁷⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1964–65*, p. 11.

¹⁷⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1965–66*, p. 12.

¹⁷⁸ RJ Cameron, op. cit.

Rev Albert Chisholm

Albert Joseph Wilson Chisholm was born in Rockhampton in 1890, the son of Alfred and Sarah Chisholm. By the time he was two years old, the family had moved to Cairns where his father was journalist and editor of the *Cairns Argus*. The children attended the Cairns State School but moved to Brisbane to live with Albert's grandparents by the time Albert was eight years old.

In 1914, Albert was employed as a messenger boy at Mr Davies's chemist shop in Queen Street. By 1917, he had entered Flavelle's jewellery business, and sometime later became District Manager.

Through his friend, Ted (later Rev AE) Smith, Albert became connected with the Tabernacle and it was largely through the faithfulness of his Sunday School teacher, Kenneth Lethem, that he became a Christian, was baptised and became a member of the Church in 1916. He was involved in the Sunday School and the Senior CES.

Albert joined the 9th Battalion AIF, in September 1917, aged 17 years and four months. Further details of Albert's enlistment and service in the AIF is recorded in *For God, King and Country*. In March 1919 Albert embarked on the HMT *Czaritza* for his return to Australia and was transferred to HMS *Dunluce Castle* at Alexandria then onto the SS *City of Roma* from Sydney, arriving in Brisbane in May 1919. Still convalescing from his wounds, he returned home to his mother to be nursed back to full health¹⁷⁹

Messrs Flavelle, Roberts and Sankey held his position open for him until his return from service and he resumed work there until 1922. On his departure, the staff assembled to honour him and made a presentation to him, as well as giving him a Red Cross outfit, thinking that would be of value to him and to the people amongst whom he was called. The firm also presented him with a tourist writing case.¹⁸⁰



Albert Chisholm

¹⁷⁹ D Driver and H Colegrove, 2018. *For God, King and Country*, City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Brisbane, pp 60–61.

¹⁸⁰ *The Telegraph*, 8 March 1922, p. 2.

Albert was accepted to serve in the AIM and trained in Sydney for twelve-months during 1921–22.¹⁸¹ A number of his friends assembled at the Tabernacle on 7 March 1922 to bid him farewell. He had volunteered for work among the missions and was leaving the Queensland auxiliary of the AIM which he founded and for which he had carried out secretarial duties for a number of years. The Rev WG Pope, on behalf of the members of the auxiliary, presented him with a writing case and a “promise box.” Mr Pope and others paid tribute to his work on behalf of the mission and wished him success in his new sphere of influence.

In October 1922, while journeying north to establish work amongst the aboriginals in the Herberton district, and the church prayed God's blessing on the work, he conducted an evening service in Maryborough. His practical message, showing the benefits of his work, was much appreciated. He also addressed a midweek meeting. He was on his journey north.¹⁸²

While travelling north, Albert also spent a few weeks in Rockhampton, where he addressed several meetings. At a meeting at the Baptist Tabernacle, an auxiliary of the AIM was formed. It is not known how long Albert served with the AIM.

From 1923, Albert served as a Home Missionary in Maleny, Murgon, and Mt Morgan. It was while serving in Murgon that he met his future wife, Beryl Baty. While serving in Mt Morgan, he often also preached at the Rockhampton Baptist Tabernacle.

Under his care, by May 1923 the debt on the church property at Maleny was wiped off. Credit was given to Albert, the Ladies' Guild, and a donation of £50 from one of the members. Albert had already organised a young people's meeting¹⁸³, June a CE Society had been started.¹⁸⁴

Ernest Hillman reported at the Home Mission Demonstration of the BAQ in 1923:

But there is no rest for us tonight, for Pastor Chisholm takes possession of us and transports us to Maleny, "the most delightful town in Queensland," he says, "where the rain comes down in yards, not in inches." It is situated on the top of Blackall Range, and numbers an adult population of about 633. Fortunately, it is not raining, and we can look about us. It is known as a one-man town we are told, and the one store, the one butcher, the one baker's places are pointed out, and the one hotel. Finally, we are shown—and this interests us greatly—the one church, our Baptist church. Our missionary takes us to four stations, Witta, Curramore, Buriobin (Boorobin), and Coochin Creek. In all these places the Gospel is faithfully delivered, and the people gladly receive it.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 March 1921, p. 8.

¹⁸² *The Australian Baptist*, 14 November 1922, p. 11.

¹⁸³ *The Australian Baptist*, 8 May 1923, p. 10.

¹⁸⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 19 June 1923, p. 10.

¹⁸⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 October 1923, p. 7.

In November 1923, the baptistery at the church in Maleny was re-opened, and two candidates were immersed. Albert took for his text: "These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth". He emphasised the command of the Lord Jesus, and His words, "If ye love me keep my commandments," pointing out that the Master expects every Christian to be out and out for Him and expects obedience. "The Scriptures", he said, "Speak of only one form of baptism, and that is the baptism practised by the Baptist Church", referring to baptism by immersion. Unfortunately, the baptistery did not hold water as it ought, and there were plans to replace it.¹⁸⁶

The Maleny church reported another baptismal service in January 1924. The subject for the evening was *Hindrances to Believers' Baptism*. Albert based his remarks on *What doth hinder me to be baptized?* At this service, the new baptistery was opened, the first candidate being an old resident of the town who had recently been brought to the Lord by Evangelist JC Sloan; two young women followed. The church was looking forward to more baptismal services during the year.¹⁸⁷

The QHM transferred Albert to Murgon in early 1924. In August, the church reported the commencement of a weekly meeting for the benefit of the young people, who requested this initiative as they had had nothing apart from Sunday services to interest them spiritually. In July, quite a number assembled in the church, for the inaugural young people's meeting. They prayed that it would be the means of bringing many to the cross of the Lord Jesus and trusted that a choir would have soon be formed. The pastor was encouraged by the appearance of fresh faces in the congregation. .¹⁸⁸

The Murgon church rejoiced in reporting two exceptionally successful services. In November, the church was filled to overflowing when five candidates were immersed in the Triune Name. The following Sunday morning, the church was again full to witness the baptism of another believer. Of the six candidates, four were current attendees at the church. It was noted that three of them travelled thirty miles over rough country roads to pass through the baptismal waters. Two other candidates had been recommended to the Maleny Church for baptism.¹⁸⁹ Being decidedly evangelistic, Albert had the joy of several decisions for Christ.¹⁹⁰ Albert attended the Murgon church's silver jubilee services.

¹⁸⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 November 1923, p. 9.

¹⁸⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 February 1924, p. 9.

¹⁸⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 5 August 1924, p. 10.

¹⁸⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 25 November 1924, p. 12.

¹⁹⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 March 1925, p. 3.

A meeting was convened in May 1925, to say farewell to Albert. In appreciation of his good work, Albert was presented with a folding *Ensign* camera from the church, and gifts from the choir and young people's meeting.¹⁹¹

Albert then re-entered business life for several years and married Beryl Baty who worked in Murgon as a music teacher prior to their wedding. The Rev WK Holman, with whom he grew up at the Tabernacle, conducted the wedding in the Central Methodist Church, Red Hill, Gympie, on 5 April 1925.¹⁹²

Unusually for that era, Beryl continued as a music teacher after their wedding.¹⁹³ Albert obtained work running a mixed business. Over the next few years, they had two children, Aloise in 1927 and John in 1929.

By 1934 Albert followed the leading of God and began studying at the BTCQ.



Albert and Beryl's wedding

Albert and Beryl were members of the Newmarket Church prior to his taking up the pastorate at Lanefield. The Newmarket Church had commenced following deliberate church planting by the Tabernacle in 1918. Albert and Beryl and their children were farewelled at a social evening at Newmarket in April 1934. In turn, the Lanefield Church were glad to report increased interest in their work. Attendances were increasing amongst an optimistic spirit. In November 1934 it was Albert's pleasure to see three young people follow their divine Lord through the waters of baptism. The pastor conducted the service and presented the claims of the Master according to the Scriptures. The church was looking forward to more of those services and believed that the Lord was leading them.¹⁹⁴

The 1934 Sunday School anniversary was an outstanding success. In the morning, the church was crowded and in the evening despite a vivid electrical display in the heavens, the church was comfortably filled. The Gospel message was presented in song and recitation by the children, who were trained by Beryl. The singing was accompanied by the church orchestra. At the close of a service in December, the pastor immersed three

¹⁹¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 July 1925, p. 3.

¹⁹² *The Morning Bulletin*, Thursday 15 April 1926, p. 6.

¹⁹³ *The Evening News*, Thursday 20 May 1926, p. 4.

¹⁹⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 November 1934, p. 10.

teenage candidates. One of the young men was at the previous baptismal service and had been so impressed that he expressed the desire to be obedient and join the church.¹⁹⁵

At the 1935 annual business meeting, the report recounted that during the year, under Albert's ministry, the young people had shown a definite interest in the work, many coming out on the side of Jesus through the waters of baptism, and into church membership which showed a net increase of eight for the year. The treasurer presented a statement which revealed an increase of nearly 50% in the income of the general fund, and nearly 100% increase when the various church organisations added. The church unanimously decided to increase the pastor's stipend and voted him an honorarium.¹⁹⁶

The church and its organisations' 1936 review of the activities of the year included the Ladies' Guild mention of the pleasure experienced in Beryl's leadership, and the interest the ladies had in the work of the Kingdom. At the annual meeting, satisfaction was expressed at the progress in the past two years, and the pastor, whose term of call had expired, was invited to continue indefinitely, at an increased stipend.¹⁹⁷

In December 1936, the baptistery was prepared to receive three candidates for witness, a mother and daughter, and a recent convert. At the January communion service these three, together with their husband and father, and two others, were received into fellowship.¹⁹⁸

The Lanefield Church was full on 26 December 1936, when members and friends gathered to encourage the Sunday School teaching staff and scholars in their annual Christmas tree and prize distribution, and to say farewell to Albert and Beryl who had been transferred to the Maroochy District. Mr CA Horne, the church secretary spoke in high esteem of Albert and Beryl and asked Albert to accept a wallet of notes from the church. Rev NC Watt of the Rosewood Congregational Church spoke with feeling on behalf of his church and also of the Lockyer-Rosewood Ministers' Fraternal, and as president of the latter, presented Albert with two books. Rev Holmans, who was also present, spoke of his long association with



Lanefield Baptist Church
(Photo: State Library of
Queensland)

¹⁹⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 8 January 1935, p. 9.

¹⁹⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 April 1935, pp. 11–12.

¹⁹⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 24 March 1936, p. 12.

¹⁹⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 January 1937, p. 10.

Albert and Beryl, and wished them and the church at Lanefield, God's rich blessing.

At the Annual Assembly of the BUQ in October 1939, Albert gave an inspiring account of the work in Nambour and Yandina, and the recently opened new field in the Maroochy district.¹⁹⁹ Maroochy had been visited by the spies of the Nambour Church, who were ready to go in and possess the land. Supported by the Union and QHM Committee, plans were being considered, and a new church building shortly would be erected. Their representative pastor was Albert, who had, under his capable and enthusiastic leadership, after a few months, won the esteem of his people.²⁰⁰

The people of the Maroochy district will long remember New Year's Day 1940, for it marked a forward step and evidenced definite progress when they officially opened their new church building. They could not have purposely arranged a better day than the one given to them—beautiful sunshine, a refreshing sea breeze, a crowded church, and a time of spiritual uplift. Mr JW Shearer, who was one of those responsible for the commencement of the district work thirty years before, opened with prayer. The QHM Superintendent, Rev Ralph Sayce, brought greetings and words of encouragement. Beryl sang *Bless this House*. The address was delivered by the Rev Albert Butler.²⁰¹

An enjoyable time was spent by the Nambour YPSCE at the monthly consecration meeting, when seven Endeavourers were received into active membership. The consecration message was delivered by the pastor, his subject being *Is Baptism Essential?* and each Endeavourer felt the urge to serve the Master more faithfully.²⁰²

There were two outstations to the Nambour church, with good work was being accomplished there. From Nambour the work stretched to Maroochydoore. The Sunday School had 50 scholars.²⁰³

Albert successfully completed his college course in 1942 and was ordained in 1943 at the Assembly. He then accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Maryborough Church. He had done magnificent work at Nambour, and with Beryl was greatly esteemed throughout the district.²⁰⁴ They were farewelled before they left for Maryborough. In August 1943, Albert and Beryl were inducted into the Maryborough pastorate by the church secretary and received into the membership of the church at the Communion service.

¹⁹⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 October 1939, p. 2.

²⁰⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 November 1939, p. 4.

²⁰¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 January 1940, p. 3.

²⁰² *The Australian Baptist*, 30 April 1940, p. 8.

²⁰³ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 January 1940, p. 3.

²⁰⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 8 June 1943, p. 2.

Albert had the pleasure of baptising his daughter, Aloise, and 10 other candidates when they confessed their faith in December 1944. Aloise and nine other people were welcomed into membership the following February. That was the largest number to have been baptized and received into membership for many years in the history of the church.²⁰⁵ Aloise and her brother John were members of the Tabernacle YPSCE in 1950.

Maryborough had every reason to feel proud of its Baptist history and witness. The church had made a magnificent contribution to the religious life of the community. Soon after Albert had settled into his new position, a move was made to buy a new site and to build a brick church, at the cost of £4500. Half of the funds required had already been raised, and encouraging progress was being made, there being every indication that before long the ideal would become a reality.

The church had two thriving outstations—Tinana and Granville—together with the oversight of the church at Torquay. People there could not speak too highly of the life, work and ministry of Albert and Beryl. They were both indefatigable workers and greatly esteemed and beloved throughout the town and district. Albert was president of the Maryborough Ministers' Fraternal in 1945 and presided over the large Anzac Day service.²⁰⁶

The 62nd church anniversary at Maryborough, in October 1945, was gratifying. Mention was made of the work of the pastor and his wife, whose leadership was appreciated by all. The statistics showed an increase in membership despite removals and the hand of death. The bright feature of the report was the interest of the younger generation in the work. They had a loyal band of young people. The outstanding function of the year was the September Musical Festival in aid of the building fund, convened and organised Beryl. This resulted in an increased interest in the musical life of the city and district and brought the church to the attention of the local community.²⁰⁷

Beryl, and the Mount Morgan pastor, Pastor Johnson, were both in a tragic railway smash at Tamaree in late 1947, when several lives were lost. Fortunately, neither suffered physical injury, but suffered severely from shock.²⁰⁸

After six years, Albert indicated to the church that he would be leaving to take up work with the British and Foreign Bible Society. He was to become the Deputation Secretary centring his work in Brisbane. The local church were sorry to lose him from the active pastoral work, though understood that he would be welcomed to Brisbane, where he and

²⁰⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 February 1945, p. 7.

²⁰⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 May 1945, p. 2.

²⁰⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 November 1945, p. 13.

²⁰⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 January 1948, p. 3.

Beryl would be seen in connection with Denominational activities, as the duties of his new appointment gave him opportunity.²⁰⁹

In 1948, Albert was a visitor at the Tabernacle for the Easter services, to hear Dr Charles Tinsley from Sydney preach. He had the privilege of witnessing the baptism of his son John by the minister of the Tabernacle, Rev Fred Smith.²¹⁰ Albert renewed his membership at the Tabernacle in December 1948 and remained in membership until it was transferred to the Jireh Church in May 1955. Beryl and Aloise also became members at the Tabernacle in 1948. John joined soon after in 1950. While at the Tabernacle, Albert was a vice-president of the YPSCE.

Albert returned to Nambour in November 1952 for the opening of the new church building. In July 1953 he was the guest speaker, on behalf of the QHM Committee, at the Maleny Church's 17th anniversary.

Albert served on the BUQ Advisory and Executive Committees. At the Annual Assembly in 1959, he was elected secretary of the Federal HMC and was involved in planning for the Resthaven Garden Settlement. He was elected President of the BUQ in 1963. His presidential address was titled *The Art and Act of Christian Living*. At that time, Beryl was the convener of the Queensland Baptist Union Women's Auxiliary.

At the call of the Jireh Church in Fortitude Valley, Albert returned to pastoral ministry. This was one of the oldest churches in Queensland but had become surrounded by business premises and the consequences that followed. However, both the pastor and people were very cheerful about the prospects of the work and planned to rebuild in Jireh, what the years had destroyed.²¹¹ George and Isabella Minnis transferred their membership from the Tabernacle to the Jireh church within a few months of Albert taking up the charge. They had been living in the Fortitude Valley area since 1903, so this move may have been prompted by the geographic location of the church rather than theological or pastoral issues even though they would have known Albert personally.

The Jireh Particular Baptist church had been established in 1861 as a breakaway from the Wharf Street Baptist Church (the forerunner of the Tabernacle). The church was the spiritual home of Martha Plested, Queensland's first Baptist missionary, who was supported financially during her service in India, by the Tabernacle, having been commissioned there in 1885.

Following negotiations, Albert also became the minister of the Newmarket (Grange) Church linking one of the denomination's oldest churches and a suburban church.

²⁰⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 3 May 1949, p. 4.

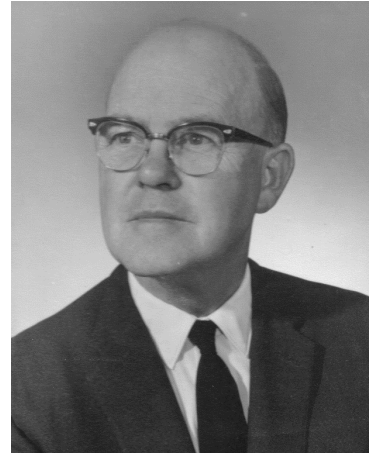
²¹⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 39 May 1950, p. 6.

²¹¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 June 1955, p. 5.

One had historical traditions and an honoured history, the other had good prospects of fruitful service in the present and future. The arrangement seemed to be a very happy one.²¹²

Albert took on the tasks of secretary of the Clifford House Committee from his friend Rev Holmans, and secretary of the Federal Home Mission State Committee. Beryl was the leader of the Clifford House Auxiliary in 1956.

In September 1957, Clifford House, was opened by the committee chairman, Rev Albert Hawley, to whose untiring efforts on its behalf, much was owed, along with Albert, the energetic committee secretary.²¹³ Two of the initial residents at Clifford House were Ruby Scott and Pastor James Sullivan who also came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1957.



Rev AJW Chisholm. 1964

Albert advised of his resignation from the pastorate of the Newmarket Church from the end of June 1959 to become the part-time Superintendent of Clifford House. The Home Committee had found the need for adequate secretarial work a very pressing one. He continued as the pastor of the Jireh Church.²¹⁴ Albert's role at Clifford House became a full-time position in 1964. Newmarket Church farewelled them on the night of the church anniversary in July 1959. The evening anniversary service marked the close of Albert's ministry.²¹⁵



Albert and Beryl in retirement

John married Margaret Sugars at the Tabernacle in 1952 and Aloise married Bruce Drury at the Tabernacle in 1955 where Rev Fred Smith officiated.

Albert and Beryl renewed their membership at the Tabernacle in November 1974 on transfer from Salisbury. Albert died in September 1978 and Beryl died in March 1986.

²¹² *The Australian Baptist*, 5 September 1956, p. 5.

²¹³ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 October 1957, p. 4.

²¹⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 3 June 1959, p. 4.

²¹⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 15 July 1959, p. 10.

Rev Alfred Brooks

Alfred Hiron Brooks, who was born in Brisbane in 1899, the fourth child of Alfred Brooks Snr and May Hiron, was commonly known as Alf. May was a member at the Tabernacle from 1906 until her death in 1938 and Alf Snr was in membership from 1921 until his death in 1946. Three of Alf's five siblings, Edgar, George, and Ernest also joined the church.

Alf was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 1st Military District Cadets in May 1917. In 1921, he was living with his parents in Toowong, while working as an accountant and was received into membership at the Tabernacle in June following his baptism by Rev WG Pope in August 1920. He had previously attended the Toowong Sunday School. Alf sang tenor in the Tabernacle choir.

Alf was a student at the BCV in Melbourne in 1923-26. While undertaking his studies, he served with the Victorian Home Mission at Eaglehawk and White Hills, until he was ordained in 1927 in Wangaratta.²¹⁶ He consequently transferred his church membership.

Alf married Gladys Taylor in 1927, in Toowong.

In 1929, Alf was instrumental in establishing a new church in Albury (New South Wales). Later, when at Wangaratta Baptist Church in late 1929, Alf accepted a call to the Windsor Road Baptist Church, Brisbane, his predecessor, Rev Thomas Leitch, having ministered to that congregation for over 50 years.

Shortly after their arrival in Brisbane, Gladys gave birth to twins, Esther and David, in 1930.

The half-yearly Assembly of the BUQ for 1934 was held at the Windsor Road Church. It was claimed that perhaps no Baptist church in Queensland had made more progress of late than Windsor Road, under the ministry of the Rev Brooks. Young, ardent, evangelistic, he was throwing all the weight of his youth into that important centre. They had a fine property, splendidly situated, commanding a great, needy residential suburb within three miles of the GPO. Already he had put into



Alf Brooks
(Photo: City Tabernacle Archives)

²¹⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 1 March 1927, p. 7.

operation the Discipleship Campaign and reported nine splendid conversions by the efforts of his people.

While pastoring at Windsor Road, Alf initiated the establishment of the new church at Ashgrove. The first building was opened in 1941 when Alf was vice-president of the BUQ; he conducted the first morning service in the newly opened building.

In 1934, Alf was the padre at the Boys' Easter Camp at Currumbin.

He was padre again at the boys' summer camp in January 1939 where, as a result of his manly Christianity, he won the esteem of all the boys.

In April 1935, Alf succeeded the Rev Stanley T Earl at the Maryborough Church and whilst there, he was instrumental in the establishment of a new church in Bundaberg in 1939.

The Wangaratta and District centenary was celebrated in October 1938. The Wangaratta Baptist Church invited Alf back for the celebrations and services on Sunday 16 October. The church was crowded with past and present members. The services were a great inspiration, and Mr Brooks' addresses were meaningful messages from the Lord to them all. At the close of the evening service, a wonderful Communion service was held. The Pastor insisted on Mr Brooks leading the service and sat with the deacons who were not assisting at the service.

During the 1939 Annual Assembly of the BUQ, Alf opened the conference with an address titled: *The Local Church as a Self-Propagating Agency*. Rev George Haughan commented that no-one was more fitted and entitled to speak on this subject than Mr Brooks, in that his church at Maryborough had given such a splendid lead in that regard. Later in the day, Pastor AJW Chisholm gave an inspiring account of the work in the district of



Windsor Rd Baptist Church, 1927
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)



Mothers' Day, 1937
Maryborough Baptist Church
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)

Alf Brooks

Nambour and Yandina and how his work had opened up a new field in the Maroochy district. Alf was instrumental in the establishment of a new church in Bundaberg, 1939. The account of the re-opening of that church was illustrative of Alf's passion for home mission.

Alf was described by Rev Charles Tinsley, Vice-President of the Baptist World Alliance, as one of the most aggressive and progressive of the younger ministers, carrying on the tradition of ministries of the past in Maryborough.

When he became President of the BUQ in September 1941, he was one of the youngest men to have occupied this position and one of only a few Queenslanders to do so.

In mid-1945, the BUQ reported that it had no reason to regret the support which it had given to Bundaberg. Like St Paul of old in his call from Macedonia, Rev Brooks saw the vision and heard the call of Bundaberg. At very great inconvenience from distance and the demands of his own church, he went and spied out the land and unfurled the Baptist flag. There was now an established church with plans to undertake a building program. During World War Two, Alf served as full-time Army Chaplain from November 1942, at the 2/4th Australian General Hospital, Redbank. He had been appointed as an Australian Military Forces chaplain in December 1939, but this may have been a part-time position.²¹⁷ He was assisted during this period at Maryborough by Pastor R Hodgson. While Rev Albert Butler was on annual leave in early 1941 and again in 1943, Alf was the preacher at the Tabernacle.

Alf and Gladys' son David won a junior scholarship to Carey Baptist Grammar School in Melbourne in 1942 and attended the school as a boarder.

Norm Barker recalls a story about one of the leaders at a camp at Currumbin, Rev Brooks, who was walking by Currumbin Creek with his lovely daughter, Ruth. They came upon a fisherman, and the minister asked him: "Have you caught any fish?" In turn the man asked Alf: "Are you a fisherman?" "Oh, yes," replied Mr Brooks, "but a different kind of fisherman; I am a fisher of men". Looking admiringly at the minister's



Chaplain AH Brooks
(State Library of Queensland)

²¹⁷ *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette*, 11 January 1940, p. 60.

daughter, the man remarked, “Not bad bait you’re using, mate!” Ruth later married Ron Elverson.²¹⁸

As President of the Union, Alf returned to Toowong, for the welcome to their new minister, Rev Walter W Solomon. In this capacity, he was also the speaker at the annual business meeting of the Tabernacle and as QHM Superintendent, he was the speaker at the 70th anniversary banquet of the Toowong Church in 1951.

After the war, Alf accepted a call to the Paisley St, Footscray Church, Victoria. Before leaving Queensland, he was the preacher again at the Tabernacle in late February 1946. On his departure, the Queensland reporter to *The Australian Baptist* wrote:

Our State is again to experience a great loss in the departure of Rev Brooks to Victoria. He is a deeply devoted minister and greatly esteemed by his brethren. We can understand his drawing to the South by the fact of having received his training at the BCV and his eldest son being a graduate of Carey College. He has done excellent service in this State.²¹⁹

He was inducted at Footscray in April. In November, Alf returned to Wangaratta to be the speaker at the Sunday School anniversary services.

In both Queensland and Victoria, Alf was a popular Sunday School anniversary speaker. Reports of his visits to various churches invariably commented that he was able to maintain the attention of his congregation, both young and old, throughout his address.

While in Victoria, Alf and Gladys retained their seaside home *Inglenook*, in Tugun, that they used for family holidays. Their time in Victoria was only brief, as they returned to Queensland in 1948, where Alf had been appointed QHM Superintendent-elect. His induction by the President of the Union, Rev WA McKay, took place in the Tabernacle in November. The Superintendent's response to the President was characteristic of the man and was a confession of his dependence on the help of the Master, and a foretaste of the challenges he would issue to churches during the term of his service. His message would focus on the supreme object, the extension of the Kingdom of the Master, and the development of Baptist work in this growing State.

Shortly after returning to Queensland, Alf was on the summit of Mt Coon-tha, more familiarly known as "One Tree Hill" for the annual breakup party of the Fraternal and Ministers' Wives. Although the function was an informal affair, Alf was observed taking a very keen interest in the view, not from the point of view of the mere onlooker, but from the very interested viewpoint of one whose business it was to know where the suburban development was taking place, that he might plan an offensive in the name of the Lord for the expanding of Baptist work. Alf had already taken a survey trip through one of the important sections of the State, contacting people, investigating possibilities

²¹⁸ N Barker, Personal communication, 2021.

²¹⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 March 1946, p. 2.

of support, conducting cottage meetings and prospecting with a view to increasing QHM activities in the area. Further trips of the same kind that he instigated, gave him an intimate knowledge of the needs of the State and prepared the way for a steady growth in QHM enterprises.²²⁰

His visit to Warwick in January 1949 is typical. Having preached on Sunday evening, during the following week he visited the out stations at Allora, Cunningham, Tannymorel, Pozieres, and Stanthorpe.

As QHM Superintendent, in his first official contribution to the BUQ, he sounded a clarion call to Baptists to go in and possess the land. Alf was tackling his huge job in a most worthy and systematic way. He pictured this great State being divided into six zones for Baptists' work. He pictured them entering upon sizeable towns throughout the State and pointed to the start already being made. The Warwick minister was reaching out to Stanthorpe and other nearby towns. A new QHM station was being established at Gayndah. The Toowoomba Church had reached out to Dalby and commenced monthly services there. A public hall had been hired in Mackay and a monthly service would be commenced there in July, in cooperation with the churches of Rockhampton. Other possible bases were mentioned and there was a conviction that QHM work was on the march.

Alf wrote several lengthy articles in *The Australian Baptist* about the importance of home mission work, declaring that The Home Mission is the instrument Baptists use for the purpose of penetrating into every part of the Commonwealth.²²¹

On another occasion, he wrote saying if there is a cry that should ring out throughout the denomination it is "Every church a mother church, and every member a missionary." He emphasized that November is the month when Baptists are asked to focus attention on our "Jerusalem and Samaria" reminding us that we are to pray earnestly, give gladly, and work joyously to enable the Home Mission to send men to teach others the saving gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.²²²

As QHM Superintendent, Alf regularly sent home mission news to the Tabernacle YPSCE.

When Alf and Gladys returned again to Victoria, Rev John Farquhar, Chairman of the QHM Committee, spoke of the goodness of God in giving to Queensland for nine years one who worked with such zeal and brought to his task the inspiration of a great vision. Tribute was also paid to Gladys, who had so loyally supported her husband.

²²⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 7 December 1948, p. 4.

²²¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 28 March 1950, p. 5.

²²² *The Australian Baptist*, 14 November 1950, pp. 1–3.

The Brooks family left Queensland in October 1957 to minister at the church in Geelong. The BUQ expressed its appreciation of the work he had done.²²³

The front page of *The Australian Baptist* in February 1951 reported that:

Queensland, with its large number of potentially great seaports and its almost limitless number of potential aerodromes, is bound to become an increasingly important maritime and air State with the passing of the years.

Further, its vast area of territory, with rich resources awaiting development, and within a day's journey of teeming millions of people in other lands, gives to it a position of strategic importance that places a heavy burden upon the QHM in its plans for the spiritual development of the State.

We must win the people of the seaboard for Christ, and we cannot be unmindful of the people of the inland cities and towns. To accomplish what we ought to do is quite beyond our resources, but there is no reason why we should not at least tackle the job and then pass on to other hands the task of its fulfilment.

We have set ourselves the task of opening up one hundred new causes to celebrate the Centenary of our witness in this State, which falls in 1955. If we were to spend £1,000 in erecting a modest little spiritual home in each place, the cost would be £100,000—an amount totally beyond our power to raise.

The need today is for our causes to be so placed that there will be no dead area, and this ideal can be hastened by the right appraisal of the worth of every true Baptist—a single Baptist may become the vital spearhead of fresh advance and become the centre around which can be built up "Baptist Fellowship" with results such as at Dalby and Southport.

There were never more favourable days for the advance of the Christian Church than the days in which we live. Because we have so little silver, and because we have less gold, and because we are so few in number, and because God is with us—LET US ADVANCE!²²⁴

Alf was elected to a second term as Vice-President and President-elect of the BUQ in October 1952. In announcing his appointment, the Queensland editor to *The Australian Baptist* wrote:

He is well-known throughout the Commonwealth and is especially highly regarded for his work's sake wherever his name is mentioned in Baptist circles. In his office of QHM Superintendent, he has set the target of 100 new centres of Baptist influence in this State before 1955. If the present rate of increase is maintained by both the QHM



Rev AH Brooks, 1953

²²³ *The Australian Baptist*, 13 November 1957, p. 11.

²²⁴ AH Brooks, Baptist Advance in Queensland, in *The Australian Baptist*, 21 February 1951, p. 1.

and Independent churches, he will need to set a much higher target long before the target date is reached.²²⁵

His presidential message entitled *The Lordship of Christ*, was printed in *The Australian Baptist* of 30 September 1953. His main points were: The Lordship of Christ as it affects us individually; How did the reception of Christ as Lord affect the disciples? and The Lordship of Christ in the Church; The Lordship of Christ in the world.²²⁶



Rev Brooks and family, Geelong, 1957
(Photo: BUV Archives)

In February 1953, Alf was involved in the QHM Setting-Apart Rally at the Tabernacle, when seven men were set apart for their work in Queensland.²²⁷

It is not known how many of church openings he officiated at as President, nor specifically the results of his efforts as QHM Superintendent. The strenuous program of travel and church visits had a toll on his health and towards the end of his term, this necessitated him taking things a bit slower.²²⁸ It was reported at the QHM meeting that 100 new causes had been opened throughout the State over the previous few years.

He was inducted as the pastor at Aberdeen Street, Geelong on 3 November 1957. He later served at Lilydale. In March 1964, he baptised five young people, from the Warburton Church which he also serviced, in the Yarra River.



Rev Brooks baptising Sheryl
Hodder (Photo: BUV Archives)

In addition to being a helpmeet for Alf, Gladys on occasion provided both solo and duet musical items and was both president of the QBWU and a member of the HMC.

Alf and Gladys had two sons, David and John, who served as a pastoral assistant at the Tabernacle in 1995–97; and two

²²⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 8 October 1952, p. 4.

²²⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 30 September 1953, pp. 1, 13.

²²⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 18 February 1953, p. 20.

²²⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 September 1954, p. 8.

Sent Forth from the City Tabernacle

daughters Esther and Ruth who was minute secretary of the HMC in Queensland and President of the Queensland Baptist Women's Fellowship and came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1955 on transfer).

Alf died in 1965, at Lilydale having suffered a heart attack while driving from his home in Mt Dandenong to the evening service to preach, aged 66. Gladys died in 1968 at Box Hill, Victoria.

Miss Margery Bush

Margery, whose name was often misspelt as Marjorie, was born in Auckland in 1906, the daughter of Walter and Margaret Bush. Her parents migrated to New Zealand in 1906 and then to Brisbane in 1929. Margery was educated at the Diocesan High School for Girls (Auckland), Auckland University College, and the New Zealand Bible Training Institute (NZBTI). Her siblings, who were born in New Zealand were Walter (her twin), Douglas, Arthur, and Margaret.

Margery was converted in 1917, at a Sunday School anniversary service conducted at the Auckland Tabernacle by the evangelist Rev Randolph Gray and baptised by Rev Joseph Kemp, in May 1922. She was called to the mission field in 1927 and accepted by the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society (NZBMS) in 1929. Margery was ordained for missionary service by Rev Kemp at the Wellington Assembly, 1931, leaving immediately afterwards for India. She was Principal of the Chandpur School, 1936–38, and Acting Nursing Superintendent of the Chandpur Hospital, 1939–40. She continued to serve in Chandpur and Brahmanbaria until 1964

Walter and Margaret transferred their membership from Auckland to the Tabernacle in late 1929. Walter was the newly appointed Chief Engineer, Water Supply and Sewerage, for Brisbane City Council.²²⁹ He was on the diaconate at the Tabernacle from 1929 until 1949 and then made a life deacon. He was the church secretary from 1931 until 1947. Margery's younger brother, Arthur and Joy Care were married at the Tabernacle in 1944 by Rev Albert Butler.

Margery was neither in membership, nor an adherent of the Tabernacle before entering missionary service, having remained in Auckland when her parents migrated to Australia. Her address in 1928 was 411 Upper Queen St, Auckland.

After the completion of her training, Margery wrote of the key values that uphold the work of the NZBTI: sacrifice, sovereignty, scripture, sceptre, service, and sphere.



Margery Bush as a child in
New Zealand

²²⁹ GH Scholefield, *Who's Who in New Zealand and the Western Pacific*, 1925, GW Venables & Company, Masterton, 1924, p. 35.

Margery, who volunteered to take up mission work in India, in January 1930, visited her parents in Brisbane before returning to New Zealand, to study midwifery at St Helen's Hospital, Auckland, prior to taking up work with the NZBMS.

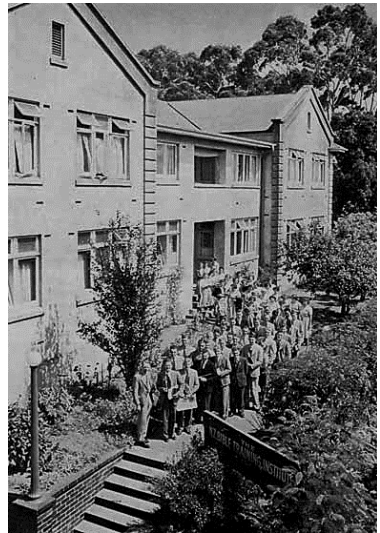
The NZBTI, where Margery studied, was not affiliated with any denomination. It was open to men and women and was residential. The two-year course of training used University style lecture and included applied training for women and Bible classes in nurses' homes and factories.

The Institute, originally established in 1922, was housed in a palatial structure that due to the influence of its principal and founder, Rev Kemp, opened free of debt in 1927. Each student had his or her individual room in the separate portions reserved for men and women. Meals were served in a common room at tables of eight, separately for men and women. There were also separate social rooms. The cost of training was nominal, with the lecturers giving their services free, leaving only accommodation expenses to be covered. Football and cricket were enjoyed by the men whilst women played tennis and basketball.

College training included open-air meetings held each Friday evening by the students in the streets of Auckland. These created great interest among the general public and were usually well attended.

During her visit to Brisbane Margery hoped to observe a class at one of the State schools. She was also invited, by leaders of the CES, to address meetings.²³⁰ While serving in India, Margery maintained regular correspondence with members of the JCE and gave a special address to the YPSCE in 1929–30.

Shortly before leaving for India, Margery was entertained at a farewell party given by 16 of her friends, on board the motorboat *Cynthia*, with afternoon tea served. On their return to town the party was entertained to tea by Mr and Mrs Bush at their home in Ascot.²³¹



New Zealand Bible Training Institute,
c. 1927 (Photo: P J. Lincham)

²³⁰ *The Telegraph*, 29 January 1930, p. 18.

²³¹ *The Brisbane Courier*, 30 July 1931, p. 17.

Mr and Mrs Bush entertained a large number of guests at their home in Ascot on 23 July 1931 in view of the approaching departure of their daughter for India. Rev Hurst paid a warm tribute to the helpful Influence exerted by Margery while she had been in Brisbane and expressed the gratification of all that she was undertaking the Important work of the mission field. In response Margery, though she had left New Zealand with some reluctance, shared that she had found in Queensland a great deal that had charmed her, and when in India, would value the link with this State.²³²

On 29 July 1931, a family gathering and social evening of a large company of members and adherents of the Tabernacle was held in the Lecture Hall of the Church to bid bon voyage and Godspeed to Margery, who was about to leave for New Zealand, on route to East Bengal, India. An address was given by Mr WR Smith, and representatives of the YPSCE, SGMU, and the Church, voiced their good wishes for her future and assured her of their interest in her career.²³³ The hall was decorated with palms, Iceland poppies, and primulas. Rev WE Hurst presided and emphasised the fundamental importance of missionary work. He congratulated Margery on undertaking one of the biggest of tasks, expressing pleasure that the Tabernacle had been privileged to have her in their midst for the last eighteen months, and conveyed the committee's good wishes to her. Miss W Smith on behalf of the SGMU presented a bouquet and book, and Miss Elsie Martin, for the CE, presented a bouquet and fountain pen to the guest of honour. Both spoke warmly of the ties of affection which existed between the young people of the Tabernacle and Margery. Mr Edward Barton voiced the church's regret at losing her, and the pride and pleasure felt that she was entering on mission service in India. Such service was all-important particularly at the time as India stood at the parting of the ways. He presented the church's gift, a leather suitcase. In reply Margery outlined the steps which had led to her decision for the mission field and said that she particularly appreciated the attitude of her parents in making this step possible. She shared that the many friendships she had formed at the Tabernacle would continue to be highly valued and an inspiration to her. Supper was provided by the ladies, the servers including SGMU members, attired in Indian costume.

It is not known why Margery's younger sister, Margaret, did not attend either of these functions, although she was in her mid-teens. She died in 1932 while Margery was in India.

Margery left by the Kyogle train on 6 August bound for Sydney en route to New Zealand. Those present on the platform to bid her farewell included her parents, Rev Hurst (President of the BUQ and chairman of the QFMC and Mrs Hurst, Digby Denham

²³² *The Brisbane Courier*, 31 July 1931, p. 16.

²³³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1930–1931*, p. 7.

(former premier of Queensland), Miss M Miller (assistant matron of the Lady Bowen Hospital) and nurses Hilton and Drew, and her brothers Douglas and Arthur.²³⁴

Word was received from India in early 1932 concerning the safe arrival of Miss Bush. Many Interesting experiences had been enjoyed on route, particularly at Colombo, Bombay, and Calcutta. Margery received a warm welcome at Brahmanbaria in Eastern Bengal, the NZBMS station to which she had been appointed.²³⁵ Later, word was received that since her arrival in India she was continuing her studies at the Language School at Darjeeling near the Himalayas.²³⁶ Margery was in Brahmanbaria for about a year before moving to Chandpur which was about 80 km north-east of Noakhali, where Australian Baptist missionaries had been serving since 1882. Her address in East Pakistan was Brahmen Derie, East Bengal.

Margery's service in Bengal was featured in the iconic *Australian Women's Weekly*, which reported that, after coming to Brisbane, she took special courses at the Ascot Primary School and the Lady Bowen Hospital. Since her arrival in India Miss Bush had passed her language examinations in Bengali. She had also made two expeditions, and photography and writing being her hobbies, both have been written up and illustrated. She was also very interested in the Girl Guide movement, and at Darjeeling took charge of a company of Blue Birds.²³⁷

After four years in India, Margery returned to Brisbane to spend her furlough with her parents, at Ascot. Shortly before her return, she accompanied several members of a Church of England mission on a trip to Kashmir.²³⁸

Margery arrived "home" in September 1935, having sailed to Melbourne on the SS *Mongolia* then travelled by train to Sydney, where she said that the numbers of local people actually converted to Christianity had not yet been spectacular or outstanding, but interest was rapidly increasing and the missions were doing a tremendous amount of good in many directions concurrent with their religious teaching.



Margery Bush
(Photo: *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 1935)

²³⁴ *The Brisbane Courier*, 7 August 1931, p. 21.

²³⁵ *The Telegraph*, 19 December 1931, p. 10.

²³⁶ *The Brisbane Courier*, 20 February 1932, p. 8.

²³⁷ Let's Talk of Interesting People, in *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 26 January 1935, p. 3.

²³⁸ Converting India to Christianity: No Spectacular Results So Far, in *The Telegraph*, 20 February 1935, p. 8.

Whilst Margery admitted that her life in Bengal was not as pleasant as in Australia, and the opposition of Hindus and Mohammedans was frequently menacing and discouraging, she could not tell any stories of grave peril or frightening incidents. In many respects, work and life there were as routine as life here, but so different and unusual that one could never call it humdrum.

Her work, which was mostly evangelistic, provided the inspiration which most other occupations lacked. She spent most of her time in fields away from towns, sometimes spending three or four days away from her base establishing touch with people who would otherwise be inaccessible. In the villages the missionaries assembled groups of women from adjoining homes to form circles for religious and other teaching. The groups were sometimes quite large. The essential feature of their teaching was simplicity. They told the story of Jesus Christ and what He did, with the object of arousing their interest and teaching them to follow His example. The number of conversions was almost nil, but the signs were most definitely encouraging. Interest was growing steadily and, most importantly, the bitter opposition of the Hindus and Mohammedans was gradually breaking down.

There were two New Zealand Baptist mission stations in Margery's territory—hers at Chandpur and the other 80 miles away, at Brahmandaria. The combined staff comprised two full-time men workers and one probationer, and nine full-time women workers and a probationer. At Chandpur, there was a hospital for women which was a tremendously valuable institution, but its work was made extraordinarily difficult because in most instances the natives did not seek aid until their illnesses had become very serious. Frequently they came for treatment when there was no hope of a cure.

Olwyn Pound who is now in her 90s at the time of writing, worked with Margery at Brahmanbaria. She reports that Margery managed the mission and used to run it as would a corporal major. The compound had a women's clinic which Margery and Olwyn ran. Every morning there would be long lines of women queuing, before the clinic opened, to be seen. This was at the time of the partition between India and Pakistan and Olwyn recalls that there were gruesome scenes of trains arriving with all occupants slaughtered in the Hindu / Muslim conflict. Brahmanbaria where they were based was quite close to the newly established border between India and East Pakistan as it was known then.²³⁹ It is noteworthy that Olwyn was a grand-daughter of Rev Kemp.

²³⁹ Personal communication, Vera Bush, 2020.

Margery and her colleagues lived in bush houses providing the average amenities of life. India, in fact, was not by any means the horrible place she had expected to find.²⁴⁰

On her return to Australia on furlough, Margery's father met her in Sydney and accompanied her to Brisbane, where she was welcomed at a meeting of the Tabernacle branch of the SGMU, at which she reported that the schools were doing splendid work in limited areas, but the majority of the people were in remote villages. She explained that there was still more seed to be sown among them, with the seed to follow Jesus, in her opinion, not being sown as much as it could be. She reminded the gathering of the text: "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

She explained that education, and particularly literacy, was necessary if the people were to read the Bible. Medical work was also needed amongst women, but she considered the preaching of the Gospel paramount. Margery explained that conditions in India presented certain difficulties due to the fact that the people in the section where she was stationed already possessed two religions—Islam and Hinduism but in most cases, the missionaries were courteously received.²⁴¹

After a fortnight in Brisbane, Margery went to Dunedin, New Zealand for the jubilee conference of the NZBMS. She returned to Brisbane in November and subsequently concluded her twelve months' furlough in New Zealand where she undertook further studies.²⁴²



Margery Bush and her mother Margaret
(Photo: Vera Bush)

Her furlough, after four years' arduous work in Bengal, would not be entirely a year's holiday. Margery intended to leave for New Zealand a fortnight after arriving in Brisbane, to speak in Baptist Churches there, encourage interest in the Missionary Society's work, and attend the New Zealand Baptist Assembly. Since it was the 50th anniversary of the formation of the NZBMS at Dunedin, the assembly was to be held there.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Converting India to Christianity—No Spectacular Results So Far, in *The Telegraph*, 20 September 1935, p. 8.

²⁴¹ Among the Villages, in *The Telegraph*, 21 February 1935, p. 3.

²⁴² *The Telegraph*, 13 September 1935, p. 11.

²⁴³ M Bush, *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 6 November 1937, p. 31.

During her service, Margery was consistently supported financially by the Senior Girls' Missionary Union (SGMU). In 1942, following ten-years' service in India, Margery became president for Queensland of the SGMU.²⁴⁴ She continued in this role for two years and under her leadership, interest in the branches' work increased. She was President again for a year in 1950.

Margery was the leader of the SGMU at the Tabernacle in 1949. In November, she travelled to Cairns where she spoke at the Sunday School Anniversary in the Central Baptist Church²⁴⁵ and continuing south, screened films on the work in Goalpara at the Rockhampton Baptist Tabernacle in December.²⁴⁶

The 1949 annual report of the SGMU, presented at the BUQ Annual Assembly, held at the Tabernacle, included the comment that "having a real missionary, Margery, as President, added to the interest and zest of the work." The SGMU had 348 members in its 24 branches in 1949.²⁴⁷

The Queensland correspondent to *The Australian Baptist* wrote: "We deeply sympathise with our Missionary Deputationist, Miss Bush, in the illness of her mother, which prevented her from making the trip to Maryborough." Mrs Bush died in 1949 and Walter died six months later in 1950. The funeral service for her father, but not for her mother, was held in the Tabernacle.

Following her father's death, Margery inherited the family home, *Kianga*, in Beaudesert Road, Moorooka where her parents had moved in about 1943.²⁴⁸ *Kainga* is a Maori word for a village usually located on low ground.

Margery transferred her membership to the Tabernacle from Annerley in June 1950 and was farewelled by members of the SGMU and the church on 18 October 1950, to return to India.



Margery Bush

²⁴⁴ *The Telegraph*, 15 September 1942, p. 8.

²⁴⁵ *The Cairns Post*, 26 November 1949, p. 6.

²⁴⁶ *The Morning Bulletin*, 10 December 1949, p. 10.

²⁴⁷ *The Courier-Mail*, 20 September 1949, p. 8.

²⁴⁸ *Worker*, 18 September 1950, p. 12.

In 1951, Margery donated £25 towards the renovation of the Tabernacle sanctuary, to pay for a maple table for the front vestibule of the Church in memory of her parents, Walter and Margaret Bush.

She was in Brisbane again on furlough in 1955–56.

Margery travelled to England but her purpose is unknown. She stayed with her father's sister, Lillian and her husband Alan Walmsley in Westcott, Surrey.²⁴⁹ Margery sailed from Wellington, New Zealand in early August 1956 travelling tourist class on the RMS *Rangitata* and left Southampton, England for Colombo on the MS *Oranje* in October 1956, travelling second class. She gave her “country of permanent residence” and “country of intended future residence” as Pakistan. She gave her occupation as missionary. Other missionaries onboard the *Oranje* were Colin and Margaret Grant, Dudley and Angelika Paterson, Nesta Soddy, Winifred Turney, and James Waddell. It is not known if any of these served alongside Margery.

Her service on behalf of the NZBMS was summarised in *The NZ Baptist*, as follows:

Miss Bush is undertaking a brief deputation itinerary among some of our churches and will be present at the 1964 Assembly in Dunedin. Opportunity will then be taken to record our gratitude for the service she has rendered since first she left for India in 1931.

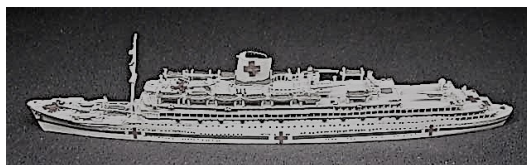
East Pakistan Field Committee of the NZBMS wishes to place on record its deep appreciation of the work of Miss Marjorie Bush who served her Lord and the people of East Bengal as a member of the Missionary Society for thirty-two years.

In Chandpur, Miss Bush was engaged mostly in evangelistic work, through 1937 and 1938 she had the charge of the School as well as this, and from June 1939 to November 1940 she was Acting Nursing Superintendent of the Hospital.

In August 1952 Miss Bush was transferred to Brahmanbaria where she worked till the end of 1960. During this period, she was, at different times, Principal of the School, and in charge of the Home and Boarding Hostel and the Dispensary. Then, for the final three years of her service, Miss Bush was again in Chandpur in charge of the Primary School there and doing general work.

Miss Bush also acted as Secretary of the undivided FC (Field Council) from September 1951 to August 1955 and has been Secretary of the East Pakistan FC since November 1956. We are grateful for the very capable way in which Miss Bush handled the administrative side of her work.

Miss Bush's work extended beyond our own mission area. The work she did latterly as Convener and a member of the Christian Home and Women's Work Committee of the East Pakistan Christian Council will long be remembered by Christian



MS *Oranje* as a hospital ship during World War II (Photo: Robert Wiringa)

²⁴⁹ V Bush, Personal communication, 2020.

women in churches large and small right throughout East Pakistan. Her contribution to bringing women together, helping them to feel less isolated, and to know themselves sisters in a larger community and thus able to work together, has been incalculable.

We cannot forget, either the years when Miss Bush wrote Bengali notes on the SU Readings for publication through “Nabajug”. This was another ministry which expressed her concern for the spiritual life of the people.

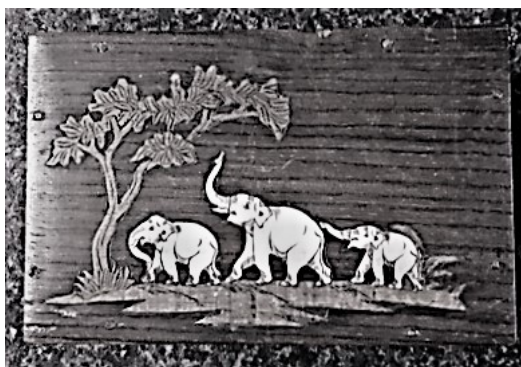
In conclusion, we would mention the love which Miss Bush had for all. Her love and concern for her fellow-missionaries is a memory that will always remain with each one of us. Her love for those amongst whom she worked, both Christian and non-Christian, was exemplified in the number of children always to be found around her and in the folk who came to visit her or who greeted her wherever she went. The amount of visitation Miss Bush herself did has been an inspiration to us all. Truly she showed forth the love of God in her own love for His children.²⁵⁰

During 1964, Marjory gave an impromptu talk of great interest to all present, to the YPSCE on the work she had done on the mission field,. Subsequently she was elected as a vice-president of the society in June 1964.

On her return from the mission field, Margery became the Hostel Matron at the Young Ladies Hostel (*Willara House*). She took over from Mrs FE Aldridge as Deaconess and commenced duties on 1 March 1965. She continued in this role until 1968. *Willara* had been the church’s manse from 1890 until 1903. It was sold in 1927 and repurchased in early 1963 and the upper floor used as the *City Tabernacle Young Ladies’ Hostel*.²⁵¹

In July, it was reported that she had already glorified her Master amongst some of the needy mothers in the vicinity of the Church. Home and hospital visitation was maintained, made possible mainly by the cooperation of Mrs D Clark in her willingness to provide transport when necessary.²⁵² Margery was also Superintendent of the Kindergarten Department of the Sunday School, Secretary of the Mothers’ Meeting, Vice-President of both the YPCES and Ladies’ Day Guild; and Leader of the Young Women’s Class.

On the eve of her retirement she was farewelled by members of the



A wooden trinket box given to her mother by Margery.

²⁵⁰ *New Zealand Baptist*, November 1964, p. 290.

²⁵¹ RW Hughes, 2013. *The Willara House Story: 1885–2013*, Baptist Heritage Queensland.

²⁵² *City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1964–1965*, p. 16.

Committee and the young ladies of the Hostel, at FT Smith's manse, which was next door to Margery's home.²⁵³

In October 1970, Margery was the Acting Matron while the Committee sought someone to fill the vacancy on a permanent basis. Although the Committee interviewed a number of prospective appointees, they were unsuccessful in finding a suitable person for the position which required special qualities. Meantime, Margery continued as Acting Matron and committed to carrying on until the end of the year if required. The Church and the Committee were grateful to Margery for her devoted and unselfish service over this period.²⁵⁴



Margery Bush, 1970s
(Photo: Vera Bush)

Margery carried on as Acting Matron for the whole of 1971 but gave due notice that she felt unable to continue beyond the end of that year. The Committee was indebted for this additional period of unselfish service and were pleased to learn that her health had benefited after the resumption of her interrupted retirement in January.²⁵⁵ She retired again to Weemala Street The Gap in 1972. She had owned this home for some time and would regularly retire there on the weekend when she was not on duty at *Willara*. She would regularly get a lift to the evening Church service with the Smiths and then resume her duties as matron. In 1977, Margery was awarded a Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal for service to the community.²⁵⁶

Margery was one of the leaders of the Mothers' Meeting which had met weekly since about 1911, until it closed on Mother's Day, May 1978.

Her church membership was transferred to Kenmore on 3 January 1980, when she was living at *Resthaven*, Brookfield. She died on 13 January 1981.

²⁵³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1969–1970*, pp. 16–17.

²⁵⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1970–1971*, p. 19.

²⁵⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1971–1972*, p. 20.

²⁵⁶ Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, 1 August 1977, p. 41

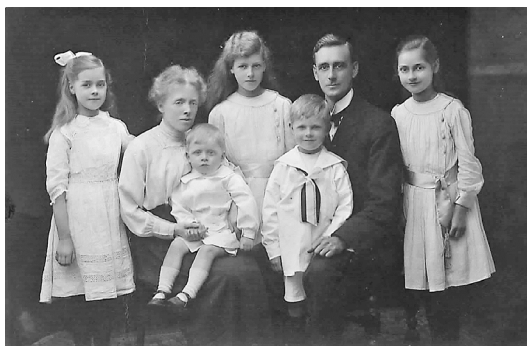
Rev Norman Hurst

Norman Hastings Hurst was born in Leicester, England in 1911, the son of Rev William and Amy Hurst. William migrated from South Leicester to Australia in 1919, travelling via Canada. Norman had three older sisters, Margaret (Elaine), Winifred and Hilda and a younger brother, Harold.

Rev WE Hurst moved from Canterbury, Victoria where he worked as an indentured agent,

commencing his pastoral ministry at the Tabernacle in April 1927. He continued in that ministry until September 1934. Norman's sister Margaret joined the church at the same time as her parents. The family lived at *Rawdon* (named after the college where he had studied) in Scott Road, Herston. Rev WE Hurst's mother died in England while he was in Australia. William and Amy and Harold returned to England on the *Jervis Bay*, arriving in Southampton in 1934. He resumed his former role as pastor of the Robert Hall Memorial Baptist Church, Leicester from 1934 until 1939 and died in 1940. Amy, who died in Leicester in 1942, had a strong interest in foreign missions and was President of the Queensland SGMU in 1929–30.

In 1927, a memorable holiday was spent by about 20 young men and lads connected with the Tabernacle Sunday School. Led by their teachers, Kenneth Lethem and John Ferguson, they boarded at Southport, the motorboats *Athos* and *Wheriwee*. During the four days' cruise, fishing, surfing, and boating played a prominent part. The spiritual needs were not lost sight of, the QHM superintendent having been invited to accompany the party as chaplain. Each evening the several boats' companies gathered on the deck of the *Athos* for worship, combined with which were a hearty sing-song, talks on "The Battalions of the Sunset," and brief chats about home mission and ministerial experiences. Amid the delightful surroundings of land and sea, illumined by the full moon, those evening reunions proved inspiring. To strengthen the bonds of fellowship the *Athos* carried the whole company on the Sunday. After a pyjama endeavour meeting, conducted by the lads in the early morning, a course was set for the salt works at Macleay Island. A halt was called at Little Rocky Point, where an Easter service was conducted by the chaplain. After lunch at the salt works the return to the headquarters at Jumpinpin was made by way of Karragarra, off the north end of Russell Island. Brisbane was reached late on Monday night, all feeling that a happy and helpful Easter



William and Amy Hurst and Family, c. 1917.
(Norman is on the right in the front)
(Photo: Virginia Harper)

had been spent. Norman was especially invited by the lads to be their guest the same privilege being accorded to the chaplain. It was hoped that the Baptist fleet in Moreton Bay would be augmented on subsequent Easters.²⁵⁷

Norman and Winifred were received into membership at the Tabernacle in December 1927 following their baptism by their father. Winifred remained in Queensland as a teacher at Herberton. She moved to Victoria soon after and remained there until 1935. She returned to England and was living in Cheshire in 1939 shortly before her father's death.

Norman was recommended for training at Rawdon College in England where he studied prior to serving in Africa.²⁵⁸ Revs WG Pope and WE Hurst had both trained for the ministry at Rawdon—a divinity academy of the Particular Baptists. Norman arrived in London on the SS *Balranald*, in September 1930, aged 18 having sailed via Suez. Rawdon was located in Little Horton on the outskirts of Bradford, Yorkshire. It was also known as Horton College.



Rawdon College

While studying at Rawdon, Norman was assisted financially by his former Sunday School teacher, Kenneth Lethem.²⁵⁹

In 1932, Norman secured his matriculation to the London University. His church membership was transferred to Leicester in June 1938.

Norman's parents and sisters transferred their membership in September 1934 to Robert Hall Memorial Baptist Church, Leicester where Rev WE Hurst had been the pastor in 1906–17. Before leaving for England, Rev WE Hurst officiated at the wedding of his daughter Hilda to Harold Harper at the Tabernacle in 1932. Neither Hilda nor Harold were in membership at the Tabernacle. Hilda remained in Australia, living in Annerley, where Harold worked as a journalist before moving to Sydney, and then to Newcastle, New South Wales in the late 1970s. Hilda and Harold had both been born in England.

On the completion of his University course, Norman was ordained into the Baptist ministry under the auspices of the Leicestershire County Baptist Union at the Robert

²⁵⁷ *The Telegraph*, 23 April 1927, p. 12.

²⁵⁸ L Ball, op. cit., p. 51.

²⁵⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 November 1959, p. 15.

Hall Memorial Church in 1937 and designated for foreign mission service in the Congo.²⁶⁰

Rev Harold Wheller, writing from London, stated that a few from the church said farewell to Norman at Victoria Station. Before commencing his work in Africa, Norman spent some time in Belgium for further studies in languages and tropical diseases. He had a fine course or study at the University, and Mr Wheller was sure he would render really good service. He took the opportunity of expressing the good wishes of Queensland friends.²⁶¹ Rev Wheller, who was Superintendent of the Albert St Methodist Church, was in England for six months, having left Sydney in April 1937.

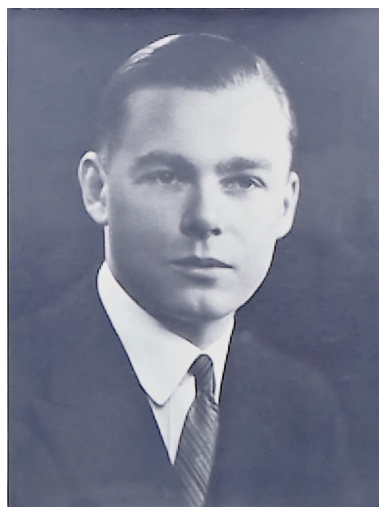
Norman was listed in the Zaire Church News in 1937, as a missionary in Yalembe with the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS).

An extract from the letter that Norman sent from Congo Beige to Mr WE Bush is reproduced here:

It is just a month today since I arrived here, and from the first moment I set foot on the beach, I felt that God had indeed called me here, and that conviction has been strengthened as the month has passed. It is 'indeed a great joy to be at last amongst the people for whom I have been training to serve. One, of course, cannot do much during the first few months as there is first of all the language to learn; but I have been teaching some French in the school, and also tried to teach arithmetic, and the few words of the language I know were not sufficient to explain arithmetic, so I have just been sticking to the French and spending the rest of my time in endeavouring to learn the language, in putting my house straight, and doing various odd jobs for which a knowledge of the language is not necessary.

The people amongst whom we are working have the reputation of being the worst people on the River. Practically all of them are adulterers, indulge in drink, lie like troopers, and not so many years ago, were cannibals. In fact, I suppose that all the middle aged and old men have been cannibals. In view of this, it is wonderful to think of the progress in the Christian life they have made since Yalembe was started by Grenfell in 1906.

There are a few leaders who are really fine Christians and are really trying to live fine Christian lives. As yet, Christianity is not deeply enough rooted in them for us to be, absolutely sure of them if some great temptation were to beset them. But many of them have a great influence for good on their friends and the people around them, and it is something for which we ought to be very thankful to God. Knowing what their fathers



Norman H Hurst

²⁶⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 14 September 1937, p. 4.

²⁶¹ *The Telegraph*, 22 September 1937, p. 6.

and mothers have been and seeing what their friends and the people around them are, it is really wonderful the way they witness for God.

Yalemba is on the bank of the Congo, about 900 miles up the river from Leopoldville, and 90 miles from Stanleyville, and about 15 miles from Basoko. At present there are five other missionaries on the station besides myself, two married couples and a single lady. Another lady is on her way out from England, and Re. and Mrs Alan Palmer, who have recently been in Australia, belong to the station.²⁶²

At the church meeting of Robert Hall Memorial Church, it was unanimously resolved to adopt Norman as the church's missionary and to undertake his financial support on the field. He had enrolled at Rawdon College, with the intention of offering himself as a missionary on the Congo Field, to which his father desired to go but was not able. It is a great tribute to Norman's conviction, courage, and consecration that, after strenuous years of study, he had equipped himself and been accepted for active service.²⁶³

In May 1939, a framed enlarged photograph of Norman was hung in the vestibule of the Tabernacle.²⁶⁴

Norman was the program organizer for the North-East Division of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in 1941. He was the preacher at the Baptist Church in Chapel Road, West Ealing on 28 April 1940 for their Missionary Sunday, where he was described as a missionary from Yalembe, Congo.²⁶⁵ Yalembe was a mission of the BMS in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Norman was interviewed by the BMS in 1936 when he was living at the Baptist College in Pudsey, West



Padre (Squadron Leader) Hurst,
1943 (Photo: Elaine Todd)



The Hurst Family – Norman,
Betty, Elaine and Jacqueline,
c. 1959 (Photo: Virginia Harper)

²⁶² A Letter from Congo, in *The Australian Baptist*, 21 June 1938, p. 5.

²⁶³ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 June 1938, p. 5.

²⁶⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 13 June 1939, p. 12.

²⁶⁵ *Middlesex Times*, 27 April 1940, p. 6.

Yorkshire and appointed in 1937. William Carey was the first missionary sent out by the BMS. Norman resigned from the BMS in 1940 or 41. It is likely that he then went directly into chaplaincy.

Norman married Elizabeth (Betty) Routh, of Leeds, Durham in October 1941.²⁶⁶ Betty was born in 1910 in Stanley, Durham. Norman and Betty had a daughter, Elaine in Malta in 1947 where Norman was stationed with the Royal Air Force. Their older daughter Jacqueline was born in 1944 in Sunderland.²⁶⁷ Elaine married Mike Todd.

It is possible that he was overseas on war service when his mother died in September 1942 in Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland. Norman was assigned the rank of Squadron Leader in the RAF in 1942. His appointment was extended for a further four years in 1946. His commission as a Wing Commander was made permanent in 1954.

In May 1948, Betty and their two daughters sailed from Malta to Liverpool, England on the MV *Georgic*. Norman did not accompany them.

He was a chaplain with the RAF in Egypt from 1948 until 1953 when he sailed with Betty and their two daughters now aged nine and six, from Port Said, aboard HMS *Worcestershire*. Betty taught while they were in Egypt. They subsequently settled in Sunderland, Durham.

Norman was awarded the relative rank of Squadron Leader in 1955 and served with the RAF in Germany, England, and Cyprus (at RAF Episkopi). He became Assistant Principal Chaplain by 1964.

In 1961–65, Norman and Betty were living in East Surrey, about five kilometres from the RAF Base at Kenley Aerodrome. In 1966, aged 55, Norman retired from the RAF and went on to teach at Skipton High School.

Norman and Betty lived in a crofter's cottage in Uig, Isle of Skye, Scotland in the 1970s after he retired, and in the early 1980's in the North of England where they purchased a very old cottage in Bellerby near Leyburn, North Yorkshire.

Norman is today remembered by a distant relative as a charming man who had a lovely sense of humour. She recalls that her family always looked forward to his visits.²⁶⁸

Betty died in 1984, when she and Norman were living in Sacriston, Durham.

In 1986, Norman remarried Freda Kane in Wensleydate, Yorkshire, and they went to live in Skye where Norman died in 1990.

²⁶⁶ *Birmingham Daily Post*, 9 March 1940, p. 11.

²⁶⁷ *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 17 December 1947, p. 6.

²⁶⁸ K Martin, Personal communication, 2020.

Pastor John Bartlett

John David Campbell Bartlett, who was always called Jack, was born at Enoggera Terrace, Paddington in 1907, the son of John and Elizabeth Bartlett, who were married at the Tabernacle, by the Rev George Rice in 1906. Jack's parents migrated from Scotland and were living in Paddington when he was born.

Jack's father, John trained as a Sea Captain in Scotland, in the days of sail. He emigrated to Australia as a trainee officer and worked as an International Captain on four-masted barques and later as a Passenger Steamer Captain in coastal waters. He served in World War I and died in Townsville in 1923. The family moved around a lot and endured long absences because of their husband / father's work. Perhaps this was the training ground for the people skills that Jack had throughout his life. Jack's mother suffered a stroke that left her unable to talk. In later years, she lived at the original Clifford House in Ascot and died in Brisbane in 1964.

Jack was educated at the Petrie Terrace Girls' and Infants' School, then at the Petrie Terrace Boys' School until age seven. When the family moved to Auchenflower, Jack transferred to the Milton State School. Jack remembered witnessing Charles Kingsford Smith and his assistant Mr Ulm, land on the racetrack at Ascot after their historic flight from America.

In 1921 when Jack was 14 years of age, the family moved to Thursday Island where Jack completed his scholarship year at the racially diverse State School. Jack remembers Thursday Island at the time as having a pub on every corner, while schools and businesses were at the "official end" of the Island and all residences were at the other end. Jack was enrolled at the Thursday Island State School and remembered that his class was a real mixture of races—Chinese, Japanese, Europeans, Singhalese, and Thursday Islanders. At the end of 1921, he returned to Brisbane by barque steamer in order to attend Brisbane State High School.

By his teenage years, Jack had developed a solid Christian faith. At 16 years old, he was baptised in 1923 at the Tabernacle on a memorable night when some 16 people were baptised. Jack liked to joke that the "Pope from Rome" baptised him as he was baptised by the Rev WG Pope, a British missionary recently returned from working in Rome. He started lay preaching when he was 16 as a member of the Baptist Union Lay Preachers' Society.

Jack was received into membership at the Tabernacle in December 1923. His brother Allan was also in membership.

When Jack finished high school, he started work with the British General Electric Company (Brisbane). He worked for several companies in the electrical industry for a number of years before joining the State Education Department in 1928. References

Jack Bartlett

from these companies describe him as “energetic, honest, trustworthy, sober & upright “

At this time only a short training course was required before a trainee teacher was placed with a trained teacher, as an assistant teacher. When he was appointed in 1928 to Teviot, 4 km west of Maclean, Rev WE Hurst wrote a personal reference for Jack saying, in part: “Mr Bartlett is one of the best of our young men, a great leader in CE work, a good preacher and a real Christian.” Jack worked in this capacity in the late 1920s in several one teacher schools outside Boonah, at Teviot and Mt. Alford, and in the Upper Currumbin area.

He taught until about 1931. He would ride a horse to church or to speaking engagements.

He lived with his mother until 1928 but was living at Upper Currumbin in 1931. Even though living away from home, he was still associated with the Tabernacle in 1929–30 as an honorary member of the Christian Endeavour (CE) when he gave a special address to the YPSCE. (He had been the secretary of the YPSCE in the early 1920s and the assistant superintendent of the ICE Society up until the end of 1926 when he was appointed the junior superintendent of the City and Valley District Union of the CE and was no longer able to regularly attend meetings of the Tabernacle Society.)

The pastor, Rev Hurst and secretary, Thomas Biggs wrote to Jack in late 1931 saying:

On behalf of our fellow members of the City Tabernacle we are sending you a little book as a token that you are not forgotten by us. There goes with the gift the assurance of our prayers for your welfare during the coming year.

We rejoice that your life is dedicated to the highest of all purposes—the making known of the love of God for mankind and the redeeming power of Jesus Christ.

We are glad to think of the tie that binds you to us and that you are witnessing for the abiding and glorious truths for which our church stands. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Yours in the bonds of a common service,



Pastor Jack Bartlett



Torquay Baptist Church, 1933
(Photo: Janette Kamst)

WE Hurst,

T Biggs²⁶⁹

Jack served for two years as the home mission pastor of the Gordon Park Baptist Church and Geebung QHM Church, riding his pushbike from his home at Toowong to Gordon Park and Geebung Churches to preach, then riding home again at 9:30 pm after the evening service. Gordon Park Baptist Church is now known as City North Baptist Church. He transferred his church membership there in 1930.

In 1932, Jack became lay pastor of the Maleny QHM Church. He was welcomed to Maleny at a meeting presided over by Mr JF Sullivan, President of the Queensland Union in mid-1932.²⁷⁰ and between February 1933 and 1936 served in the same capacity at the Torquay QHM Church in Hervey Bay. This church had been recently established by a generous donation from Mr TS Warry, a wealthy Maryborough businessman, who was a deacon of the Maryborough Baptist Church and had a large home near the waterfront at Torquay. Torquay was under the joint control of the HMC and the mother church at Fort St, Maryborough. Jack, referred to as a Home Missioner, was for the time being recognised as the assistant pastor of the Maryborough Churches.²⁷¹

Jack safely negotiated the preliminary year at the Queensland Baptist College (QBC) in 1931, and in 1932 was preparing for the Junior Public Examination. He was welcomed to Maleny at a meeting presided over by Mr JF Sullivan, President of the BUQ in mid-1932.²⁷² He was transferred by the QHM from Maleny to Torquay in early 1933. He was in his first year of theological studies in 1935. He was also the chairman of the Torquay school committee in 1934.²⁷³

Jack passed his Junior Public Examination in 1935 and received his Junior Certificate. He entered first year of theological studies in 1935 at the QBC.

Pastor Bartlett published his sermons on a regular basis in the *Maryborough Chronicle*, *Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser*. They were always "Authorised by the Ministers' Fraternal".

At his farewell on 21 February 1936, a large group of friends gathered at Torquay Baptist Church. The Rev AH Brooks occupied the chair, and expressed regret at Pastor Bartlett's departure, as he had served the church at Torquay faithfully for three years. He had received a call to fresh fields, where he was sure he would make many friends and do much good work for the Master.

²⁶⁹ City Tabernacle Archives.

²⁶¹ *The Brisbane Courier*, 12 March 1932, p 8.

²⁷¹ ST Earl, 1933. *Fort Street Baptist Church Maryborough Jubilee, 1983–1933*, p. 11.

²⁷² *The Brisbane Courier*, 12 March 1932, p. 8.

²⁷³ *Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser*, 19 December 1934, p. 6.

Jack Bartlett

Mr Ashford asked Pastor Bartlett to accept a small gift from his Torquay friends as a token of appreciation and esteem. Items during the evening included recitations, solos and hymns—“*We All Shall Meet in Heaven; Shall We Gather at the River, God Be With You and Blest Be the Tie.*”²⁷⁴

Pastor Bartlett, in replying, thanked all for their kind thoughts and good wishes, and asked that they give the same loyal support to his successor. Supper was served by the Endeavourers. About 70 guests were present and all spent an enjoyable evening.

It is interesting to note an anecdote from the Rev Walter Solomon (Fort St Baptist Church Maryborough) who when presiding over a function at Torquay Baptist church many years later, admitted that Torquay had been only a name to him - the first Home Mission church he had heard about. Later, he became more interested in Torquay, when he met one of the pastors who had been stationed there, in the person of Mr J Bartlett. It was by Pastor Jack Bartlett, that he had been baptised.²⁷⁵

An exchange was affected between Jack and Pastor JG Llewelyn, of Gordon Park and Geebung.²⁷⁶ This was probably arranged to facilitate Jack’s attendance at college for study.

Jack then served for two years (1936-37) as Pastor of Gordon Park Baptist Church and Geebung Home Missions Church, riding his pushbike from his home at Toowong to Gordon Park and Geebung Churches to preach. He and Pastor John Llewellyn alternated with morning and evening services. Jack would ride his bike home again, sometimes arriving after 9:30 pm after the evening service. He remained as Pastor of Gordon Park



Jack on Tilly, Maleny 1933
(Photo: Janette Kamst)



Gordon Park Baptist Church

²⁷⁴ *Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay & Burnett Advertiser*, 25 February 1936, p 8.

²⁷⁵ *Maryborough Chronicle*, 24 October 1951, p 4.

²⁷⁶ *The Courier Mail*, 22 February 1936, p. 8.

until 1939. While at Gordon Park, he baptised a young lady - Edna Claybourn - little knowing that he would later marry her!

At this time, Jack met up again with Harold and Rose Kirkwood, parents of Neville Kirkwood, had transferred their membership from the Tabernacle to Gordon Park in 1932 after 11 years at the Tabernacle. They had come into membership at the Tabernacle at the same time as Jack and were very active in supporting home and federal missionary work.

Jack was living in Thorpe Street, Toowong, with his mother and brother in 1936–37, and then moved to Oliver Street, Kedron from 1937 until 1943.

In March 1937, Jack resumed his studies at the QBC and in May 1938, he was one of only four students at the college. It is probable that he did not complete his course, as he is listed as a Queensland Baptist pastor only until 1938.

Jack was the speaker at the quarterly rally of the north-eastern District CE Union in the Sandgate Baptist Church young people's and Intermediate rally in September 1937.²⁷⁷ He spoke on *The Spirit of Youth and its Contribution*.

Jack continued his studies at the QBC and in December 1937, a letter sent to him reads:

The committee congratulate you on your success in seven of the subjects for which you entered but have to record a failure in Greek. ... A pass has been granted in the work of third year, conditionally upon your passing Greek at the supplementary examination in February next.

It is not certain what happened after that, but he is listed as a Queensland Baptist pastor only until 1938. He was one of only four students enrolled in 1938.

Jack resigned the pastorate and enlisted in World War II to join the AIF. However, due to his age, he was not called up until 1941. In the interim two years, Jack worked on the tramways and trained at the 7th Brigade Park, Chermiside



Jack Bartlett

²⁷⁷ *The Courier Mail*, 25 September 1937, p. 12.

Jack Bartlett

He entered into service and was assigned firstly to 5th Division Signals then to the Army Intelligence Unit, 9th Battalion. Jack was discharged in 1945, having served in New Guinea, Bougainville and the British Solomon Islands. He organised services for the troops, leading, singing & speaking at meetings.

Jack was assigned to the Army Intelligence Unit, 9th Battalion and was discharged in 1945, having served in New Guinea and on Bougainville, British Solomon Islands.

He remained a member at Gordon Park during the war, so he is not listed on the Tabernacle's World War II Roll of Honour.

Jack's brother Allan was in membership at the Tabernacle from December 1928 until 1953. Jack was a witness when Allan married Alison Roger at the Tabernacle in 1946.

After his discharge, Jack returned to work on the tramways, before commencing work at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. He served there for 23 years, as Admission Officer for the Hospital Board, before retiring in November 1973.

Jack remained in membership at Gordon Park, but did not resume his pastoral role after the war. He continued in membership at Gordon Park until his death. During his years at this church, Jack performed many roles, including: Pastor (1936-39); Member (1936-2000); Secretary (1948-50, 1962-63, 1973-75); Treasurer (1963-74, 1982-83); Deacon and then Life Deacon; and Sunday School Superintendent — some sixty years of service.

Commencing in late 1954, Jack served on the HMC for 16 years.

Jack was still living at the same address in Kedron as in 1937, working as a tram conductor, until 1954. He reunited with Edna Claybourn at Gordon Park Baptist and they were married at Gordon Park in 1953, when Jack was 45 years old. Edna was born in Brisbane in 1924, the daughter of Manning and Louisa Claybourn of Woolloowin.



Jack Bartlett, 1953
(Photo: Jan Kamst)



Jack and Edna's wedding, 1953
(Photo: Jan Karmst)

Jack and Edna moved to Lutwyche in the 1950s. Edna's brother Raymond (Ray) married Myrtle Stacey at the Tabernacle in 1948. Myrtle remained in membership at the Tabernacle after her husband's death in 2016, until her death in 2020.

After his retirement, he worked in a voluntary capacity in his son's business, and from 1984, for a further 10 years, as a Baptist Hospital Chaplain.

Even after he stood down from active pastoral roles, Jack was in demand as a guest speaker at churches and for many Sunday School Anniversary celebrations.

He was also known for his lovely tenor voice. Throughout his life he held a special place in his heart for children and youth ministries.

Jack and Edna had a daughter Janette (Jan) Kamst, born in 1954, and a son John, born in 1955.

Jack and Edna lived in Bradshaw St, Woolloowin until 1989 and then moved to Albany Creek. Jack died at Mt Olivett Hospital, Kangaroo Point in 2000 and Edna died on 12 December 2016.



Chaplain Bartlett
(Photo: Jan Kamst)

Rev Joseph Leggett

Joseph Walter Leggett, commonly known as Joe, was born in Brisbane in 1918, the son of George and Alice Leggett, who were married in 1912 in Willesden, Middlesex, England. They had migrated to Brisbane by late 1913 when their daughter Evelyn was born. Evelyn died shortly before her first birthday. They lived in Wynnum from 1914 until at least 1931, but had moved to Park Ave, Auchenflower by 1936. George was a carpenter/joiner by trade. Joe sat the Scholarship examination in Wynnum in 1931.

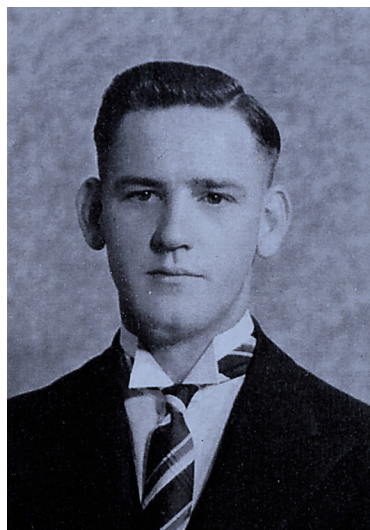
Joe came into membership at the Tabernacle in October 1941 on transfer from Rosalie.

Joe was in Papua New Guinea when he enlisted in the Army during World War II and while on leave married Violet Green at the Tabernacle in 1942. He served in Papua New Guinea and is listed on the Tabernacle's Roll of Honour. Immediately after discharge in 1945, he was accepted on probation for the QHM staff.²⁷⁸

In 1943, Violet was living in Auchenflower with Joe's parents. Although George Snr and Alice were not members at the Tabernacle, their children Dorothy, George Jnr, Ruth and Cecil (Frederick) were. George Snr and Alice may have been in membership at the Rosalie Church. Joe's father died in 1970 and his mother died in 1978 in Brisbane. His sister Ruth's missionary story is outlined elsewhere.

Initially Joe was appointed minister of the Torquay Baptist Church. It was believed that his four-years' service with the army would be beneficial to him in his new service. A public welcome was tendered to Joe and Violet, in March 1945. The minister of the Maryborough Baptist Church, Torquay's parent church, presided and all interested were invited.²⁷⁹ Joe's church membership was transferred to Maryborough in October 1947 upon his taking up of this pastoral role. Joe and Violet may have known Pamela East, who transferred her membership from the Tabernacle to Petrie Terrace in early 1947.

Mention was made in *The Australian Baptist*, of the work at Torquay, Maryborough's seaside resort where Pastor Leggett was stationed. Increased



Rev JW Leggett (Photo: QB Archives)

²⁷⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 3 April 1945, p. 3.

²⁷⁹ *Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser*, 3 March 1945, p. 4.

attendances and finances evidenced progress and activity.²⁸⁰

Records describe a happy time spent at the home of Mr and Mrs Leggett, with a social and baking competition arranged by the Torquay Baptist Ladies' Guild. The afternoon was ideal for outdoor games and competitions. As this was the first entertainment of this nature that the Pastor and his wife held in their home, Mrs Home, made and iced a beautiful cake which was cut, and everyone was presented with a piece.

Irene, who is generally known as Ann, was born to Joe and Violet, in 1946 at Torquay.

Pastor Leggett subsequently served the Woodford and Wamuran churches.

Queensland Baptists at meetings during 1947, were told that they should be very proud of the men who form the staff of Home Missions and served as pastors of the churches controlled by the QHM Committee. At the committee meeting in April 1947, the monthly reports from these men made very encouraging reading, reporting conversions and baptisms, cooperation with the Gospel Wagon, and efforts to reach those not usually touched by the usual means of church work.²⁸¹ In June that year, Joe advertised that he wanted to buy a "cluster gear: new or in good second-hand condition for his 1930 Harley Davidson, 5-7 HP twin cylinder motorcycle." The motorcycle had a side-car and Joe would transport Violet to church in the side-car with little Ann on her lap.

The HMC transferred Joe to Petrie Terrace in early 1948.²⁸²

In early 1949, Bible College students were scattered far and wide because the College was in recess, but the results of their year's work were to hand and congratulations were extended to them and to the Principal and tutors upon their results at the tests. In the Licentiate of Theology (LTh) examinations, JW Leggett, who had recently completed his fourth year, secured the highest average marks for the year.²⁸³

The manse at Petrie Terrace was enriched by the birth in 1949, of a son, Peter. The happy parents were congratulated, and prayer was offered for God's blessing upon the new son.²⁸⁴

At the inaugural meeting of the QBC in March 1950, opportunity was given to the exiting students, paying tribute to the value of the work of the College supporting their ministry. The ordinands were Pastors Reginald Jarrott and Joseph Leggett. Both had brilliant careers as students and had been successful in the practical work of the pastorate. Their tributes to the College, the Principal, and the Tutors, were well worth

²⁸⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 November 1945, p. 3.

²⁸¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 15 April 1947, p. 3.

²⁸² *The Australian Baptist*, 13 June 1948, p. 2.

²⁸³ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 January 1949, p. 4.

²⁸⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 23 August 1949, p. 4.

listening to, and told of developing mental powers, a keener awareness of their responsibilities as ministers of the Gospel, and a deepening spiritual and devotional life. For all of this, they praised their five years of College training as playing a very important part.²⁸⁵

An ordination service was held for Pastors Jarrott and Leggett in conjunction with the half-yearly assembly of the BUQ in April. The Tabernacle was filled for the occasion. Rev Fred Smith addressed the young ministers on the subject of *The King's Crier*. There was a reverent hush in recognition of the Spirit's presence as the laying on of hands took place, while Rev Ralph Sayce led in the ordination prayer. The addresses of the ordinands told of definite experiences of saving grace and a call to the work of the ministry.²⁸⁶

While Joe was the minister at Petrie Terrace in 1951–53, *The Courier Mail* under the banner *The Pulpit: Revival of Bible Reading Big Need*, reported one of his sermons.²⁸⁷

At the monthly meeting of the Queensland Baptist Ministers' Fraternal in June 1953, held at the Tabernacle, Rev Leggett presented a paper on *Psychology and the Ministry*. The paper gave evidence of considerable research and hard work and he was commended by his brethren for his work.²⁸⁸



Petrie Terrace Baptist Church
(Photo: The QB Magazine, 2019,)

The Petrie Terrace Church was situated in an inner suburb of Brisbane—it was only 1.7 km from the Tabernacle. For that reason, the work had never been easy but was characterised by some magnificent sacrificial giving and service. In 1952, the minister, Rev Leggett, had been doing splendid work over the past two or three years. For some time, the Sunday School had experienced real difficulty in finding enough space to carry on its work, especially in the kindergarten section, where there were some 60–70 children on the roll. At the same time, the church was too large for the congregations attending, although these were by no means small. The church carried out a renovation scheme, which gave more room to the school and reduced slightly the area of the church building and improved the setting of the pulpit and the vestries. A separating wall was

²⁸⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 March 1950, p. 7.

²⁸⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 April 1950, p. 10.

²⁸⁷ *The Courier-Mail*, 17 March 1952, p. 2.

²⁸⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 13 June 1951, p. 7.

also removed, so that the size of the hall was doubled, and four swing doors were placed at the back of the pulpit. Painting work was also undertaken. George Leggett, the pastor's father, was responsible for drawing up the plans and for supervision of the work. The total cost was approximately £300, of which a substantial amount had already been paid. The President of the Union presided over a large congregation for the dedication service where the offering amounted to about £40.²⁸⁹

It is unclear when or why Joe left Petrie Terrace. He was still referred to as Rev JW Leggett in *The Australian Baptist* in July 1954. Sister (Deaconess) Bell McMahon was appointed by the HMC in November 1955 to the Petrie Terrace church, to take effect from 1 March 1956. Pastor Warwick Hartin, of the Norman Park church, was given the task of pastoral oversight. The Petrie Terrace Church closed in 1991.

Joe transferred his membership back to the Tabernacle in 1958 and Violet came into membership at the same time. Violet and the children continued to attend the Tabernacle where Ann and Peter were involved in the Girls' and Boys' Brigades.

Joe and Violet were living in Milton in 1958–72, when Joe was working at Barry and Robert's Department Store in Queen Street Brisbane, and later as a funeral director at Alex Gow Funerals. Throughout this period, his occupation on the electoral role was given as minister of religion, even though he was no longer in pastoral ministry.

The family were living in Cannon Hill from 1977. Joe became general manager at Alex Gow Funerals and was still living in Cannon Hill when he died in 2005. Violet was living in Kingston when she died in 2006. Ann came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1965, and married Gary Johnson at the Tabernacle in 1966. She later remarried Kevin Mischlewski. Her church membership was cancelled in 1976, probably because she had started attending the Garden City Assembly of God Church. Peter died in Adelaide in June 2017.

²⁸⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 July 1952, p. 13.

Rev Keith Bowen

Keith Griffiths Bowen was born in Queensland in 1919, the son of David and Elvera Bowen. His father was born in Victoria and became a timekeeper in Wondai before his marriage in 1914. His mother was born in Queensland. Keith grew up in Annerley and was received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1942 on transfer from the Annerley church, which was a nine-minute walk from his parent's home. David, and Keith's twin brother Selwyn, also became members in 1942, and Elvera joined shortly after. Keith and Selwyn had an older brother, Leonard, who moved to Sydney.

John McLellan, managing director of the Intercolonial Boring Company, wrote that Keith's parents were well known to him and could not be regarded otherwise than those of the best citizens. The home influence both from the religious viewpoint and otherwise had been of the best and Keith had a worthy example in his father and mother. Rev A Hedley Abbott, minister of the Annerley Baptist Church, also wrote a character reference for him. Keith was employed for about 18 months by Charles Gilbert Co Pty Ltd, Tailoring Specialists.²⁹⁰

In April 1940, Mr CJ Connell, the Teacher-in-Charge of the Unemployed Youths' Commercial Classes at the State Commercial High School wrote that Keith had been diligent and attentive in his studies and had made satisfactory progress, while his conduct, at all times had been exemplary. He regarded Keith as an energetic and trustworthy young man of pleasing personality and had no hesitation in recommending him for any position for which he was qualified. Keith had made rapid progress in studying accountancy reaching the Intermediate stage in that area of study.²⁹¹

Keith enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force in World War II in May 1940 and served as a sergeant (leading aircraftsman) in stores (accounts). He gave his denomination as Baptist and is listed on the Tabernacle's Roll of Honour. Initially, he was paid 7/6 (75¢) per day. He spent a month or so in various locations, including Richmond, New South Wales and



Keith's enlistment photograph
(Photo: National Archives of
Australia)

²⁹⁰ National Archives of Australia, A9031, 22877, p. 43.

²⁹¹ National Archives of Australia, A9031, 22877, p. 40.

served for about 16 months in Sembawang (Singapore) before returning to Australia. He was discharged in June 1945 to undergo theological training.²⁹²

Keith transferred his membership in 1945 to the Central Baptist Church, Sydney, while studying at the Sydney Bible Training Institute.

He arrived in Townsville in 1948 to take up duties as the Assistant Minister of the Central Presbyterian parish where he was charged with the responsibility of taking the services in South Townsville, North Ward and Pimlico. The services at St. Andrew's were conducted by the Rev WCR Moore.²⁹³ After carrying out relieving duties in Townsville for some months, Keith was transferred to Bowen.²⁹⁴

When Keith took up duties at St. James Presbyterian Church, he had the following message published in the local newspaper, the *Bowen Independent*:

Dear Friends, As I commence my ministry in this parish, may I pass on to you a thought or two to help us along the daily road and round of life we are called to tread.

We each one of us has a task to do, whether we be in the ministry or not we can preach by our life and daily conversation the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In short, we preach Christ and Him crucified. Not only a crucified Lord, but a Risen Glorified Saviour. Let us remember the words of the apostle Paul as he writes to the Romans. He says, "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord." Romans 14:8. This was the Apostle's unfailing purpose of life. He crashed through the greatest of obstacles because of it, and it was the reason, why he never lived unto himself. Whatever the circumstances he never proceeded to any task unless he enquired of Christ, "What was His will in the matter." Therefore, by the grace of God he was able to say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Shall we by His grace seek His will and purpose in life for us. Shall we let the direction of our life be to "The prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus." If we do this, shall we not realise the purpose for which Christ came when he said, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. Let us then by faith step out on to the highway of life abundant, trusting in the Lord.

The battle is not yours but God's;
Therefore why fight?
True faith will cease from struggling
And rest upon His might:
Each conflict into which you come;
Was WON on Calvary,
Tis ours to claim what Christ has done,
And hold the-victory.²⁹⁵

²⁹² National Archives of Australia, A9031, 22877, p. 8.

²⁹³ *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 14 February 1948, p. 6.

²⁹⁴ *The Proserpine Guardian*, 4 June 1949, p. 2.

²⁹⁵ HE Jessop, 1997. *Faith is the Victory that Overcomes*, Reprinted in LBE Cowman, *Springs in the Valley*, Zondervan., 1997.

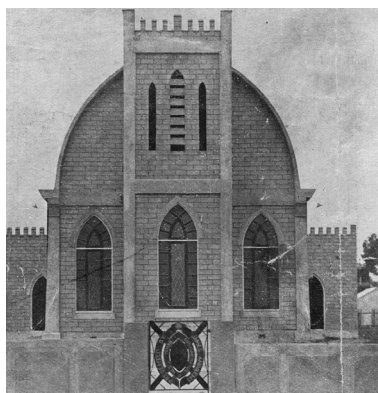
Keith Bowen

Your friend and minister, Keith G Bowen²⁹⁶

During the seven months that he served in Bowen, Keith had a weekly *thought for help and encouragement* published in the same newspaper, and when he left Bowen, he wrote expressing his regret at leaving. During his time of ministry of the Eternal verities of Jesus Christ, he had grown to love the members and friends of the church as well as the townsfolk. He took the opportunity to thank all who had loyally assisted him in the consolidating of the work. He particularly wanted to thank all the townsfolk of the Church Universal who had opened their homes in hospitality.

His letter was accompanied by the poem:

God holds the key to all unknown,
And I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if He trusted it to me,
I might be sad.
Enough this covers all my want,
And so, I rest;
For what I cannot, He can see,
And in His care, I saved shall be,
Forever Blest.
Measure your life by loss not gain,
Not my wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice,
And he who suffers most has most to give.²⁹⁷



Bowen Presbyterian Church, 1936
(State Library of Queensland)

The opportunity was taken to farewell Keith who had carried out relieving duties at St James' for some months, and many tributes were paid to his sincerity and fervour.²⁹⁸

Keith was transferred by the Presbyterian Home Mission to Yeppoon from 1950 then to Biloela in mid-1951 and Callide Valley.²⁹⁹ Throughout the period 1950–54 he was serving under the Rockhampton Presbyterian Church.

At a public lecture in Biloela, Keith recounted some of his experiences as a sergeant in the RAAF during the war. His lecture covered both the humorous side of his experiences in the Middle East and his less attractive experiences as a prisoner of war. One of the most humorous incidents related occurred during the evacuation of Singapore in February 1942. After the vessels had departed, there were several motor vehicles on the wharf and Sergeant Bowen and his friend found themselves in charge of a beautiful automobile, the property of the General Officer Commanding Far Eastern Forces.

²⁹⁶ *Bowen Independent*, 5 November 1948, p. 6.

²⁹⁷ J Parker, 1910. God holds the Key in *The Youth's Instructor*, 5 July 1910, p. 1.

²⁹⁸ *Bowen Independent*, 17 June 1949, p. 7.

²⁹⁹ *Morning Bulletin*, 7 July 1951, p. 1.

Another story related to the outwitting of the enemy when they were in a secret drome at Palamatang, known as P2. When enemy paratroopers arrived in large numbers, Sergeant Bowen and his squadron cleared out without being detected. When taken prisoner, he was at Pandong and eventually transferred to Batavia.³⁰⁰

He returned to Brisbane and served as a minister of religion while living on Ekibin Road, Annerley. It is not known which church he served while in Brisbane. His father died in 1958.

Keith and Shirley were married in the early 1950s. It is not known if they had any children.

Keith left the ministry and worked as a storeman packer, while living in Inala from 1958 until his death in 1975. Shirley remained at Inala until at least 1980 and died at Banora Point in 2011.

³⁰⁰ *Morning Bulletin*, 23 September 1953, p. 2.

Rev Dr Lloyd Andrews Kent

Lloyd Andrews Kent was born on Good Friday 1923, the son of Reuben and Daisy Kent. His parents had become members at the Tabernacle in 1919 on transfer from Maryborough, shortly after Reuben returned from military service in World War I. His service is recognised on the Tabernacle Roll of Honour and is recorded in *For God, King and Country*.³⁰¹

Lloyd grew up in Paddington and attended church and Sunday School at Carmel Bardon Presbyterian Church and subsequently at the Tabernacle, including through the depression years. His first job was as a telegraph messenger. Lloyd made a commitment in 1940, was baptised by Rev Albert Butler in 1942 and received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1944.

He enlisted in 1943 in the Royal Australian Air Force in World War II and is listed on the Tabernacle Roll of Honour. On discharge in 1945, he went to Melbourne to commence theological studies. Rev Butler wrote him a letter of introduction, saying that Lloyd had proven himself a most loyal and worthy member of his church and went with the fullest confidence of the church which trusted that he would eventually prove himself a good minister of Jesus Christ.

Lloyd transferred his membership in 1947 to Brunswick Baptist Church while studying at the Baptist College of Victoria (BCV). In his final year at the college, he was the senior student. Before taking up pastoral duties he remained at the college for a couple of years to undertake further studies. While at the college he was a student assistant at Brunswick and qualified for the awarding of a Licentiate of Theology (LTh).

Lloyd's ordination service was held in the Collins Street Baptist Church in December 1949. The other four ordinands were all graduates of the BCV. The President of the Union, Mr HJ Martin, presented a Bible to each man with the words, "My brother in Christ, we ordain you to your high calling, and commit to you the ministry of the Word. Make full proof of your ministry."³⁰²

Lloyd's engagement, following his proposal by letter, while Winifred (Win) was in East Pakistan (Bangladesh), was announced in *The Australian Baptist*:

KENT—DENNING.—The engagement is announced of Winifred Edith Lois elder daughter of Rev and Mrs Ernest H Denning, of Ashfield, NSW, to Lloyd Andrew, younger son of Mrs DT Kent, and the late Mr RH Kent of Bardon, Brisbane."³⁰³

³⁰¹ D Driver and H Colegrove, op cit., pp. 110–114.

³⁰² *The Australian Baptist*, 13 December 1949, p. 5.

³⁰³ *The Australian Baptist*, 22 November 1949, p. 13.

Prior to their marriage, Win had been a missionary in Orakandi, with ABMS. She undertook deputation work for Foreign Missions after their marriage. At the half-yearly Assembly of the BUV, it was reported that:

foreign mission matters were ably presented by the State secretary and Mrs L Kent. The speaker mentioned the disappointed and unsatisfied national hopes of natives who were turning elsewhere, and thus posed a challenge for the missionaries.³⁰⁴

Rev Denning was pastor of the Frenchton Baptist Church, Ipswich in 1923–27.

Lloyd and Win were married in the Croydon Baptist Church, New South Wales in 1952, prior to him being inducted, in October of that year, as the minister of the Tottenham Church by Principal Grigg.³⁰⁵

A special service was held at Gordon Street, Footscray, where the immediate Past-President, Mr W Dick, introduced Llyod to the congregation. He had been recently inducted to the pastorate of the church at Tottenham. Tottenham and Gordon Street subsequently became a combined pastorate. In 1953, the Victorian Baptist Youth Department appointed Lloyd in a half-time capacity as Secretary to the Department. He was to major on the work of the Religious Education Committee with emphasis on Sunday School activity, while carrying out pastoral work half-³⁰⁶

In 1953, Lloyd was the Secretary of the Footscray and District Ministers' Fraternal.

In January 1955, the *Happy Hours School* at the East Fremantle church was in full swing. A hundred children attended on the first day. Though in the nature of an experiment, they had skilled tutors and were grateful for expert help from Rev Kent, who was in charge of the venture. It was about this time that Lloyd published a 16-page book *Introducing Vacation Bible Schools*”.³⁰⁷

The Gordon Street church experienced a time of blessing under Llyod's ministry. A highlight was the baptismal service in April 1955, when eight candidates were immersed.³⁰⁸ Throughout June 1955, he supplied the text for today to *The Argus* in Melbourne. Llyod was instrumental in the commencement of a JCE society at Tottenham. The meetings were held at the manse after school on Thursdays.

Lloyd was the guest speaker and leader at the junior section Young People's Easter Camp in Perth, Tasmania in 1956.

³⁰⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 June 1952, p. 14.

³⁰⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 November 1952, p. 12.

³⁰⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 25 February 1953, p. 12..

³⁰⁷ LA Kent, (Undated). *Introducing Vacation Bible Schools*, Melbourne: Clifford Press.

³⁰⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 22 June 1955, p. 15.

Lloyd Kent

The transfer of Rev Bruce Baker in 1958, to Gordon Street, highlighted the progress the church had made. For a very long time it had been engaged in a hard struggle, but under Llyod, and with the coming into the life of the church of some fine officers Gordon Street had recaptured its self-supporting status.³⁰⁹

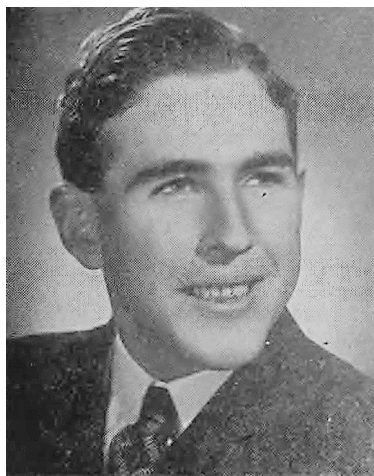
Rev John Hopkins, Honorary Director of the Victorian Youth Department, wrote in *The Australian Baptist* that the daily press had given prominence to the Victorian Youth Department's new program for Sunday Schools and CE Societies, explaining the concept of the entire family being trained in understanding the Word of God. The three-year program aimed to double Baptist Sunday School enrolments and to treble teaching staff, establishing new departments together with leadership training courses and conferences. The new work was the responsibility of Rev Kent who was now fulltime secretary of the Youth Department and in whose former pastorate at Tottenham the program was already functioning very well.

In May 1958, Lloyd was promoted to Acting Director of the Youth Department. Rev Hopkins remained as Hon Director. The division of duties—or rather, the teamwork—would largely be along the line of Rev Hopkins controlling policy and Lloyd being responsible for executive work.³¹⁰

The new Baptist CE Manual that had been produced by the combined efforts of Llyod and the National Organising Secretary of CE, Rev Norman Pell and was released in June 1959.³¹¹

Lloyd demonstrated qualities of leadership and capabilities for detail and organisation, while also making wide contacts in the interests of youth amongst churches and in State and Federal Baptist Unions.³¹²

One of the most significant movements in Christian Education in 1950s was the change from afternoon to morning Sunday School. As Director of the Youth Department. Lloyd outlined his reasons for voting for morning Sunday School in *The Australian Baptist*.³¹³



Rev Lloyd Kent, 1958

³⁰⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 April 1957, p. 5.

³¹⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 3 July 1957, p. 4.

³¹¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 February 1959, p. 8.

³¹² Introducing Christian Education Directors, in *The Australian Baptist*, 11 February 1959, p. 12.

³¹³ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 August 1958, p. 12.

As Director of the Christian Education Council his biggest task was the encouragement towards new methods in relation to the All Age Sunday School and expanding programs of CE.³¹⁴

In 1959, Llyod was congratulated on the results of his careful planning for the launch the BYF in Victoria. The function brought together 1000 Baptist young people, 200 of whom were from country churches, in the Royale Ballroom at the Exhibition Building. The impressions of young people who were present were that there seemed no reason at all why Llyod's dreams of a Victorian BYF equal in virility to the other States should not be realised.³¹⁵

The Christian Education Council under Llyod's direction planned two courses for ministers, youth workers and Sunday School teachers on the theme: *Building a Church Training Program*, designed to show how to use CEs effectively.³¹⁶ It seems improbable that Lloyd's experiences in the Tabernacle's CE societies did not significantly impact on his role.

Due to the BUV's financial problems, Lloyd's position as Director of Christian Education was terminated in 1961 and Lloyd became part-time pastor at Westgarth for three years and supplemented his income in clerical and training positions with the public service.

In May 1964, Lloyd and Win and their two sons, Peter and Andrew, travelled to Darwin, when the city's population was just 18 500, with the specific aim of establishing a Baptist church. To finance the move, initially Lloyd worked as a Senior Training Officer with the Northern Territory Administration while establishing and pastoring the Darwin Church as honorary pastor. As the work became established, he relinquished his public service job to work full-time in the church. Initially the fellowship met in the Masonic Hall until the church building was opened in July 1966.

Over the next 15 years, Lloyd also served as: Honorary Pastor; Director and Secretary of the North Australian Baptist Homes Trust; Secretary of the fledgling Baptist Union



Revs Frank JC Stone and LA Kent at the dedication of the baptismal pool

³¹⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 February 1959, p. 12.

³¹⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 July 1959, p. 4.

³¹⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 February 1960, p. 7.

Lloyd Kent

of the Northern Territory (BUNT); and Executive Officer of the proposed William Carey College, which did not eventuate.

He continued to serve various churches as honorary pastor while working as an Executive Officer in the Office of Aboriginal Liaison from 1978 until 1996.

In 1999, Lloyd was presented with a plaque by Rev John Simpson, General Superintendent of the BUV, in recognition of his 50 years of devoted Christian ministry as pastor of the Baptist churches at Whitehills (Bendigo), Gordon Street Footscray, Tottenham, Westgarth and Darwin. He was also recognised for his service as the Director of Religious Education in Victoria, and Director of Church Extension in the Northern Territory. The plaque read, “We thank God for the example of your faithful service for Jesus Christ”.³¹⁷

Lloyd died on 24 April 2012 after a battle with cancer. The eulogy at his funeral, in 2012, reads, in part:

If ever there was a man with a big heart and bigger vision, Lloyd was that man. Although Lloyd was small in stature, he was large in vision, and his heart went far beyond any local church. Lloyd could see the huge potential for kingdom work in the Top End, and he set about reaching beyond the church walls to the broader community.

Lloyd had his eyes on Katherine in the late 60s, but Katherine was a small town, and there was an evangelical work already there, so an agreement was made with the AIM, and the result was a unique arrangement—a joint AIM and Baptist witness, known as Bethel.

The BUNT was established in 1971 and Lloyd served as its secretary for five years during the early stages of its development and president for two years. Again, the vision was Lloyd’s, and he poured himself into establishing this work. The aim of this union of churches was to provide opportunities for fellowship and mutual encouragement across the Northern Territory, including of course the indigenous churches. Annual assemblies were occasions to enjoy fellowship across ethnic barriers.

When you are a visionary, a strong personality, and able to enthuse others to join you in working out the vision, you are the one most open to criticism when things go wrong. Lloyd copped his share of flak during this period. Lloyd was able to fight his way through and find new pastures to graze on. For example, he took on some study: first a Masters, then a doctorate.

Lloyd was also: secretary Northern Territory branch of the Evangelical Alliance



Partially completed Darwin Baptist Church and baptismal pool.

³¹⁷ *The Victorian Baptist Witness*, November 1999, p. 24.

for 5 years; administrator of Northern Gateway College for six years; a member of the Northern Territory Council of Churches for three years; and a member of the Darwin Christian Ministers' Association for many years.

But this list of achievements is not the key issue. Lloyd was not here to build up a CV. His motivation was not from this world, it was to do with the realm of the Spirit—to do with people, their conversion and spiritual growth within local churches. What he began in Melbourne, he continued in Darwin and in many places beyond.

If you mention his name at Lajamanu or Yuendumu, they'll say: "Oh Japangardi—yes we know him! He helped us grow in the Christian way." Ivan Jordan, long term missionary in the Northern Territory, wrote: "We remember Lloyd warmly. Firstly, as a very genuine supporter, both of the indigenous people with whom we worked, and those of us who worked with them."



Baptism of Cecil Johnson

From earliest days the Kents were always ready to welcome their indigenous brothers and sisters, taking a personal interest in them and were able to greet them by name and talk family talk with them and were amongst the few who could always be counted on to travel south for special events on the communities.

Then there were the refugees—from Indonesia, Africa, Burma, and Iran. There are many who can say with gratitude that Lloyd and Win were genuine friends to them.

That outgoing nature was something he showed to everyone, and we believe that is why God in his wisdom chose Lloyd and Win for the task of kingdom building in the Northern Territory.

God knew his man—and the man knew his God. It's that relationship with God that is the key to understanding Lloyd's life and ministry. Whether it was Melbourne or Darwin he was there because of God's call on his life. He did what he did because God had captured his heart. Lloyd's life—whether it be within his family, a church home group, broader church life, or community involvement was all about the kingdom of God, and he lived as he did because the God of the kingdom had brought him to Himself and captured his allegiance.

So, we would share with Lloyd in saying along with the apostle Paul *"I am what I am because of the grace of God."*

Lloyd's obituary was recorded in the minutes of the Assembly of the BUNT of 16 June 2012. It stated, in part, that having established a Baptist Church in Darwin, Lloyd's vision and energy drove much of the development of Baptist work in the Top End. His warm nature reached out to people of all kinds, and his legacy was still visible in the lives of people across the Northern Territory. He had a special place in his heart for indigenous folk and sought to involve them in the wider life of Baptists. He was honoured for his vision, energy, and love for people.

Lloyd continued his involvement in other community organisations both within the church and outside with: The Northern Territory Council on the Ageing; Orchid Society

Lloyd Kent

(as a committee member, judge, and president); Arthritis Foundation (as President); and the Northern Gateway College.

As if not busy enough, Lloyd also undertook masters level studies in Missiology (1995–99) and Doctoral Studies in 1999–2001 leading to a PhD in Biblical Studies. He completed his thesis (*The involvement of Australian Baptists in overseas mission work*) in 2001, at the age of 79 years, a testament to the principle of life-long learning.

Throughout his ministry, Lloyd was ably supported by Win who passed away in 2014.

Following her death, the Lloyd and Win Kent Scholarship Fund was established by the BUNT to acknowledge the life and ministry of Lloyd and Win. A scholarship to help people learn more about the Bible and Christian ministry was considered an appropriate memorial to Lloyd and Win, as they were both were avid scholars of the Bible.

Dr Norman and Joan Chenoweth (née Brooks)

Thomas Norman Chenoweth, or Norm as he was invariably called, was born in 1920 in Mackay, the son of Dr Thomas O and Mary Chenoweth. His father was born in Castlemaine, Victoria, and his mother was born in Townsville. They married in Charters Towers in 1911.

Norm boarded at Brisbane Boys' College in Clayfield for early primary school and then at Toowong. He was converted in his grade twelve year there, through a Crusader's group spoken to by Joh Bjelke-Peterson's uncle. Norm then lived at Emmanuel College, in Wickham Terrace while studying medicine at the University of Queensland. Norm's Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Science degrees were conferred at a special graduation ceremony in 1944.

Upon graduation, he was appointed Second Medical Officer at the Cairns Hospital in May 1945.³¹⁸ This was only a short-term appointment. He enlisted in World War II in July as a Captain in the 7th Field Ambulance and was posted to Perth. His name was not included on the Tabernacle World War Two Roll of Honour, however, because the war finished before he was sent overseas.

Joan Margaret Brooks was the daughter of Edgar and Hazel Brooks of Windsor. Edgar and Hazel were living in *Kalinga*, Eagle Junction in 1937 but had moved to Toowong by 1943. Edgar was in membership at the Tabernacle from 1920, until his death in 1953. Hazel, who died in 1983, had been in membership since 1923.

Joan was awarded a book prize in the junior division Scripture examination in 1936. She was baptised by Rev Albert Butler in 1938 and came into membership at the Tabernacle later that year. Joan and her sister May were both awarded gold medals for first place in their respective divisions of the annual scripture examination. She was the Superintendent of the Buds' CE in 1941–42 and moved up to the Junior Society as Superintendent in 1942–43, where she was assisted by her brother John, who was the Treasurer.

The China Inland Mission (CIM), which had been founded by Hudson Taylor in 1865 held a Great Farewell Meeting in the Collins Street Baptist Church in 1948. The chairman was J Oswald Sanders. Testimonies were given by Norm, Joan, and the other new workers. The Valedictory Address was given by Rev John Searle..³¹⁹ The nine missionaries passed through Brisbane on their way to China in September and another

³¹⁸ *Cairns Post*, 22 May 1945, p. 3.

³¹⁹ *The Argus*, 7 August 1948, p. 15.

Norm and Joan Chenoweth

farewell meeting was held in the Ann St Presbyterian Church, where Rev Fred Smith gave the valedictory message.

Norm and Joan Chenoweth served with the CIM in China for approximately two years before they were compelled to return home. They were in Shanghai in 1950, studying Mandarin, when the communist troops moved in and took the city from the nationalist army troops. After many bombing sorties over the city, Joan described the eerie silence of that misty morning. Within a few months the CIM had been displaced from China. As a Faith Mission (the missionaries were not allowed to let the public know of financial needs; these were always just a matter for prayer) over 900 missionaries were transported back to their homes without any debt.

They were married in 1950, at the Free Christian Church, Shanghai, by Mr JR Shinton (Deputy Director, CIM).³²⁰ Joan had a stillborn son in 1952, which was a devastating loss for both Norm and Joan.

After their return to Brisbane, Norm commenced a medical practice in Ascot in July 1951. Norm and Joan were received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1954, having been baptised by Rev FT Smith. Their return to the mission field was delayed by the births of John and then Robyn, who were brought to the Tabernacle for dedication in 1953 and 1955. Eventually, Norm put out a 'fleece' in which he asked the Lord to give him 15 souls saved as a sign to proceed. He led 17 or so to the Lord; thereby the call to return to missionary service on the foreign field in Thailand, again became clear. In 1957 the family sailed for Bangkok to work with the OMF, the renamed CIM.

John recounts the story of Wayne's family. Wayne's great-aunt attended Norm's practice in 1957 and was led to the Lord by Norm. Then Norm led Wayne's grandmother Barbara to the Lord (she was one of the 17). Subsequently Norm led Mike, one of Barbara's sons to the Lord while he gave him a vaccination! Wayne himself was born again in 1957. He said his family had always felt a debt to Norm, for changing the direction of their whole family. They had all gone on with the Lord, and



Norm and Joan Chenoweth
with John and Robyn

³²⁰ *The Courier-Mail*, 23 September 1950, p. 18.

Wayne himself sees an influence from Norm impacting on his own children.³²¹

Later in 1957, Norm preached at the Greenslopes Church. At the close of the message the pastor, Rev AH Hawley, made an appeal to the large congregation. People came forward seeking salvation, and some others for reconsecration. Many more were visibly affected as the Spirit of God moved in the Church.³²²

In September, another valedictory message was given by Rev FT Smith, to mark their going forward to service in Thailand; and at the same time announced the acceptance by the ABFM of another member (Dr Joan Webster) for medical missionary service in India.

The promising medical practice was disposed of, and two lives rededicated to missionary service. A good company of members and friends gathered to say farewell and Godspeed to them. Each addressed the gathering with a challenging word.³²³

Six months before the end of their four-year first term of service, Joan was diagnosed with severe viral hepatitis. Joan and their children (John, Robyn, and Neil) flew home to Brisbane and stayed with Joan's mother, Hazel. Norm was to have come also, but the OMF asked him to stay on at Manorom Christian Hospital to help with staffing issues. Joan had a full recovery and they then had a full four-year term, returning to Brisbane in 1966.

After a period of furlough in Australia, a Tabernacle midweek prayer meeting in 1962 took the form of a Church farewell, to wish God's blessing upon them and their family, who left Queensland in June, to return to Thailand. The Pastor assured them of the continuing prayerful remembrance of them by the Church as they went forward. The Chenoweths spoke of the work to which they were returning and told how God had given them the assurance that they were doing His will in returning, despite the unsettled political situation in that country.³²⁴

The mission policy was that at age five, mission children should be sent to Chefoo School in the



Dr Norm Chenoweth
with a patient

³²¹ J Chenoweth, Personal communication, 2019.

³²² *The Australian Baptist*, 21 August 1957, p. 16.

³²³ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 October 1957, p. 9.

³²⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1961–1962*, p. 9.

Cameron Highlands of Malaysia. The school was named after the original CIM school in Chefoo China. It was a lovely school. Norm believed God led him to send all three of his children to Chefoo. All the parents sent their precious children, trusting in their faithful God. “Jehovah Jireh” was the mission and school motto.

Despite the uncertainty of the times, the medical work continued to be a most effective means of reaching people with the Gospel. 1965 had seen changes—the hospital had been enlarged and Norm was given increased medical responsibility. They did not know how much longer they would remain in SE Asia but felt that they must work while it was day.³²⁵

Manorom Christian Hospital in Chainat province opened to cater for the overwhelming needs for surgery, midwifery, and leprosy control. The land was gifted by a local landowner. It pioneered the combatting of haemorrhagic fever and reconstructive surgery by Dr Grace Warren, from The Leprosy Mission.³²⁶

The mission’s policy was that for grade seven and onwards, education should take place in the home country. John flew home alone and stayed once more with his grandmother Hazel. Faced with the decision as to where to continue John and Robyn’s education, with the mission proposing that they stay for the next four years in a hostel in Melbourne, Joan and Norm decided to resign from the OMF, and Norm resumed medical practice, this time in Clayfield, not far from his first practice in Ascot.



Manorom Christian Hospital (Photo: OMF).

On their return from the field in 1970, Norm and Joan renewed their membership and again involved themselves in the activities of the Tabernacle. Joan was the leader of the senior youth fellowship in 1979–81. Norm was the convenor of the Carers’ Group in 1994–98 and on the ministerial staff as pastoral assistant in 1996–99. He was also a Home Bible Study Group Leader in 1997–98. In 1995–96, Norm took a series of lessons on Ezekiel for the adult Bible School. His contribution was valued by those present. In 1999–2000, he led adult bible school studies on *The God Who Speaks* and *Other World Religions*.

³²⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1964–1965*, p. 10.

³²⁶ <https://omf.org/thailand/omf-thailand-history/>

The Tabernacle was indebted to Norm in his acceptance of the role of Pastoral Assistant. As well as taking the message of the Christian's hope to those whom he visited, his medical qualifications enabled him to understand in a practical way, the ills of individual members who were laid aside from time to time, and so was able to minister to their needs with appropriate words of encouragement, Scripture, and prayers. Much blessing ensued from Norm's ministry, particularly amongst the sick and elderly members of the congregation. His Scripture reading and pastoral prayers during worship services brought inspiration and blessing to all in attendance. He undertook the leadership of a church Home Group, with much discussion taking place.³²⁷

Although very different to his work as a GP, Norm found his duties as assistant to the pastor very rewarding. Getting to know the church family was a real privilege, something he really enjoyed. Being a member of the pastoral team was an extra bonus!³²⁸ The church's decision to extend his ministry to those living or working in the city was very dear to his heart.

In 1998, the church secretary wrote that Norm had served the church well, and they were grateful to God for the wisdom and experience he brought to this area of ministry.³²⁹ As an Assistant Pastor, Norm enjoyed visiting members in their homes, having fellowship with them and forming friendships. With



Norm and Joan Chenoweth

many, he could share the deep things of God, and these occasions were the highlights of his time in visitation. His calling was to be a Levite, whose duty was to care for the temple of the Lord. In his case it was for the Body of Christ, to stand before Him for himself and others, to minister to Him being a channel for His life as He lived through him, to be a minister to others and to offer the sacrifice of praise for all His love and faithfulness.

Joan and Norm were involved in a motor vehicle accident, in which their car was a write off and after Joan's discharge from hospital, Norm became her full-time carer. This put an end to his visitation. They entered into the most difficult period of their lives and found that they were not ministering but were ministered to by the Church Family in

³²⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1996–1997*, p. 10.

³²⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1996–1997*, p. 7.

³²⁹ *ibid.*, p 6.

Norm and Joan Chenoweth

many ways. There were messages of encouragement and prayer support, flowers, cards, letters as well as tasty meals, snacks, and cakes. They were humbled and thankful for all the kindness shown to them. Norm reported that he developed a new skill—timing and pressing the start button on the microwave!

Because of the changed direction of his life, Norm asked to be relieved of the position of Assistant to the Pastor as he was not fulfilling that ministry.³³⁰

The church formally recognised his ministry at the 1999 anniversary dinner. They had appreciated his ministry and made special comment of his encouragement in prayer. He continued as leader of a Home Bible Study Group throughout 1997 and 1998.

Norm and Joan had three children: John; Robyn; and Neil. John became a member at the Tabernacle in 1970 and married Wendy McConaghy at the Tabernacle in 1997. Robyn who married Terry Collins in 1977 at the Tabernacle, came into membership in 1971. Neil and Robyn also became members and following their parents' example, served on the mission field. Neil's story is outlined elsewhere in this book. Terry served as a pastor in South Toowoomba and, alongside Robyn, served on the mission field in Thailand, but their story is not recounted here as they are considered to have been sent forth from the South Toowoomba Baptist Church.

Norm died suddenly in 2008 and Joan died in 2011. Their funeral services were conducted at the Tabernacle.

³³⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1998–1999*, p. 5.

Rev Dr Neville Kirkwood

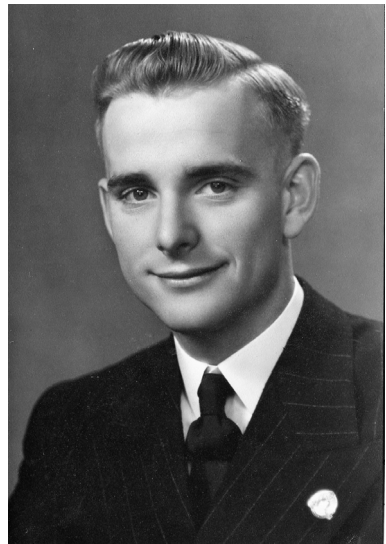
Neville Allan Kirkwood was born in 1927, the son of Harold and Rose Kirkwood and was living with his parents in Lutwyche until at least 1949. Harold and Rose had been in membership at the Tabernacle since 1922 and 1923. In 1950, Rose was the President of the QBWU and President of the Queensland SGMU in 1955–57 and again in 1961–62. Harold was the treasurer of the QFMC and elected to the BUQ Council in 1951.

Neville was received into membership at the Tabernacle in October 1946 on transfer from Gordon Park and was commissioned for missionary service in 1952. As a foreign mission student in 1949, he was the chief organiser of the Young Men's Missionary League (YMML) which had been formed the previous year. The purpose of the League which he commenced, was the enlistment of the active interest and prayerful support of all Baptist young men for the work of Christ's Kingdom at home and overseas.³³¹

In October 1951, having completed his College course in the BTCQ, Neville was ordained to the Christian ministry. The Principal paid high tribute to the young ordinand. Neville paid tribute to the influence of his Christian parents and others who had helped lead him into his present position. The solemn charge was delivered by Rev Ralph Hodgson, his former pastor. Neville intended to leave Brisbane in the New Year to undertake training in Melbourne before departing for the field.³³² Neville was conferred his LTh and awarded the LM Dart Memorial Prize for the best results for the whole course secured by an exit student.

Before heading for the mission field, Neville did some missionary deputation work, starting in the far north of Queensland and working his way down to Brisbane, arriving in time for the Assembly meeting.³³³

Neville served with the ABMS in Banghpara and Debitol, Goalpara, Assam, India from 1952 until 1970. Prior to his departure, Rev Albert Butler prayed with him in his cabin on the SS *Mooltan*. A large group of people were present to wish him bon voyage and were boat side, to send him away with



Neville Kirkwood

³³¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 11 August 1954, p. 5.

³³² *The Australian Baptist*, 10 October 1951, p. 20.

³³³ *The Australian Baptist*, 20 August 1952, p. 8.

the conviction that there would be many Baptists in Queensland who would continually bring his name before the Throne of Grace. The whole party gathered on the wharf before the final goodbyes were said, while the Chairman of the QFMC commended him, and his parents, to God in prayer.³³⁴

The ABMS had been working in the Indian state of East Bengal since 1882. In 1944, the Boro people in Assam asked the ABMS to send missionaries to them. The ABMS in East Bengal responded enthusiastically and several Australian missionaries travelled to Assam to meet the Boro people. Negotiations proceeded slowly and in April 1947, the American and the Australian Baptist Missions agreed that from 1 May, ABMS would take full responsibility for mission work among the Boros in the area from the Brahmaputra River north to Bhutan.³³⁵

In December 1952, the South Australian Overseas Mission Department entertained Revs Trevor Farmilo, Eric Aspinall, and Neville Kirkwood, and Mr JC Thompson, Secretary of the BUV, as they passed through Adelaide en route to India-Pakistan. Mr Thompson was accompanying Rev FA Marsh and Mr RH Lawrenson of New South Wales, as a deputation to the field on behalf of the AFMB. The usual good fellowship was manifest at the gathering, and there was a deep and prayerful interest in the outgoing men. All listened with interest to their words.³³⁶

Neville's Bengali language examination consisted of five written papers and one oral paper. The set books that he had to know, as well as any language textbook at home, were: The Children's Bible (a selection of Bible stories in Bengali); Children's Ramayan (the story of the life of Ram, one of the famous figures of Hindu mythology, who is one of the incarnations of the god); and an anthology of Tagore, the renowned Bengali poet.

The school day at the Language School in Darjeeling, India, officially opened with devotions conducted by the Principal, followed by three lectures on the set books, English to Bengali. Lessons focussed on Bengali to English, grammar, and storytelling, during which he had to narrate previously prepared stories in Bengali. After lunch he was free to go about his own methods of study, except for three tutorials per week. Language study was never regarded as a chore when it came to mastering it quickly. Neville reported that at times he felt like the tortoise at Bengali.

Neville and Beryl Peterson, both on the Pakistan field staff, announced their engagement in February 1954³³⁷ and were married by the Rev Neville P Andersen in

³³⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 3 December 1952, p. 10.

³³⁵ <https://www.bbcaturk.net/en/about-us/brief-history-of-cm-hospital>.

³³⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 December 1952, p. 8.

³³⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 17 February 1954, p. 7.

June. It was a lovely and happy ceremony. The monsoons which broke that morning, ceased as the wedding party arrived at the church and as they left it again.³³⁸

A letter from Neville, was a typical expression of the appreciation of another small piece of service by the YMML, namely, the sending of food parcels to a number of missionaries. He wrote that the parcel, which had arrived at Birisiri while he was out on tour, was a most unexpected surprise. It was particularly welcome, as he had just a few weeks before been asked a question which would ultimately lead to concern about the stock situation in the pantry. The usual practice for the engaged men was to stockpile their parcels to start off the newly married home. They certainly needed to do it. That is what he did with their parcel. It was waiting until after the honeymoon. He thanked the YMMLers.³³⁹

Beryl was from the Sans Souci church in New South Wales. She had been farewelled at a meeting in the Central Baptist Church (Sydney) in 1952, having trained in Victoria. When their wedding was celebrated in the Darjeeling Union Church, a service was held in the Sans Souci Church at the same time.³⁴⁰ A film of the wedding was shown at a combined SGMU, YMML and BYF function in the Tabernacle lecture hall in June 1955

The joint Field Council transferred Neville and Beryl from Comilla in East Pakistan to Assam, to work among the Garos, in December 1954.³⁴¹

Mrs Petersen visited her daughter in India in October 1955. She had been on the Indian Field Stations for some weeks and had lost her heart to the work completely.³⁴² It seems likely that she was in India for the birth of her grand-daughter Narelle, in 1956. As a witness to the people, they dedicated baby Narelle to the Lord during the Assembly. Veteran Pastor Bilu Babu explained the meaning of



Beryl Kirkwood (née Peterson)

³³⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 30 June 1954, p. 4.

³³⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 June 1954, p. 7.

³⁴⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 August 1954, p. 6.

³⁴¹ RM Gooden, India—Assam's new challenges, in LA Cupit, RM Gooden and KR Manley, (eds), 2013. *From Five Barley Loaves: Australian Baptists in Global Mission 1864-2010* Morning Star Publications, Northcote, Victoria. p. 166.

³⁴² *The Australian Baptist*, 29 February 1956, p. 4.

the service.³⁴³ They had a son, Ian, who was born in the Gauhati Mission Hospital, Assam, in 1957.

A Sunday midday service at Botjhora was a little unusual in that a number of Boro women attended with a request for Neville to visit Kartik, the big mahajon (wealthy landowner) of the district. Kartik, a Boro, was respected by Garos, Boros and Rabhas alike, and lived in the Boro section of Dungakata. Monday afternoon was spent with him, playing Gospel records, and talking.

Kartik's wife had been sick for some time and had tried to gain relief at a number of hospitals. Finally, she went to the American Baptist Hospital at Gauhati, where Dr Mundhenck was able to locate and treat the trouble, relieving the pain. The fact that a Christian hospital was able to do what others could not, together with the Christian witness of the hospital and Chapel, had given his wife an earnest desire for a knowledge of the "Way".

Kartik said that he had no objection, although once he had strongly opposed Christians. The offer was made for the visit of a Boro preacher from Tukrajhar to spend a few days with them giving teaching. Kartik warned, however, that all the village would require teaching, as he would not make a profession of faith without a similar profession by all other men of the village. Of his present beliefs, he understood little.³⁴⁴

Baptist Mission policy in India and Pakistan was aimed at the National church accepting evangelistic and administrative responsibility. Baptists of the indigenous church in the North Goalpara Baptist Union had pledged themselves to an all-out campaign of evangelism in their territory during 1958. The gauntlet had been flung down and the challenge accepted.

A welcome home to the Kirkwoods was held in Beryl's home church in Sans Souci in late 1958. The church was filled with enthusiastic members, wishing to welcome Beryl back after her first term of service. Greetings were expressed by the church and the Missionary Cooperation Council, and in reply Beryl gave a glimpse of incidents on her field of service. Neville spoke with feeling of his call to the mission field and felt that the evening was a time of dedication for him. Hearts were touched, and the pastor, Rev A Baker, reminded the church that if it was a time of dedication for the missionaries it surely must be for those who remain at home.³⁴⁵ The couple arrived in Brisbane in November, after spending two weeks in Sydney to commence their first furlough.³⁴⁶

³⁴³ *The Australian Baptist*, 18 July 1954, p. 7.

³⁴⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 30 April 1958, p. 3.

³⁴⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 October 1958, p. 5.

³⁴⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 5 November 1958, p. 4.

Neville spoke on the ABC program *Meet the Travellers* on Sunday afternoon 16 November 1958.³⁴⁷

In *The Australian Baptist*, Neville recounted the story of the conversion, persecution, and victory of Moren and his wife, who were the first Christians in Dungakata, North Goalpara.³⁴⁸

Neville and Beryl were welcomed into the South Brisbane Baptist Church in December 1958. They responded and spoke with gratitude concerning the great opportunities for service on the foreign field. Neville illustrated the fact that Christ was receiving the nations for His inheritance, by telling stories of many in Assam won to Christ and following Him.³⁴⁹



Rev Neville P Anderson, Miss Jean Harry;
Rev Peter Ewing; Miss Edna Hale; Rev
Neville Kirkwood
(Photo: *The Australian Baptist*, 1958)

The South Australian Easter Youth Camps in 1959 were attended by more than 340 young people, and many more could not be accommodated. At Mylor, Rev Neil Adcock was the speaker with Neville ably supporting him. Both camps had the theme *The Great Themes of the Christian Faith*. In all, more than one hundred decisions were made by campers, some first decisions for Christ, some for baptism, some for reconsecration, and some for full time service. Rev Kirkwood told the Campers many stories of tigers in Assam, and at the conclusion of the camp he was presented with £25 to buy a gun and ammunition for his protection.³⁵⁰

In April 1959, Neville was engaged in deputation work in Queensland. Much of his time in Assam had been devoted to evangelistic itineration among the Garo villages. It was this area which had seen a considerable response to the preaching of the gospel. He had *Kodachrome* slides showing something of the work, which conveyed lasting impressions of the natural beauty of the land as well as the ugliness of rampant heathenism.³⁵¹

The theme of the Warwick Missionary Fellowship Weekend held in the Baptist Church in April was *Jesus, the Light of the World*. Arranged by the YPSCE, the purpose of the

³⁴⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 12 November 1958, p. 5.

³⁴⁸ NA Kirkwood, The Trials of Moren, in *The Australian Baptist*, 26 November 1958, p. 5.

³⁴⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 10 December 1958, p. 10.

³⁵⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 15 April 1959, p. 9.

³⁵¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 29 April 1959, p. 9.

weekend was to present the claim and challenge of missionary service both at home and overseas. Speakers included Neville who spoke of the ABFM.³⁵²

Neville and Beryl had another son, Dale while on furlough in 1959. The Kirkwoods had hoped to return to the field but were unable to go. They proceeded to Queensland where they ministered at the Greenslopes Church for at least six months beginning in January 1960.³⁵³

Rev Frank Starr, from the Petersham Baptist Church, was the guest speaker at a three-day missionary convention—organised by Neville—at Greenslopes, with the theme *Adventuring with God*. A display in one of the Sunday School halls showed the fields of the Baptist Missionary work in Assam, India, East Pakistan, North-East New Guinea, and Dutch New Guinea. A highlight of the convention was a *Meet the Missionaries* panel along the lines of the *Meet the Press* panel that was a well-established part of Australian television. This panel was compered by Mr SB McGrath, a Deacon of Greenslopes and secretary of the Sudan Inland Mission. Members of the panel were Miss Hope Andress (East Pakistan), Rev Starr (New Guinea) and Rev Kirkwood (Assam).

On the stage of the Sunday School hall, were four life-like models dressed in national clothes—a woman wearing a sari in Bengalese fashion, an Assamese woman, a Rabha woman and a man wearing a Naga shawl—of the people encountered by missionaries in Assam and East Pakistan. All phases of missionary work were shown by coloured slides and explained in an illuminating series of addresses, while two excellent films were shown of Dutch New Guinea and Pakistan, taking viewers right into the country where the missionaries work.³⁵⁴

The Sunday School Hall was packed with one of the largest crowds in its history for the Church farewell to the Kirkwood family, who were to sail in November to return to Asia. In his eight-month interim ministry, Mr Kirkwood made a deep impression



Rev FH Starr, Mr SB McGrath, Miss H Andress and
Rev NA Kirkwood

(Photo: *The Australian Baptist*, 1960)

³⁵² *The Australian Baptist*, 6 May 1959, p. 4.

³⁵³ *The Australian Baptist*, 16 December 1959, p. 4.

³⁵⁴ Missionary Convention at Greenslopes, Qld, in *The Australian Baptist*, 3 August 1960, p. 4.

and left many people closer to the Christian way of life following his punch-packed sermons.³⁵⁵

Neville and Beryl returned to New South Wales to spend a few weeks with Beryl's parents prior to sailing for India. The ladies of the BWMU farewelled Mrs Kirkwood at their October meeting and presented her with a token of their love and esteem and assured her of their prayerful remembrance.³⁵⁶

A small presentation was made to Beryl at the October meeting of the Baptist Women's Missionary Union of New South Wales. In responding, she said that she would value prayer, as this time she was going out as a wife and mother of four young children. She knew there would be times of loneliness and responsibility when her husband was away, but in spite of this, she was looking forward to returning to the work among the Garos.³⁵⁷



Neville and Beryl Kirkwood and their family in 1965 in Garo
(Photo: GI Archives)

The task in the fields was so urgent that there is very little time in which to cut the crop. The labourers had to hurry as fast as they could. If they wore unnecessary clothing or took anything which was not essential for the work, then they would not be able to get there quickly enough. Similarly, if they greeted any-one they passed on the way, then valuable time would be lost.

They were farewelled at a function in the Sans Souci Church in November 1960, arranged by the NSW MCC and the Sans Souci Branch of the SGMU, of which Beryl was a member. The valedictory address was given by Rev Frederick G Smith, Hon Secretary of MCC. The evening featured an exhibition, portraying missionary work in India and Pakistan. The Kirkwood family sailed on the SS *Strathnaver*.³⁵⁸

The days of Missionary Service in India were definitely limited. The policy was that Missionaries would be excluded from Assam first. Their task and that of the Church in Assam was therefore urgent. The Lord's work everywhere required haste. They needed to pray for each other and the work of the Kingdom, He had given into their hands to accomplish. They needed wisdom that they were not encumbered with unnecessary

³⁵⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 26 October 1960, p. 15.

³⁵⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 November 1960, p. 9.

³⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁵⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 9 November 1960, p. 8.

things and interests so that they had maximum effectiveness from all their labours for Christ.³⁵⁹

In 1962, Neville and Beryl's two older children were the first ABMS missionaries' children to be sent to the Mt Hermon School in Ooty, Southern India. In 1965 all four children were sent to the boarding school.³⁶⁰

Neville's new colleague amongst the Rabhas was the Rev Rokhama, the first Mizo Baptist Missionary to work outside the Mizo District. He was full of the Spirit of Revival which swept through Mizoland in 1962, which can be traced directly to the new birth experienced by three Mizo students during Billy Graham's Crusade in Calcutta in 1956. Khama's brother was one of the first to be influenced by the three when they returned to study in Gauhati. After Gauhati and Shillong Mizo students had received the New Birth, Khama's brother took it back to the Baptist South Mizo Hills. The Mizo's are 98% Christian. Max and Ezzie, whose story is recounted elsewhere, were from Mizoland.

The revival was based on the assurance of salvation. The talk in the tea shops, in public transport, and in the bazaars was, "Are you saved?", "How do you know you are saved?" God was able to use this movement amongst the students to revive lukewarm pastors, deacons, and the older generation who at first were sceptical. These people also now had the assurance of salvation.

Brisbane had recently had a Billy Graham Crusade. It was possible for a similar outpouring to come to Brisbane and Australia. It would be a joy for Neville if revival started in Brisbane because of some Spirit-filled Tabernacle members. God wanted to do it. The effect would be felt beyond yourselves even as the Rabhas are beginning to feel the effect of the Mizo Revival.³⁶¹

In Neville and Beryl's final report to the Tabernacle, they sent thanks to all for their prayers and interest in the work over the years of Missionary Service.³⁶²

Neville and Beryl moved to Sydney, where they lived at Fairlight. Rev Kirkwood's membership was transferred to the Manly (New South Wales) church in February 1970.

Neville continued to write and publish. In 1996, he was awarded the Australian Christian book of the year award by the Australian Christian Literature Society for his book *Care of Arabic Muslims Experiencing Hospitalisation in Australia*.

³⁵⁹ City Tabernacle, Yearbook, 1966–1967, p. 20.

³⁶⁰ N Bertling, Private communication, 2021.

³⁶¹ *ibid.*, pp. 17–18

³⁶² City Tabernacle, Yearbook, 1968–1969, pp. 21–22.

Their four children, Dale, Ian, Narelle (later Mrs Narelle Bertling) and Sheryl (later Mrs Shirley Devine) were still living with them in Blaxland in 1977, and in North Rocks in 1980, where Neville was still in ministry.

Neville completed his doctorate (D Min) in 1986 through the Theological Seminary in San Francisco, California. His thesis subject was pastoral care to Muslims.³⁶³

Since returning to Australia, Neville has been involved with Manly Youth Centre, Sydney, as chairman (1971–74); foundation secretary of the Baptist Chaplaincy Care Service for New South Wales (1977–84); member (1977–93) and chairman (1990–93) of the Civil Chaplaincies Advisory Committee of New South Wales; member of the management board and lecturer at the Academy for Chaplaincy and Community Services; lecturer at Kuringai College of Advanced Education, Milperra College of Advanced Education and at colleges for nursing education; and director and board member of Fresh Start (divorce recovery program) (1994–99).³⁶⁴

He is an honorary life member of the Australian College of Chaplains.

The 2016 missions' month was condensed into two weeks of missions' celebrations in thanksgiving for the many missionaries sent out from the Tabernacle. It was a joy to have reunion with many former missionaries including Neville, who returned for this very special time.³⁶⁵

Beryl died in 2015 and Neville now lives in Woorim, Queensland.

³⁶³ NA Kirkwood, 1986. *Care of Arabic Muslims Experiencing Hospitalisation in Australia*, MDiv Thesis, San Francisco Theological Seminary.

³⁶⁴ <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/kirkwood-neville-1927>.

³⁶⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2015–2016*, pp. 14–15.

Rev Dr Leslie Duncan

Leslie James Duncan, who was most commonly known as Les, was born in Woolloongabba, Brisbane in 1920, the only son of Herbert and Eva Duncan. His parents were married in Glasgow in 1919. Eva's parents, James and Elizabeth Lamond were married in the Wharf Street Church in 1885. James, who was born in Scotland, had migrated to Brisbane in his early 20s. Les had two sisters, Barbara and Jean.

Les attended Brisbane Grammar School where presented a vocal item the school's annual concert in the *Princess Theatre* in 1935., Les joined his father's business and completed his apprenticeship as a plumber.³⁶⁶

Les was Secretary of the YPSCE in 1937–38 and became a member at the Tabernacle in 1939, following his baptism by Rev A Butler in November 1938. He was also involved with the Free Tract Band, which conducted open-air evangelistic services throughout south-east Queensland. Lillian Window (later Mrs Lillian Larmar) and Les Larmar, parents of Merilyn Bradbury were also involved with the FTB.

Les was living with his parents in Woolloongabba and working as a plumber in 1943. He served in World War II as a Staff Sergeant with the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, serving in Dobadura and Lae in New Britain and is listed on the Tabernacle Roll of Honour. He gave his religious denomination as Presbyterian. (This was probably the church in which he was baptised as an infant. His father also gave his denomination as Presbyterian when he enlisted.) His father served in World War One and suffered a gunshot wound to the back. He returned to Australia in June 1919 with his wife.

After his discharge in 1945, Les undertook further studies, qualifying as a Chartered Accountant while still living with his parents, and later graduated from the MBI.

In his testimony published in the CIM magazine, *China's Millions* he said that of the many advantages he had had, the most important had been that of Christian parents and background. He gave himself to the Lord Jesus when he was nine years old. During the



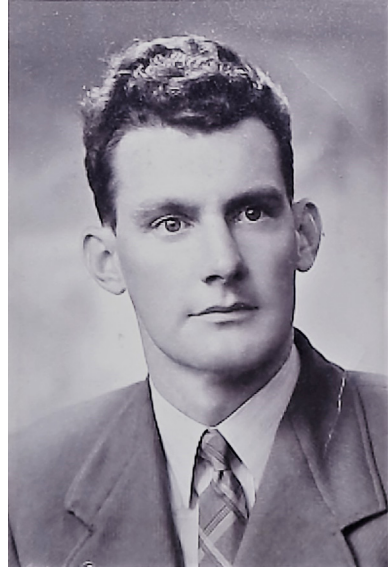
Free Tract Band
Les is second from right, back row
(Photo: Narelle Larmar)

³⁶⁶ *Daily Standard*, 27 June 1935, p. 10.

years he had devoted himself to Christian work, but never seriously considered missionary service. he was more concerned with a career than with Christ.

The call came after his discharge from the AIF. He knew that God was calling him, and that he must obey. Later, after much prayer and thought the Lord confirmed His call to China.

Les was accepted for the CIM candidate's course in mid-1949 and was expected to commence the course the following June.³⁶⁷ During his preparation for service, he had been constantly reminded and assured of the Lord's faithfulness and provision. In all things He had been sufficient. The future was in His almighty hands, and He who had proved faithful in the past would prove equally faithful and sovereign in the future.³⁶⁸



Les Duncan

It is not known where Les's parents worshipped. They may have been Presbyterian. They were not in membership at the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle had what it considered the distinct honour of one of their young men being called to service on the Mission Field in China. In September 1949, Les addressed the Prayer Meeting and told of his call to the CIM, and on Sunday the 11th, the Pastor conducted a valedictory service for him. Their prayer was that God's rich blessing would be with him in all his service for Christ in the needy land of China.³⁶⁹

Les and Kathleen Watsford were studying at the Chinese Language and Customs School in Chungking, western China, when the political unrest and Communist takeover by Mao Tse-tung



CIM Mission Candidates, 1949
Les Duncan (far right back row) and Elizabeth
Watsford (second from right, back row)
(Photo: China's Millions, 1949)

³⁶⁷ *China's Millions*, 1 October 1940, p. 15.

³⁶⁸ *China's Millions*, 1 October 1949, (page unknown).

³⁶⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1949-1950*, p. 7.

resulted in their forced departure from China, being escorted down the Yangtze River to Hong Kong.

In 1950, he wrote from hospital in Chungking to report that he had undergone an operation in March and that everything was going very satisfactorily. He was quite certain that the Lord answered both his own and the church's prayer for the operation. He had not suffered any pain. "While ye are yet calling, I will answer" Truly, the Lord was good. Everyone had been kind and everyday someone came to spend a few minutes with him. He had opportunity to speak Chinese with the nurses, some of whom were keen to learn English, so he did a little teaching. As a consequence, however, he was getting behind with his Chinese language studies and required further prayer for patience and freedom from anxiety regarding this delay in his study.³⁷⁰

He returned to Australia in July 1951 aboard MV *Gorgon* via Singapore and Fremantle, and married Kathleen E Watsford in the Kew Baptist Church, Victoria in November. Kathleen, who was most commonly known as Elizabeth, was a nurse from Kew North. They met at the MBI. She was the daughter of Rev Edward and Rita Watsford.

While on furlough, Les was the speaker at a Tabernacle YPSCE meeting. Their eldest child, David was born in 1952 at St Kilda Private Hospital. In 1955, Les transferred his church membership to Graceville, immediately prior to their return to Singapore where they served with the CIM (now OMF International) from 1956. Rev WK Holman was the pastor at Graceville at the time. In Singapore, they were the host and hostess at the CIM International Headquarters until 1965 and assumed responsibility for the Christian Witness Press and preaching at English-speaking Chinese churches.

On their return from the field, while living in Sherwood, Les undertook further studies at St Francis' College. He was ordained to the Anglican Diaconate in St John's Cathedral, Brisbane in December 1967. He continued his studies at the College in 1968, while serving as a Deacon at St Bartholomew's, Mt Gravatt. In December 1968, he was ordained to the Priesthood.

He continued to work in ministry, living at Wishart while serving in the Mt Gravatt, Wishart, and Rochedale Parishes, and then at Mt Tamborine. In addition to his pastoral ministry, Les was chaplain to the State Emergency Services and Queensland Ambulance Service on Mt Tambourine and was instrumental in the revitalising of St Luke's Anglican Church in Canungra and St John's on Beechmont and the establishment of St George's Anglican Church at Eagle Heights.

³⁷⁰ *China's Millions*, 1 August 1950, p. 25.

He continued to serve on Mt Tambourine, exercising a notable evangelical ministry until his retirement in July 1990. Les completed two doctorates (PhDs) in 1999 and 2006.³⁷¹

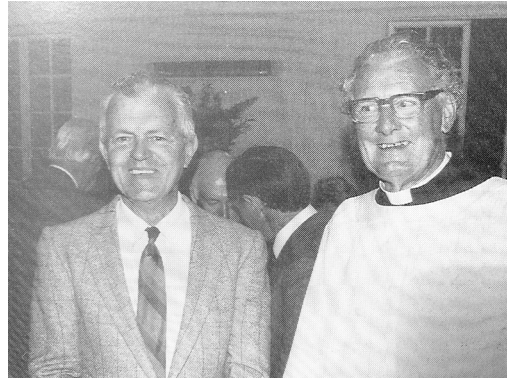
One of his successors at St Philip's Anglican Church, Rochedale commented that Les is remembered with great affection by some of the older folk in the church, who recall his earlier ministry as faithfully biblical and true to the gospel.³⁷²

Les died in 2007.

Les and Elizabeth had four children: David; Andrew; Douglas; and Philip. Elizabeth is now a resident of the Churches of Christ Nursing Home, Southport.



St George's Anglican Church, Mt Tamborine



Rev L Duncan

³⁷¹ *Tambourine Mountain News*, 2 May 20017, p. 14

³⁷² GS Stuart, Personal communication, 2020.

Rev Vincent Chataway

Vincent Frederic Chataway, or Vince as he was generally known, was born in Mackay, 8 February 1924, the son of Frederic and Erica Chataway. Vince's great-grandfather was Rev James Chataway.

Vince had to wait until 1940, when he was old enough, to enlist in World War II, and served until 1947. He became a fitter and turner during the war.

Following his baptism by Rev Fred Smith in August 1949, he came into membership at the Tabernacle in December, when he was living at the Queensland Bible Institute (now the Brisbane School of Theology) in Cross St, Toowong and gave his occupation as theology student. He then transferred his membership to Wamuran in June 1951 when he was appointed as a home mission pastor. He served there until 1952. He was set apart for this ministry in early 1951.

Vince returned to Brisbane and was living at the Queensland Baptist College (QBC, now Malyon Theological College) in Gray Rd, West End by 1954 when he was a student, having commenced his studies in early 1950, while serving as a home missionary.

Vince and "Miss Dun" were accepted as missionary candidates at the Queensland Baptist Assembly in 1952. Rev Neville Kirkwood was recognised as an outgoing missionary at the same meeting.

At the combined BYF rally on Saturday, 10 April 1954, Vince was one of three current students and one former student of the QBC who, in humorous vein, dramatised a College class by the Principal (Rev TC Warriner who was in the audience). In amongst the fun of the *College Class*, the history of the College, the College personnel and other interesting facts about it were presented in a memorable way. The three students gave short testimonies concerning their calls to the work of the ministry, to the Home Mission and to the Foreign Mission, and of the part the College was playing in enabling them to answer that call.³⁷³

Vince and Lucy E Dun, from Wolvi, via Gympie, were married on 19 June 1954, at the Clayfield Baptist Church, by Rev Richard G Walker, who had



Vince Chataway and Ellen Dun's wedding
(Photo: *The Courier Mail*, 1954)

³⁷³ *The Australian Baptist*, 14 April 1954, p. 5.

been the Baptist minister in Gympie in the mid-1940s. Vince and Ellen had a lengthy engagement, having announced their intention to marry in May 1952. This may have been the result of the College's insistence that students not marry while they were at college.

Lucy, who was more generally known as Ellen, was born 31 March 1926, the daughter of William and Lucy Dun. She was nursing at the Brisbane Women's Hospital prior to their marriage.

The Rev and Mrs V Chataway trained for Foreign Mission Service in India but felt the call to minister among the needy in Korea. Vince and Ellen went as missionaries to Pusan, South Korea, with American Baptists

Initially, in 1954, Vince and Ellen were sent to war-torn South Korea to assist in the distribution of a consignment of food parcels and at least half a dozen large cases of clothing, etc under the auspices of the Baptist World Alliance Relief Committee.³⁷⁴ Arrangement were made with the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern (American) Baptist Convention, for them to go to as Australian Baptist Relief Work Representatives.

They were loaned to the Baptist Union of Australia (BUA) by the Foreign Mission Board. Accommodation was provided for them in the American Mission compound at Pusan, and they worked under the direction of Dr John A Abernathy, who supervised Baptist Relief in Korea.³⁷⁵ They left Sydney on 31 July 1954 on the *Changsha*.

On behalf of the Baptists of the Commonwealth, and of the State, the President-General bade them farewell and commended them to God's blessing and to the prayers of the people. Rev E Edwards made a presentation of a cheque to them, and then they both responded to the farewell, telling of their call and of their anticipations concerning the Work to which they are going. At the conclusion, they were asked to kneel, while the hands of the brethren were laid upon them, and they were "set



Rev and Mrs V Chataway
(Photo: *The Australian Baptist*, 1954)

³⁷⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 26 May 1954, p. 6.

³⁷⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 23 June 1954, p. 3.

apart to the work whereunto they were called." The whole congregation stood, while Principal Warriner led in a prayer of dedication. The very impressive service was concluded with the singing of a hymn and the Benediction.³⁷⁶

Dr Lincoln H Kim, the Consul for Korea, attended the farewell gathering for them in Sydney.

Rev and Mrs Chataway arrived in Pusan, Korea, on 18 September 1954, after a long and interesting journey by sea and air. Rev Rex Ray, and members of his staff were at the airport to meet them and take them to the mission compound, where a real Baptist welcome awaited them.

On their first Sunday in Korea they preached at the Pumuldong Baptist Church in the morning, and at the Central Church in the evening, aided by an interpreter.



Rev and Mrs Chataway, in Korea
(Photo: *The Australian Baptist*, 1955)

They were engaged every morning with a Korean teacher, learning the language, and in the afternoons were out doing special relief work. Mrs Chataway was already in the clinic with other American nursing sisters, giving relief to the sick and wounded.³⁷⁷

Eight hundred and six packages of relief clothing had been received and were being distributed through Baptist churches. Ellen was rejoicing in opportunities of helping in the Medical Clinic of the Mission and in setting up Mother and Baby Clinics in Pusan. Many Baptist Women's unions made bunny rugs for distribution in the clinics.

Vince rejoiced at the opportunities of preaching the Gospel by the aid of interpreters. He also performed a vital function in helping to keep the Mission Land Rovers going, drawing on his trade background.



Mrs Chataway being assisted by a
Korean nurse.
(Photo: *The Australian Baptist*, 1956)

³⁷⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 14 July 1954, p. 4.

³⁷⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 20 October 1954, p. 3.

Several churches responded to the call for help for this distinctive Baptist effort. Rev and Mrs Chataway had a big task on hand. A letter from them said: "This is indeed a needy field—spiritually, physically, economically—and though the work upon which we are engaged seemed the veriest drop in the bucket toward alleviating any of these particular needs, we are endeavouring to play our part."³⁷⁸

Dr Chandil Soo, the Korean Baptist President, reported in 1957 that Rev and Mrs Chataway, had performed a wonderful ministry. They had endeared themselves to Korean Baptists by their untiring and loving ministry of encouragement and practical service.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (SBFMB) also expressed their appreciation of the Chataways. They asked that the Australian workers might serve for a further term in Korea as associate missionaries of the SBFMB, and the BUA was happy to concur in this arrangement. Australian Baptists were to continue to support them by their prayerful interest and by the forwarding of supplies for relief although they were to be supported for their personal needs by the Southern Baptists.³⁷⁹

Vince and Ellen returned to Brisbane in December 1959 having completed their five year term of service in Korea. Rev Chataway accepted a call from the Holland Park Church and commenced his ministry there in April 1960.

A congregation of 225 crowded the Church to participate in their official welcome. The President-General, Rev Frank A Marsh, gave a warm welcome on behalf of the Baptists of Australia, while the President, Rev John E White, spoke on behalf of the Baptists of Queensland. In responding, both Mr and Mrs Chataway spoke about the privilege of serving in Korea, and the joy of being among old friends again.

It was fitting that the greetings of the surrounding Baptist Churches were conveyed by the Rev Neville Kirkwood. Neville and Vince had both: been in membership at the Tabernacle; been fellow students in the Queensland Baptist College; had each gone into Missionary service thousands of miles apart; and had suddenly found themselves pastors of adjoining Baptist Churches in the Brisbane Metropolitan Area.³⁸⁰ Rev Chataway was inducted into the pastorate on 3 April by Rev White.

Almost 90 young people spent Easter 1960 together at the Currumbin Camp, considering the theme *Take Up Your Cross*. The Camp leader was Rev RW Brown (who was the Queensland Baptist Youth Director/ Director Christian Education) and the studies were given by Rev Chataway.

³⁷⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 19 January 1955, p. 4.

³⁷⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 5 June 1957. P. 3.

³⁸⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 27 April 1960. P. 10.

Vince Chataway

Vince was also the speaker at the Greenslopes Church's missionary weekend in 1960, organised by Rev Kirkwood, on the Friday evening. He also spoke at the Gordon Park Missionary Weekend later in 1960. They lived at 10 Yuletide St, Holland Park, which is now the location of Grace Baptist Church, while Vince was serving as the Holland Park pastor.

He subsequently served in Kalbar for 10 years from 1963 until 1973. Rev Chataway, LTh, was the pastor of Kalbar Peace Memorial Baptist Church when the church's foundation stone was laid on 7 November 1964 by Rev Frank JC Stone, BA, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Queensland.

The secretary of the Kalbar Church reports that: during his time at Kalbar, Vince became one of the most respected pastors the church ever had, especially within the community. His profile within the community was second to none. Most of this was accomplished through the formation of the Boys' and Girls' Brigades. The two groups were among the largest in Queensland. Children were recruited across church boundaries and there were many members who had no church affiliation. Vince and Ellen were tireless in visitation and caring for the less fortunate. Their ministry encompassed the true ideals of Christianity—hospitality, selfless giving to others, and being every-day people with a God given agenda of spreading the good news—for which every-one loved and respected them. They were loving parents, and this showed through in their ministry within the church and the wider community. There was a richness and diversity in their ministry that appealed to friend and foe alike.³⁸¹

Vince then took leave of absence and became a part time industrial chaplain, and Mrs Ellen went back to work as a nurse. While on leave, Vince



Kalbar Baptist Church



Vince and Ellen with their children,
c. 1963 (Photo: Erica Lloyd-Smith)

³⁸¹ W Neuendorf, Personal communication, 2021

studied for his Bachelor of Divinity degree from the University of Queensland.

Vince and Ellen were living with their four surviving children in Bunda St, Slacks Creek in 1980. They had three sons Paul, John and Robert, and two daughters, Erica and Julie.

Vince then undertook some interim pastorates and did a lot of survey work door-to-door, leading to the establishment of the Logan City Baptist Church in 1982, where he was pastor until 1985. This is now known as Gateway Baptist Church - Logan Campus.

He also continued as Veterans' Affairs Chaplain at Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital. They purchased land at Bethania in 1988 and physically built their own house. He took services at Princess Alexandra Hospital up until 2005.

Ellen was an enthusiastic supporter of Baptist Heritage Queensland (BHQ) and served as Secretary from 1985 to 1995. Vince was treasurer from 1985 until 2005, and also a loyal and devoted member of BHQ.

Vince and Ellen retired to Bethania where they lived in a house built by Vince. After Vince's death, aged 82 in October 2006, in Logan City, Ellen moved to Bethany Retirement Village, in Underwood and was taken to Church at Annerley by her family. When Ellen died aged 88 in February 2015, her memorial service was held in the Annerley Baptist Church.



Ellen and Vince Chataway
(Photo: Baptist Church Archives, Queensland)



Lucy Chataway and her four
surviving children, 2015
(clockwise from top left: Robert,
Paul, Erica, Lucy (Ellen), and Julie.
(Photo: Robyn Morley)

Rev Norman Barker

Norman Thomas Barker, or Norm as he is generally known, was born in Brisbane in October 1928, the oldest child of Cyril (Sid) and Louisa Barker, then farming at Samsonvale. Soon afterwards the family moved to Dayboro where his Cyril built a very modest home. Norm attended primary school at Dayboro State School and Sunday School and church at the Dayboro Presbyterian Church, but his parents did not have a vital connection with the church.

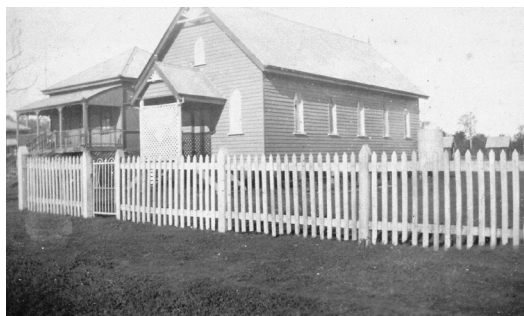
There are a variety of experiences and interactions with a range of people which are used to influence men and women's commitment to full-time Christian service. Many of these are recorded in Norm's memoirs, which are detailed below.

During his years in the country he undertook various manual jobs: tending a patch of pineapples at his parent's home; helping his father fell timber; and working on a farm cutting cow feed during the labour shortage of World War II.

After two years of secondary school at State Commercial High School, on the current site of the Queensland University of Technology, during World War II, he worked for the Commonwealth Bank. He matriculated and commenced part-time study in Commerce at the University of Queensland, at the urging of his bank branch manager.

In August 1948 Norm had a life-changing experience. Mavis Morgan was a little older than Norm and a fellow worker whom he admired for the way she went about her work. One day she came to Norm and some other staff and gave them an invitation to a Mission being conducted in Brisbane by an American evangelist, Hyman Appelman.

When Norm completed the Scholarship exam in Dayboro some years prior to this, he thought of himself as *graduating* from Sunday School and Church. It did not occur to him that he should continue to be involved. There had been just one occasion at the boarding house when his mate



Dayboro Presbyterian Church, c 1926
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)



Dr Hyman Appelman

Tom Mowthorpe asked if he would like to accompany him to Albert Street Methodist Church, which he attended from time to time. From the age of 14 until August 1948, aged 19, this was the only occasion Norm attended a church.

The Appelman Mission was held every night over three weeks in a large tent in Gregory Terrace, near the old Museum building. It wasn't until the third week that Norm thought that he would go to the Crusade. He often wondered why a 19-year old un-churched lad would do such a thing—jump on his motorbike at Highgate Hill and ride across the City to hear a preacher.

But almost from the moment he entered the tent, he was gripped by a kind of religion he had never met before, certainly not in the little local church he had attended. There was an enthusiastic choir, drawn from churches throughout the city, with hearty singing led by a song leader, Homer Britton. Wow! This was different.

And the preaching! Dr Appelman said that he was Russian, a Jew by birth, who had become an American citizen. Norm has often been bemused that surely being converted under the preaching of a Russian-born, American Christian Jew, must account for him being such a mixed up person!

Dr Appelman preached with a fervour Norm had not met before. He preached as if the Gospel of Jesus is the most momentous thing that this world had ever experienced. Dr Appelman could jump a foot from the platform and come down with both feet to emphasize a point. It grabbed the attention of one young person at least.

Norm first attended on the Wednesday night of the last week of the Crusade. He went back on Thursday and Friday nights. As was common with American Evangelists, and became familiar in the Billy Graham Crusades, the evangelist concluded each night by making an appeal for those who would surrender their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet somehow it did not seem to click with Norm—yet.

When he finished work at lunchtime on Saturday, Norm went home to Dayboro for the weekend. Usually, when he did this, he returned by the rail motor on Monday morning, although it meant arriving a little late for work. But on Sunday, he suddenly said to his mother: "Mum, I have been going to hear this evangelist this week. I think I will go back early on the Sunday afternoon train, so that I can attend again for the final night".

Mavis told him later that she was pleased that he had attended the mission, but her heart sank when he went home for the weekend. She knew he usually came back on Monday. She saw him come into the tent on the Sunday night and came down from the choir to say how pleased she was to see him. Then she said simply: "Norm, have you ever thought of giving your heart to the Lord?" It was a simple question. But it hit him like a bolt of lightning. "Yes, that is what I should do" he replied, "I will, tonight."

Norm is not quite sure what Dr Appelman preached on that night. But at the end he made his usual appeal. Norm got up from his seat and walked forward to indicate his

acceptance of Christ as his Saviour. Inquirers were directed to a room for individual counselling. It seemed more than coincidence that the counsellor to whom he was designated was a Commonwealth Bank officer, Phil Elliot, who worked in the head Savings Bank branch on King George Square. Norm had not known him previously but got to know him quite well. Another happy 'coincidence'—eleven years later Phil and Norm both sat on the Counselling Committee for the 1959 Graham Crusade.

Norm remembers going into the bank in the Valley the next morning. He does not know why but his friend Bert said to him: "*You* didn't go forward, did you?" A bit sheepishly Norm replied that he had. As a Christian of less than twenty-four hours' standing, he was not quite prepared to make a bold affirmation of his new faith.

At the mission, new converts were presented with a copy of the Gospel of John. This he took home and he began to devour the Word of God. Mavis loaned him a copy of the first Christian book, apart from the Bible, he had the pleasure of reading—a collection of addresses given by Lindsay Glegg at the Keswick convention centre. The title was *Life with a Capital L*, based on John 10:10, "*I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it abundantly*" (or to the full). LIFE with a CAPITAL L is a keynote of how he now conceives the Christian life. Nothing insipid! Something wholehearted! The most complete human existence!

In 1977 Norm had to write to the headquarters of the Billy Graham organisation in Minneapolis, USA. He got the idea to enclose a letter to Dr Appelman, thinking that that organization would know of his whereabouts, and telling of his own life since accepting Christ in Dr Appelman's 1948 mission. Some months later he received a letter from him. The passion to preach the Gospel was still burning fiercely in him, even in old age. Norm felt guilty that he had not prayed for him as he ought.

Norm had a lesson in grace when he lost Mavis' book—he thinks he must have left it in a tram. Mavis just said: "Never mind, it might do someone some good!"

He had no connection with a Presbyterian Church in Brisbane. Mavis knew that he had met Neville Kirkwood, who attended the Tabernacle, at evening tutorial classes. Mavis suggested that he

THE BILLY GRAHAM ORGANIZATION

Hyman Appelman

7339 BROADWAY • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64114 • (816) 333-4022

June 5, 1978

Rev. N. T. Barker
The Manse
57 West Street
Toowoomba 4350 Australia

My dear Norman Barker:

Had you sent me a check for \$10,000, this is no exaggeration, rather than your magnificent letter, I should not have felt as gloriously grateful to God for you, and to you for God. Letters such as yours make life worth while as they continue to help repay the drain and strain of these end-on-end campaigns around the world. Your kindness helped me enormously.

The enclosed reports, 40 years, 1977 also, will tell you something about what the Lord in His infinite grace and mercy continues to do with me and my humble ministry.

Thank you again for keeping me on the top priority of your prayer list. It may be in the good wisdom of God, that Australia may invite me again at some not too far o date, for a season of evangelistic campaigning.

Meanwhile, may the choicest of heaven's benedictions be your constant abiding heritage, that of your loved ones, and particularly of the work with which He has entrusted you. Keep on interceding for me.

In grateful, fervent, cordial pray.

Hyman Appelman
Hyman Appelman

think of going there—of course the fact that she was herself a Baptist had nothing to do with it!

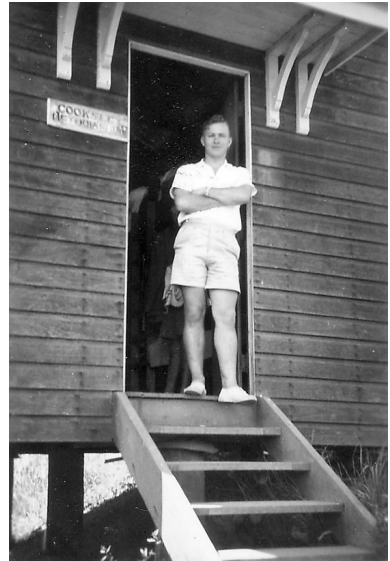
Norm started to attend the Tabernacle and joined in with a fine group of young people. Rev Fred Smith had been the minister of the Tabernacle for a little over a year. His style of ministry left an indelible impression on Norm. He was dignified in the pulpit and, unusual for a Baptist, wore a preaching gown. He was passionate in the leading of prayers and in his preaching. It was a special treat when he came to address the young people's fellowship.

Norm was baptised and came into membership at the Tabernacle in November 1948, following his baptism by Ref Fred Smith in October. He remained in membership until 15 November 1950. In 1949, he was treasurer of the Young People's Christian Endeavour

Rev Smith told him in later years that the group of young people at the Tabernacle was one of the best youth groups in his ministerial experience. Norm cherishes the friendships he made there, from whom he learned a lot, including Marg Shaw.

In 1948, the Tabernacle deaconess was the widow of a Baptist minister, Mrs Frances Aldridge, who lived in Dutton St, Hawthorne. She learned of Norm's joining the church and approached him to ask if he would like to become a private boarder in her home. He liked the idea and moved into a pleasant bedroom in her home. It was handy to his work at the bank—he walked across Hawthorne Park to the Ferry, caught it across the river, and then had a short tram ride to the Valley.

During two years with Mrs Aldridge, Norm learned much of her ministry with her late husband, Frank. This knowledge contributed to Norm's understanding of and approach to church ministry. Frances had been a member at the Tabernacle since 1944. She was a very precise lady, with a strong Yorkshire accent. She did a fine job organizing the Tabernacle ladies and visiting strenuously the Spring Hill area to the west of the Church, which at that time was a run-down near slum.



Norm at Currumbin Baptist Camp

As a member of the Baptist youth group, Norm came to experience the joy of Christian fellowship. A few months after his conversion a number of young people went to the

summer youth camp on a hill above Currumbin beach. They camped in huts of eight, two double bunk beds on either side of the hut.

Norm experienced the joy of an Easter Youth Convention, held at *Kingswood*, near Warwick. After work on the eve of Good Friday, he caught the train to Warwick, arriving many hours later. On Good Friday morning, the campers attended a combined service in the Presbyterian Church. Perhaps the solemnity of a Good Friday service, or perhaps the overly solemn style of the preacher, had little impact on the Baptist young people. On the way out, Mavis Morgan's fiancé, Ray Smith, said: "Wot! No hands!" Preaching without passion and evident conviction has always been one of Norm's pet hates.



Warwick Easter Convention, 1949
(Mavis Smith 2nd row, 6th from left; Rev J Knight
and Rev AH Brooks 2nd row, 5th and 6th from right)

In a letter-to-the editor of *The Courier Mail*, under the banner Evangelism, Norm wrote:

Mr. Middleton speaks of 'emotional outbursts.' If, by 'emotional outbursts' he means the preaching of the Gospel of Christ crucified, by all means let us have more of these 'emotional outbursts.' Perhaps that would account for the fact that the ordinary man and woman is much more ready to support the evangelist who has a real message and a burden for the souls of men, rather than the dead and lifeless thing, called by the name of Christianity, preached in so many churches to-day.— Norman T. Barker, Presbyterian Manse, Samford Road, Mitchelton.³⁸²

One of the regular activities of the Tabernacle youth group was to conduct an open air meeting in Spring Hill before the Sunday evening service. This group, and another lunch-hour meeting in Centenary Park near The Valley, gave Norm his first experience of giving a brief message in public, often just a verse or two of the Bible.

During his time at the Tabernacle, Norm was approached to lead a Sunday School at West Toowong. A mature lady was the backbone of the little Sunday School, but she wanted a man to lead it. It was all good experience for the future.

Soon after, Norm felt a call to preach, and began to conduct services in various Baptist Churches for the Baptist Lay Preachers' Association. He recalls one service at Norman Park in particular. On his way home the night before, he took a corner too sharply on

³⁸² *The Courier Mail*, 8 April 1952, p.2.

his motor bike and hit a 'silent cop' (a much smaller version of a roundabout) with the undercarriage of his bike and was thrown heavily to the road. Fortunately, it was winter and he was wearing a heavy overcoat.

He managed to ride the bike back to Hawthorne. The service at Norman Park was the next morning, a Sunday. He was undoubtedly shaken by the accident and was still very inexperienced. In any case, he forgot to include the Lord's Prayer in the service. He was told later that one of the members had walked out of the service—he had threatened that the next time a preacher omitted the Lord's Prayer he would walk out. It was a valuable lesson.

Another preaching contact he had concerned his friend Neville Kirkwood. As a student in the Baptist College, Neville was given assignments to preach in country churches. As Norm had a motorbike, Neville asked him to take him riding pillion. Two of the churches they visited were Minden and Redland Bay.

Norm also became involved in leading the Saturday night Youth Rallies, organized by the Baptist Youth Department and conducted in the auditorium under the Tabernacle. He had not long been converted when the leader, another student for the ministry, Harry West, completed his training and prepared to go as a missionary to India. Harry was a most enthusiastic, and capable youth leader. When Norm said that he didn't know much about leading a praise session, Harry said he should just wave his arms about. Neville and Harry's stories are also recounted in this book.

The Baptist State Youth Director, Rev John Knights organised city-country youth exchanges. It was on one of these exchanges early in 1950 that Norm met Marie Gordon. Mixing with such people—enthusiastic Christians, evangelical, missionary minded—it is not strange that Norm's mind turned to full-time ministry.

Norm had thoughts of following in the steps of Harry and Neville. He approached Rev Smith, who was always eager to foster such thoughts in young people at his church. The first step was to be accepted as a student at the Baptist College. Norm did not understand all the processes involved—a certificate from his church as well as an interview with the rather austere Rev Ralph Sayce at the Baptist Union Office. When Norm went for an interview, there was no letter from the church. He had been very ill with the 'flu when it was arranged for him to address the Tabernacle's mid-week prayer meeting. The result was that, without the church's letter, the head office was unable to do anything.

Norm was still very immature and didn't think the Baptist official was at all helpful or encouraging. About to become engaged to Marie in December, he wasn't too keen either on the Baptist requirement that a student not marry during his five-year training period. However, he had the 'bull by the horns' as it were and gave his notice of resignation to the Bank, after five and a half years' service.

Resigning from the Bank proved interesting, to say the least. His manager was a well-read atheist and communist. After Norm's conversion, he heard from him the well-worn jibe that Christians "look for pie in the sky when they die". The manager did everything in his power to dissuade Norm from leaving the bank, even writing to his mother. When Norm would not be dissuaded, he proved himself a good friend in requesting that Head Office not ask him to repay his bursary. During his years as a student and in his first ministry at Ashgrove, Marie and Norm ran into him a few times in the street. He would invariably ask how they were going, ask how much he was earning, and then remind him how much he could have been earning in the Bank.

Norm had a hankering to go home to Dayboro to do a bit of outside manual labour for a few months while he waited for the Baptist Union to make up its mind about his application to become a student. During this time he worked with his father, mainly in cutting cordwood for the Butter Factory.

God sometimes works in mysterious ways. The Presbyterian Home Missionary was diagnosed with tuberculosis and was unable to carry on. The Presbyterian Home Missions secretary, Rev James McPhail, was informed that Norm was in Dayboro and wrote to him, asking if he would conduct the services in the Upper North Pine Presbyterian Charge. He accepted the invitation gladly. This involved services at Dayboro and small churches scattered throughout the district—Samsonvale, Closeburn and Mt Pleasant.

To get to these places he needed a car—although it was not so long since Home Missionaries had travelled to these places by horse and buggy. Norm had a motorbike license, but not a car license. The church owned a car. He began to drive it around the township, and then went into the police station to arrange a driver's license. Country town cops knew most things going on in their town. He had seen Norm driving around in the old church car, and said: "You don't think I am going to drive with you in that, do you?" He promptly issued a license—without conducting a test.

He needed something more reliable. One of his father's friends had a utility which he was able to hire. The only trouble was that it had a worn steering bracket. When you turned the wheel around a 90 degree corner, it would get jammed, so that you could not turn it back. The utility kept going around in a circle. He was caught with this once when turning at the main intersection in front of the Crown Hotel, and nearly finished up in a corner café. On another occasion, he took a sharp corner on the top of a mountain between Samsonvale and Closeburn and finished up in the right-hand gutter.

Norm carried on part-time, conducting the services for a couple of months, until one day Rev McPhail's wife came to speak to the Women's Guild at Dayboro. She told Norm's mother how pleased she was to hear that her son was entering the ministry. Louisa looked a bit sheepish, and said: "Oh, but he's intending to become a *Baptist*

minister". Mrs McPhail, in her very Scottish voice and her decisive way, said: "He can't do that!".

At the time, Norm was working with his father laying concrete at the Butter Factory. It was only a short walk from the Church. Mrs McPhail took off in full flight, with Louisa in tow, to accost Norm who was stripped to the waist, dressed only in shorts, boots and an old army hat, and covered in cement dust. This very demure lady said to him: "You must come and see Jim" (her husband).

So Norm went off to see Rev McPhail at the Presbyterian Church Offices. He found a quite different reception to that which he had received at the Baptist Union office. He arranged for Norm to be interviewed by the Home Mission Committee, and before he knew what was happening, Norm had a train ticket to take up his first Home Mission appointment at Scarness, Hervey Bay, in late January 1951.

He married Marie Gordon on 1 December 1951 in Marie's home church, Rosalie Baptist. The minister, Rev AP Norton, conducted the service, and Rev McPhail chaired the reception in the hall underneath. Norm and Marie had two children, Peter and Robyn, and five grandchildren.

Norm has always appreciated the two years he spent in the Baptist Church immediately after his acceptance of Christ as Saviour. There is a warmth that pervades Baptist people, that comes, he believes, from their emphasis on a personal decision for Christ and a vital experience of Jesus as a Saviour. Yet he thinks that his Presbyterian roots were deeper than he thought at the time, and that he fitted into the Presbyterian way of worship and church life better than he would have the Baptist church.

He served for a few months at Hervey Bay and Tamborine, then from 1952-until 1955 at Mitchelton and from 1955 until 1957 at Cannon Hill. As a young minister he related well to young people, who dubbed him 'TNT'. At Mitchelton, his evangelistic fervour found expression in two week-long evangelistic missions conducted by the Assembly Evangelist, Rev (later Dr) Harold Whitney. The Church experienced great blessing through Mr Whitney's fervent ministry and impassioned appeals. Thus began a long association. Norm's father became a Christian in about 1954, when Rev Whitney called on the family and challenged Sid as to what his drinking was doing to his family.

At Cannon Hill, Rev Whitney was engaged to conduct another evangelistic crusade. When he fell ill, Norm took up the challenge himself in conjunction with the then Principal of the Queensland Bible Institute, Rev Eric Potter. This mission too was marked by decisions for and recommitments to Christ.

During this time he pursued studies in Arts and Divinity at the University of Queensland and completed the course of training for the ministry at Emmanuel College Theological Hall in 1957. In each of his Hall years, 1955-57, in a class of 10, he was awarded prizes

Norm Barker

in major subjects of the course. He graduated Bachelor of Arts in 1954 and received his Diploma in Commerce in 1955.

On completion of his training, he demonstrated an early leaning towards missions and education, applying, unsuccessfully for a position at the Tangoa Training Institute in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu).

While supplying the vacant parish of Ashgrove, Norm received a call to that charge and was ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia and inducted as minister of Ashgrove on 17 April 1958. His ministry at Ashgrove was blessed by considerable additions to the membership, the commencement of a Boys' Brigade, and the extension of work to The Gap, where land was purchased, a church hall erected in 1960, and a congregation gathered. While at Ashgrove, he served as Presbytery youth officer and was closely associated with the early days of the Presbyterian Youth Choir. He was appointed Convener of the Spiritual Life and Work Committee, which had oversight of the evangelistic work of Dr Whitney. He successfully argued for the Assembly to support the Billy Graham Evangelistic Crusade in 1959 and participated in the Counselling Committee. In the wider evangelical community, he was appointed Queensland chairman of the Inter Varsity Fellowship's Graduates Fellowship from 1959-62. Marie and Norm were House Parents for the first Australian Convention of the associated Overseas Christian Fellowship held at Kings College, St. Lucia, in 1961. He completed a year in New Testament studies in the divinity course during his first year at Ashgrove, graduating with Bachelor of Divinity (Honours) in 1959.



Rev Norm Barker, 1960s
(Photo: State Library of Queensland)

A week before his 34th birthday, he was called to the provincial city church of St Stephen's Maryborough, and inducted in 1962. The church was about to celebrate its centenary in February 1963. A centenary booklet produced for the occasion noted: "Mr Barker has begun his ministry with marked enthusiasm, backed by his cultural qualifications, an abiding faith in his calling, and a sincere desire to strengthen the work of St Stephen's Parish."

Recognizing the vital importance of a committed eldership, immediately after his induction he arranged an Elders' Conference at Torquay, to share his vision for ministry and in particular special planning of events during the Centenary Year, to reinvigorate

the parish, which had suffered from several less than happy ministries. The year was marked by a number of special events associated with the centenary.

During his time at Maryborough he had his first experience as a hospital board member—as minister he was automatically on the Board of the church's private hospital, St Stephen's. He was also involved in social outreach by the formation of St Stephen's Meals on Wheels service in 1965. He served for most of his time in Maryborough as Clerk of the Presbytery of Maryborough.

In 1967 there came another challenge with a call to St Andrew's Toowoomba. Although only four years at St Stephens, he was challenged to take up the work of St Andrew's which had grown tremendously under the ministry of Rev James McConaghy. The Clerk of Assembly put to him that he was peculiarly suited to the evangelical tone of this congregation, that it had grown quickly, and could as quickly fade.



St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toowoomba

Norm was inducted as minister of St Andrew's in April 1967. Thus began his final and most fruitful parish ministry which lasted until 1980. The church continued to grow steadily, to over 500 communicant members. He supported enthusiastically the All Age Sunday School commenced by Jim McConaghy and worked harmoniously with a Kirk Session eventually numbering over 40 elders. Boys' and Girls' Brigades were started. He established warm and lasting relationships with his large congregation and became known for his energetic pastoral oversight, assisted by a committed eldership and three very able evangelical deaconesses.

At St Andrew's he was appointed to the board of St Andrew's hospital established by his forerunner. For much of his time in Toowoomba he served as Clerk of the Presbytery of Toowoomba (Darling Downs). He was also a member of the Board of Fairholme College and acted as a tutor at Toowoomba for divinity subjects offered by the University of Queensland.

With the advent of Church Union, although by inclement ecumenically minded, especially through contacts with the evangelical community, he felt he had to speak against the proposed Basis of Union, particularly for its seeming devaluation of the place of Holy Scripture as the Supreme Authority in the Church. With the advent of the Uniting Church in June 1977, he was left with oversight of a vast area stretching south to the NSW border. On the west, Oakey was incorporated into the parish.

Norm Barker

With Church Union also came new responsibilities in theological education. Dr Whitney, who had assumed the responsibility of forming a new theological college for the continuing Presbyterian Church, invited him to travel to Brisbane each fortnight to lecture. This was warmly supported by his Toowoomba congregation.

He served as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland in 1978–79. It was a time when the scattered parishes of the church in Queensland were trying to find their feet again after the division brought about by the formation of the Uniting Church. Usually accompanied by his wife, he travelled extensively throughout the State, north to Cairns and Mornington Island, west to Mt Isa and Charleville, and many places in between. His special charter was to encourage the remnant congregations.

At the conclusion of his term as moderator, the 1979 Assembly appointed him Professor of Biblical Studies in the Queensland Theological Hall within Emmanuel College, from the beginning of 1980. His service of Induction was held in St Andrew's on 8 February 1980. During 1980 he worked closely with Dr Whitney, and in 1981 succeeded him as Principal of the Hall. During his early years at the college he undertook further studies at the University of Queensland in the Department of Studies in Religion, graduating as a Master of Literary Studies in 1984. He resigned as Professor at the end of 1993 on reaching the age of 65 but continued as part-time Principal in 1994. He was appointed Minister Emeritus. The 1994 Assembly passed a Minute of Appreciation for his services to the church in theological education.

During this time he became closely involved with Emmanuel College. Being elected by the Assembly, he was welcomed to membership of Emmanuel College Council on 15 October 1981 and appointed Vice-Chairman in 1985. Soon after his retirement from the Theological Hall he was appointed Chairman of the Council and served in that capacity from March 1995 until November 1998. He retired from the Council in March 2000. He was elected an Honorary Fellow of Emmanuel College in 2005 but relinquished the position due to theological disagreements. Marie also served as an Assembly representative on Emmanuel Council for ten years. Norm was also a member and Vice-Chairman of Grace College Council until he had to relinquish some duties after suffering a heart attack in 1990.

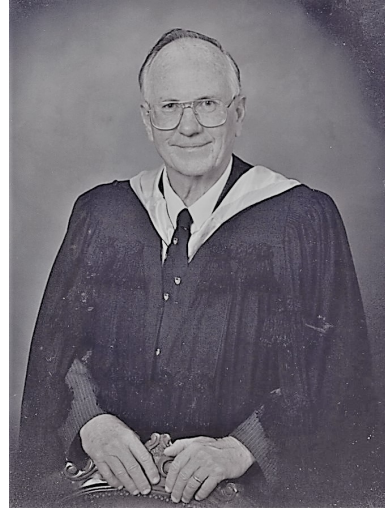
Norm had a life-long love of books and learning. However, it was usually done under difficulties. In Dayboro he read with the dim light of a kerosene lantern and partially supported himself



Rev Norm Barker, 1978

during secondary school by cane cutting for cow feed each Saturday on a dairy property. Matriculation was through evening classes. Studies in Arts and Divinity were part-time, although for his divinity degree he achieved one high distinction, five distinctions and three credits. He had to settle with second class honours as these studies were undertaken during his first year at Ashgrove. Studies for the Master's degree were undertaken while teaching at the theological college.

Norm continued to play golf, as a member of the Indooroopilly Golf Club, until the end of 2008, when he resigned for health reasons. In retirement he and Marie became involved in the Probus Club of Toowong. Both have been president of the club, and Norm was elected a Life Member in 2007 for his contributions, including the compilation of a history of its first 25 years.



Rev Norm Barker, 1994

He cherished his family, marking up each year of his long journey with his beloved wife Marie, following with interest and enthusiasm the careers of their children, and in turn their grandchildren.

In the early 1980s, while living at Kenmore, Norm met up again with Fred Smith, travelling by bus to his new home in the Baptist retirement Village at Brookfield. "I must get you out to preach in our chapel," he said, and so for some twenty years Norm had the joy of conducting several services a year in their lovely chapel, feeling very much at home. During Rev Smith's lifetime, Marie and Norm usually partook of morning tea and fellowship with Fred and his wife, Win. Norm values a number of books which he passed on to him, including the *Jerusalem Bible* presented to him when he retired as Chairman of the Bible College of Queensland.

Marie died in 2010 and Norm continues to reside at Aveo, Taringa. Mavis and Ray Smith remained their life-long friends.

Above all, Norm gives continual thanks that God moved in his heart as a young man of 19 to turn to Jesus Christ as his only Saviour and Lord. To follow the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach his Gospel, to commend him to others as a faithful ambassador for Christ, has been the earnest desire of his heart and mind.

Rev Paul Harrison

Paul Theodore Harrison was born in Willesden Green, London, in 1928. Paul was the son of Rev J Pearson (JP) Harrison and Mabel, who married in Essex in 1918, shortly after JP completed his studies at Spurgeon's College. JP was pastor at the churches in Marrickville and Parramatta in Sydney, from 1932 until 1943, where he exercised a strong ministry.³⁸³ Subsequently, he was pastor of the Rosalie Baptist Church (1944–47) and became the Australian Secretary of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union in 1949. Mabel Pearson was President and then Secretary of the QBWU in 1945 and 1946.

Paul was baptised in the Parramatta church and was a member of the choir and a collector for the Forward Movement³⁸⁴. He came into membership at the City Tabernacle in 1948. It is not known how long and in what capacity he had been at the Tabernacle prior to this. At the time, he was living with his parents in Paddington, but moved with them to Brunswick, Victoria in 1949 and was still living with them in Brunswick in 1954, employed as a clerk. It is not known which church the family attended in Melbourne. Rev JP Harrison is thought to have continued to reside in Brunswick until his death in 1966.

In March 1950, Paul was given a letter of Commendation by the Tabernacle, recommending him for admission to Spurgeon's College, London, where he hoped to undergo training for the ministry. The church prayed that the blessing of God would be upon him in his studies and later in the service to which he was called.³⁸⁵ Paul sailed on the SS *Mooltan*, arriving in London in September 1952. It is presumed that Paul was awarded his Bachelor of Divinity by Spurgeon's College. John and Mabel Pearson travelled to England in late 1958, presumably to visit Paul.

Following his studies, Paul served as the pastor of three churches in England: Southampton; Petts Wood, Kent; and Zion Baptist, Cambridge from 1956 until 1975. Paul was a



Spurgeon's College
(Photo: *The Church Times*, 2019)

³⁸³ Parramatta (NSW) Church Centenary, in *The Australian Baptist*, 21 March 1951, p. 5.

³⁸⁴ *The Baptist Recorder: Journal of the Baptist Historical Society of New South Wales*, Vol 3, No 86, June 1986, pp. 9–10.

³⁸⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1949–1950*, p. 9.

third-generation pastor. His grandfather, Rev William Harrison, who died in Charters Towers, Queensland in 1898, was also a pastor.

Paul married Audrey Ticehurst in Hove, Sussex in 1956. Audrey was born in Sussex in 1921, the daughter of Arthur and Winifred Ticehurst. She had become a registered nurse in November 1948, having studied at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Sick Children in Brighton and was living at the Royal Waterloo Hospital, Lambeth in 1956.

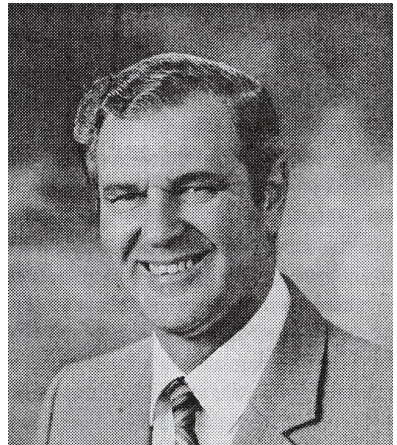
Paul returned to Australia and served at Dandenong, Victoria (1975–80). Rev JP Harrison died in 1966, and Mabel moved to Brisbane and remained a widow until her death in 1987.

Paul and Audrey had two sons, Christopher and Nigel, both of whom were students in Melbourne in 1980.

After months of eagerly awaiting his arrival, Paul was inducted into the Pastorate of the Tabernacle on Sunday 1 February 1981. Rev Harry Orr of Sydney preached on the subject *The Inescapable Assignment*, in which he said that the congregation should give the Minister the opportunity of preaching to the unsaved. After Paul and Audrey were given the right hand of fellowship, Paul conducted the service of Communion during which time he outlined the steps which led him to accept the call to the Church and asked the congregation to continue praying as more would be accomplished by prayer than by his preaching. It was a moving and inspiring service.³⁸⁶

The Tabernacle had been without a senior pastor for 18 months prior to Paul's induction and had been reliant on the continuing ministry of its Associate Pastor, Rev Murray Sinfield.

In his first pastoral letter, written about four months after his induction, he wrote that it had been a huge encouragement to him to discover so many men and women in the congregation with a hunger to see the blessing of God upon the work, worship, and witness of the Tabernacle, who had worked and prayed for it, and continued to do so. Surely, the church could appropriate the promise given to Jeremiah (29: 10), "I know the plans that I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare ... to give you a future and a hope." He went on to say that worship, fellowship, and evangelism must receive equal emphasis as we



Rev Paul T Harrison

³⁸⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1980–1981*, p. 7.

seek a vision for our future. The Tabernacle must be both a love centre and an outreach centre. Pray that God will enfold His plans for us in all these areas in such a way that we may grow into the fulfilment of them with assurance and joy.³⁸⁷

Paul has been described as an ‘old school’ pastor. He had a strong personality, which commanded instant respect, and his leadership was such that others enthusiastically followed. His ministry was typified by adherence to biblical exposition and pastoral care.³⁸⁸

Members of the Tabernacle Pastoral Team carried out overseas Ministry visits during 1993. Paul and Audrey visited Africa, where the churches in Zambia and Zimbabwe greatly appreciated the time of sharing and ministry.³⁸⁹

After 13 years of ministry, in his final pastoral letter, Paul wrote that when he commenced his forty years of full-time pastoral ministry, he had the conviction that a pastor’s priorities were “The Three P’s”, as referred to in Spurgeon’s College: Preaching, Pastoring, and Praying. The years had served only to deepen that conviction. Do nothing but these three things, and you do enough; do less and you do nothing.³⁹⁰

The impact of Paul’s ministry at the Tabernacle is documented in Les Ball’s *Sesqui-Centennial History*.³⁹¹ During his period of ministry, Frances Guard, Lois Brooks, Neil and Joelle Chenoweth, Graeme and Coral Johnson, Lenore Hedley, Richard Lamont, and Neil Bernard all commenced their service or training in preparation for service. Max and Julia King commenced service the year after Paul’s retirement, having committed themselves to service during his ministry.

Rev PT Harrison retired from pastoral ministry at the end of 1993, aged 65, but continued in membership at the Tabernacle until his death. Audrey took on responsibility as Coordinator of the Northside Bible Study Group in 1995 and continued in this role for many years. She later became a Vice-President of the Ladies’ Day Fellowship. Paul was an occasional “guest” preacher and for the Northside Group, conducted Bible studies from Matthew on *The Kingdom of Heaven* based on Jesus’ parables and led a series for the Sunday Morning Bible Study entitled *Rummaging through the Bible’s attic*—studies in Micah, Joel, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Nahum, Malachi. Paul was one of several members of the church who served communion twice a year to “shut in” members of the church and he and Audrey were both involved in the Summer City Kids Club in 2001.

³⁸⁷ City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1980–1981, p 5.

³⁸⁸ L Ball, *op. cit.*, p 81.

³⁸⁹ City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1993–1994, p 9.

³⁹⁰ City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1993–1994, pp. 4–5.

³⁹¹ L Ball, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–89.

In 2001, Paul published *The divine forbearance: or the dynamics of forgiveness*.³⁹²

Paul died at Woorim, Bribie Island in 2012. A thanksgiving service to God, for his life and ministry, was held in the Tabernacle. He requested no flowers and that donations to the mission work of GI would be appreciated.

Audrey died in 2013, in Brisbane.

³⁹² PT Harrison, 2001. *The divine forbearance; or the dynamics of forgiveness*: West Chermshire.

George Sawyer

George William Sawyer was born in England in 1913, the son of Charles and Mary (aka Margaret) Sawyer. His parents had married in 1902 in Wiltshire. George had an older sister Amy and a younger sister, Gladys. His father died in 1929. George served in the British Army in World War II in the 86th brigade, the Hertfordshire Yeomanry. When he was 36 years old, in 1950, he migrated from England from Southampton to Sydney, aboard the *SS Astuorias*. He gave his occupation as porter.

Initially, George lived in Auchenflower with his sister, Dorothy Eastall, her husband Frank (Francis) and their family who had migrated to Australia in 1948, having married in Hertfordshire in 1929. As the family attended the Tabernacle, George started attending as well, but it was through an open-air meeting in the City of Brisbane that he surrendered his life to Jesus. He was baptized by Rev Fred Smith soon after in November 1950 and was then received into membership at the Tabernacle in early 1952. He was commissioned for missionary service later in 1952. Dorothy and Frank Eastall had come into membership at the Tabernacle in 1950, and their four children, David, Frances (Frank), Grace (later Mrs Grace Davis) and Julie, who married Bevin Hohnke at the Tabernacle in 1964, all became members in due course.

In November 1894, the Petersham Baptist CES erected a house at La Perouse near the mouth of Botany Bay whereby Miss J Watson lived and worked among the local indigenous people until ill health forced her early resignation and Miss Retta Dixon, a member of the Petersham Church, took up the ministry in 1896. By 1899, work had spread to four other centres and the New South Wales



George Sawyer as a child (front row on the left) with his parents George and Mary and four sisters, c. 1916
(Photo: Sandra Norvill)



George Sawyer

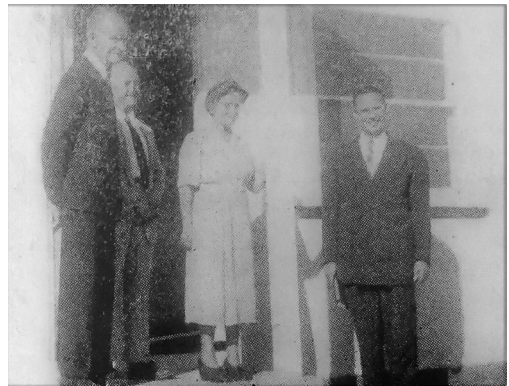
Aborigines Mission, subsequently named the Australian Inland Mission (AIM), was formed.³⁹³

George had been associated with the QBI for some time when he responded to the challenge of the AIM, was interviewed by the Federal Council in December 1952, and accepted for service with the Mission. Initially he served in the New South Wales Branch of the AIM, engaged in the building and maintenance of Mission Stations.³⁹⁴

George served as an evangelistic missionary in New South Wales and the Northern Territory from 1952 until 1960. He was sent to Griffith with the AIM builder Albert Goulter, where he assisted with the building and painting of the mission house. They began looking after the Sunday School and held cottage meetings twice weekly during their time here.

The local missionary, Miss M Campbell, reported that the mission house (i.e. accommodation for AIM missionaries) was completed just in time for the official opening in April 1954. The plumbers only finished their work on the Thursday night, and the electricians on Friday night, together having to work hard to get the many necessary tasks completed. Mr Goulter and Mr Sawyer did a valiant job, and everything was ready when the visitors arrived. The opening ceremony was conducted by the AIM director, Rev Egerton C Long.³⁹⁵

George then went to Leeton, where he painted the interior of the mission house and was described as a very great help and a most willing worker.



Opening of the Griffith Mission House
Rev EC Long, Mr Sawyer, Miss Campbell and Mr Goulter (Photo: Our Aim, 1954)

³⁹³ <https://australianindigenousministries.org.au/about-us-read-more/>

³⁹⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1952–1953*, p. 9.

³⁹⁵ M Campbell, 1954. The Opening of the New Mission House At Griffith, in *Our Aim*, 17 April 1954, pp. 10–11.

In December 1953 it was reported that he had a scalding accident when a kettle of water was upset on his foot causing second degree burns.

In mid-1954, George relieved the worker in Balranald for some weeks and then in August after holidaying at the Bethshan Mission, Wyee on the central north coast of NSW, he was assigned to assist in the work in Dubbo. In October, George reported that God was speaking to the people and they were praying that many would hear the voice of the Saviour. They praised God that some had already responded to His voice. George had come to love the people and the work at Dubbo and praised God for the wonderful way prayer had been answered.³⁹⁶

Wesley (Wes) Caddy, the senior worker in Dubbo at the time, wrote that George had been to Wellington for a few days prior to also spending a week in Gilgandra. He had a very good time there and the people appreciated his ministry in their homes.

Mr RM Living subsequently became the senior worker at Dubbo. He made mention in mid-1955 that George had assisted greatly in Dubbo, in the way he had renovated the church and living quarters and in the ministry itself, especially in visitation work. The people living in and around the town did not generally attend church services, but the attendance of children both at Sunday School and the JCE had been a great encouragement to the ministry team.³⁹⁷

Many people expressed their regret when it became known that Mr Sawyer was leaving Dubbo for the Northern Territory. George had had a devoted ministry amongst the people for 18 months and was much loved by them all. It was not surprising that the church was filled with friends and well-wishers of all ages who had come to say goodbye.

In responding, George told of his godly mother and her constant prayers for him which were answered when he came to the Lord some years previously. When at the QBI, he became discouraged with his studies and sought the Lord as to whether he would go or stay. The Lord gave him a remarkable answer through His Word showing him a definite way that it was His will he should remain at College so that he could become equipped to win souls for the Lord. He spoke with feeling of his work amongst the children whom he loved and the way this work was especially dear to his heart. He knew that the call to go to the Territory was from the Lord.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ G W Sawyer, 1954 Helper Together: Dubbo and the Western District in *Our Aim*, 18 October 1954, p. 6.

³⁹⁷ RM Living, 1955. Circling Our District with the Gospel in *Our Aim*, 18 July 1955, p 8.

³⁹⁸ RM Living, 1955. Farewell to Mr G W Sawyer at Dubbo Church in *Our Aim*, 17 November 1955, pp 12–13.

George arrived in Darwin in November 1955. He stayed at the Retta Dixon Home (RDH) where he helped in many ways as well as being involved with the spiritual ministry through meetings held in the outskirt area of Winnellie, where a sizeable Aboriginal camp was located.

A couple of ladies who were teenagers at the RDH during his time there remembered George and each said that he was a nice old man who helped with the mission work – *you know, going out and doing meetings and visiting*—and each also remembered him as always having a camera around his neck—he took a lot of photos of the residents at the RDH.

In January 1957, he was twice in Darwin Hospital for high blood pressure. He went on furlough for the second half of 1957 and then arrived in Narrandera, New South Wales, to recommence the work there at the end of January 1958. He had further furlough in 1959–60, during which time he returned to the Tabernacle for a visit.



Retta Dixon Home, Darwin (Photo: *Daily Mail*, 2020)

George left the work at Narrandera at the end of August 1961 after working with the AIM for nine years.

Following his missionary service, he moved to Newtown, Sydney and resumed work as a porter for a while before returning to Brisbane. In April 1962 he conducted meetings in Redfern while the local worker, Miss Acland, was on holidays.

George was planning to marry May Nicholls, who was a divorcee, but unfortunately, aged 59 years, she had a stroke and died in the Brisbane Hospital in July 1965, the day before their planned wedding. It is thought that George took this as a sign that he should not marry, and he returned to England soon after.

George was removed from the Tabernacle's membership roll in 1968.

He tried to return to Australia but because he had been back in England for more than three years he was refused permission.

He died following a road accident on London Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire in 1994, aged 80, only eight kilometres from his birthplace. His father George senior was killed in a road accident on the same road.

The Retta Dixon Home was badly damaged by cyclone Tracy at Christmas in 1974.

Ruth Morris (née Leggett)

Ruth Leggett was born in 1925 in Wynnum, the youngest of George and Alice Leggett's six children. She grew up in Auchenflower and was a good school student, topping the state in her Scholarship (year 8) Examination. For six years up until 1948, her father was Secretary of the Queensland Evangelistic Committee and chief organiser of the evangelistic Gospel Wagon. Her brother, Cecil (Cec) had a very long association with the Tabernacle, coming into membership in 1952, and another brother, Joseph came into membership in 1941 and later became a Baptist pastor. (His story is recounted elsewhere.) Their sister Dorothy Leggett and brother George came into membership at the Tabernacle at the same time as Ruth, but neither of their parents were in membership. George and Alice both died in Brisbane in 1970 and 1978.

Ruth was awarded a gold medal in 1934 in the elementary division and a book prize in 1936 in the junior division of the BUQ Scripture Examination. She was a scholar at the Rosalie Sunday School.

In 1949, Ruth was living at the Brisbane General Hospital where she worked as a nurse. She undertook further nursing training in Toowoomba, ultimately becoming a triple certificated registered nurse. She was received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1946 on transfer from Toowong, suggesting that her parents may have been members of the Toowong Church which was a 550 metre walk from their home.



Ruth Morris (née Leggett)

While in training in Toowoomba, Ruth and a fellow nurse, Joan McBurnie, became lost in darkness on their way back from a hike to Table Mountain and were forced to spend the night in a clump of lantana in the rough country between the mountain and Picnic Point. A black tracker, a party of police, and searchers, were out all night on the mountain looking for them. When a relief party went out early the following morning they found the two nurses making their way back. Police reported that one of the girls had been badly scratched by lantana bushes, but that they had done the right thing in remaining in the one spot when they became lost. An experienced hiker who had extensive knowledge of the area in which the nurses were lost, said that the bottom of the mountain was dangerous country in which to be wandering at night.³⁹⁹ Their

³⁹⁹ Nurses Lost on Hike, Safe, in *The Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 12 October 1949, p. 2.

rescue was reported in the newspapers in Cairns, Townsville, Warwick, Mackay, Rockhampton, Ipswich, and Brisbane. Ruth was able to report for duty on the morning of their rescue.

Ruth was the soloist at a special nurses' service conducted by members of Australian Nurses' Christian Movement in the Scarness Presbyterian Church, Maryborough in October 1950. She sang *I am satisfied with Jesus*.

She was commissioned for missionary service in 1952, and served in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan (1953–60) with the Sudan United Mission (SUM). It is not known if she had any contact with Barbara Cooksey (née Hodgson) who served with the same mission in the same region for part of her time in Sudan.

Before going to the Sudan, Ruth went to the QBI where she was the only lady in a group of four who went to Sudan.

Ruth was the guest of honour at a farewell function at the Tabernacle, on the Tuesday before her departure and left Brisbane on 28 March 1953 for the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, where she planned to work for three years. Ruth spent her first six months overseas at the American Presbyterian Mission girls' boarding school at Khartoum learning Arabic and assisting with medical work and instruction. One of her first tasks on arrival would be to grapple with Arabic and then to learn some of the tribal languages.

She had not been out of Queensland previously and was to join Mr and Mrs Roy Conwell at Nyakma.

There were about 3000 Hansen's disease (leprosy) sufferers in the area. At Nyakma, the site of the station for Hansen's disease sufferers, there were 40 in-patients and 20 outpatients, and they expected to reach a total of 100 by April 1954.⁴⁰⁰

Mr Conwell, who was also from Brisbane, had been supervising the building of the hospital and was hoping to have it completed by the middle of April that year.

Ruth reported to the team in the Sudan that with the new sulphur drug, diaminodiphenyl sulfone (DDS), the chances of a cure had become much greater with some patients being cured within two years. Occupational therapy also played a big part in the treatment of the disease and as the Nyakma was very fertile, patients were encouraged to cultivate the soil. Ruth was to live in a locally constructed brick

⁴⁰⁰ Missionaries to marry, in *The Brisbane Courier*, 25 January 1955, p. 8.

building with a thatch roof. Ruth and Mrs Conwell were the only white women at Nyakma.⁴⁰¹

Ernest George Morris, who was generally known as George, subsequently married Ruth Leggett, was born in Gayndah in 1919, the son of Ernest and Gertrude Morris. He served in World War Two, but his name is not on the Tabernacle Roll of Honour. George escorted the new missionaries to the field, and it was always a family joke that Ruth's father said to him: "You look after our Ruthie, won't you!".

Ruth and George had to dispense the medications daily as people thought if one tablet was good then why not take the whole lot at once.

MORRIS—LEGGETT—Mr and Mrs George Leggett, of Cooper's Plains, wish to announce the engagement of Sister Ruth Leggett and Mr George E Morris, both of SUM, Sudan.⁴⁰²

They had known each other for a number of years and were planning to be married when the field conference of the SUM met in April, before the wet season started.

As planned, they married in April 1954. A tape recording of their marriage was played at a SUM rally in Bible House, Brisbane on 7 September 1954.

Their first child, Sue was born at Malakal, South Sudan in 1955. The plan had been for the baby to be born in a hospital, but fighting broke out, so she was born in the home of Presbyterian missionaries attended by Catholic nuns. Sue's brother, Stephen was born in 1957, when Ruth and George were home on furlough.

George was received into membership at the Tabernacle in April 1958 while on furlough from the mission field. The family went back to Sudan until 1959 when safety again became an issue and the missionaries were starting to be repatriated. They returned from Sudan as much as anything due to the state of George's health.⁴⁰³

The family settled in Gayndah, where George worked as a builder and Ruth became a Blue Nurse. Ruth and George transferred their church memberships to Gayndah in October 1960.

Over the years, many missionaries came to stay with them in Gayndah and they kept an open house for anyone in need. Initially they were part of the Baptist Church but when that closed in 1982, they joined the Uniting Church, but were always part of many Christian organizations and had a missionary prayer chart on their wall to remind them

⁴⁰¹ To nurse in Sudan, in *The Courier Mail*, 23 March 1953, p. 6.

⁴⁰² *The Courier Mail*, 23 January 1954, p. 20.

⁴⁰³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1958–1959*, p. 8.

of who they needed to pray for. The family were always up early so they could have family devotions before going to school or work.

George died in 1986. Ruth, with her daughters Sue and Wendy, and Wendy's family, moved to Toowoomba in 1997, where she lived until she passed away in 2009.

Hazel Frank (née Brooks)

Hazel May Brooks, who was commonly known as May, was born in Brisbane in 1925, the daughter of Edgar and Hazel Brooks. Edgar had been in membership at the Tabernacle since 1920 and Hazel joined the church the day after their marriage in 1923. May had three siblings: John; Margery who married Rev Henry (Harry) West after his return from the mission field; and Joan, who became a missionary alongside her husband Dr TN Chenoweth.

May and Joan were received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1938, following their baptisms by Rev Albert Butler in September. They were both awarded gold medals for first place in their respective divisions of the annual scripture examination in 1940. The family were living in Eagle Junction at the time. May was the Secretary of the JCE in 1939–41, and Secretary of the ICE Society in 1943–44. She was living with her parents in 1949 in Toowong, while working as a nurse, and after her father's death in 1953, continued to live with her mother until 1954.

May transferred her membership to the Toowong church in 1944, shortly after her parents moved to Toowong. Then in 1970, she transferred back to the Tabernacle. She has been included in Part 1 of this book because although she was in membership at Toowong when she was commissioned for missionary service, she had grown up at the Tabernacle and spent her adolescent years there.

In her testimony in 1954, May said that it was through the influence of her Christian parents that she first learned to love and honour the things of God. At the age of 14 years, she realised she was a sinner in God's sight and accepted the Lord Jesus as her personal Saviour. Not long after, she was invited to attend the monthly CIM prayer meeting, and there realised the need of heathen lands. It was soon after at the age of 19 years, that she commenced nursing and became interested in work in Indonesia. That interest deepened throughout the years of training that followed, until she became increasingly conscious that God's command to her was to go. After completing two years at the MBI, and further hospital training, she felt impelled to take the next step of applying to the CIM. She delayed for some months doubting her sufficiency for the task, but as she stepped forward, He gave her the assurance that she was "in the way", through the words of John 15:16. As time went on that conviction deepened, and as she looked back, it was with deep thankfulness to God for all the way He had led her.⁴⁰⁴

May was accepted by OMF Australia as an appointee in 1954. She left Australia with seven other appointees in September, for the OMF Orientation Course in Singapore. By

⁴⁰⁴ *The Millions*, 1 October 1954, pp. 13–14.

1955, she was serving in South Thailand in the town of Narathiwat and joined the Saiburi Christian Hospital in 1956.

May reported from Saiburi that the clinic was a busy place. The first patient for the day usually arrived at about 7 am, and sometimes earlier. Officially they did not open until 8 am, but from that time until the last patient was seen about 12:30 pm, there was not much spare time. During the dry season, they had their greatest number of patients. Often between 80 and 200 people passed through the consulting and treatment rooms in a morning. As they waited for their turn in the waiting room, one of the staff would take the opportunity of playing a Gospel recording to them and telling the story of salvation with the aid of pictures. It was a colourful scene as they crowded round the door and squatted on the benches in their colourful sarongs and headscarves.

The missionaries' home was part of the clinic, or perhaps it might be better to say that the clinic was part of their home. May's bedroom was immediately above the examination room, so she did not miss much during her "off duty" times. The front door opened onto one of the main streets of Saiburi, which was a little country town on the coast. Although quite a small town, the surrounding area was studded with Malay villages hidden amongst the trees. Prior to 1943, the region around Saiburi had been part of Malaya.

Each day buses deposited their cargo of patients outside the clinic, some having travelled 20 to 30 km and the occasional patient much further. With no ambulance, fathers had to carry their sons or vice versa if they could not walk. It was not an uncommon sight to see a young man carrying his old father into the clinic, or it might be a young man carrying his wife who had beri-beri.⁴⁰⁵



Messrs DG Beard, LH Thomson, PF Jeffries, D Wylie, Misses D Barber, EF Roose, M Brooks, D Kelly

(Photo: *The Millions*, 1954)



Saiburi Christian Hospital
(Photo: Saiburi Looker)

⁴⁰⁵ *The Millions*, 1 August 1956, p. 15.

In 1957, Hazel wrote saying that the missionaries were thankful for the opportunities that the clinic and midwifery services had given to the lives of the people. They felt inadequate as they sought to tell them the simple, elementary truths of the Gospel. Simple statements which they took so much for granted were not easy to explain to someone in another language. How to tell them of God's holiness and hatred for sin, and yet his infinite love for each one of us? Her language was still quite limited, and sometimes she wondered if anything she had said had made sense after speaking for a while in the waiting room—or if she had misrepresented the truth by the use of wrong words. There was still many a “Ta erti” (I do not understand). She requested prayer for help in understanding and speaking the language of the people, and above all that the Holy Spirit would make the words not only clear to their heads, but also to their hearts.⁴⁰⁶

Later she wrote expressing her hope that the day would soon come when she would be able to write and tell the church of Malays who were believing in Christ. She wished that they could meet some of the folk who came into their house. People she had come to regard as friends—who sat and talked with them or just watched them as they worked. Yet they so quickly retreated behind a wall when Christ's name was mentioned. Christ had promised to those who follow Him, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” Freedom from fear, superstition, sorrow, self, to serve the Living God with their whole heart.

For those who had been praying, she had the good news that at least six visas had been granted to members of the Mission during the year. God was answering! She was happy in the work in South Thailand but felt too that God would in His good time lead her on.⁴⁰⁷

May sailed through Fremantle, on the MV *Charon*, en route from Singapore in 1959, when she was 33. She had been out of Australia for four years and was returning on furlough and for home assignment. She left again in 1960 for her second term of service and again ministered in Saiburi Christian Hospital and in the city of Pattani until 1964.

During her second term of service, however, she was able to write that when she thought of the many Christian friends she had back home and the strength they were to her as a missionary, it made her realise a little of the struggle that folk had when they became Christians, sometimes without any friends, with their family against them because of their stand for Christ. It was no wonder that some fell by the wayside.

⁴⁰⁶ Openings Given Through Medicine, in *The Millions*, 1 February 1957, p. 13.

⁴⁰⁷ God is Answering, in *The Millions*, 1 July 1957, p. 14.

But for those who determined to go on despite the cost, the Lord gradually transformed their whole life and outlook, and you could see Him adding exceedingly abundantly joy, new lasting friendships, and a new purpose in life.

This was evident in the lives of some of the Christians in Saiburi where the Thai Church was gradually growing in number and strength.⁴⁰⁸

May arrived back in Brisbane in 1964 and during her furlough, trained as a State Certified Midwife. She went back to Saiburi in 1965 for a third term of service. On her return to Brisbane, she was the Captain of the Girls' Brigade in 1971–72 at the Tabernacle.



May Brooks (Photo: *The Millions*, 1957)

Before her marriage, May was living in Clayfield. May and Norman (Norm) Frank were married at the Tabernacle in 1974 by Rev Neville Abrahams. Norm was born in 1904 in Manchester, England, the son of Samuel and Jennie Frank. He migrated to Australia with his parents as an infant in 1906. His first wife, Winifred Ireland died in 1948. He came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1948 following visitation, and was elected as a deacon in 1950, to fill the casual vacancy created by the passing of Margery Bush's father, Walter, but was not re-elected. Following their marriage, they lived in Caloundra, where Norm died in February 1995.

May's funeral notice read:

FRANK, Hazel May Late of Brookfield Village, passed away peacefully, Thursday, 23rd May 2013. Aged 87 Years. Dearly loved Wife of Norm (deceased). Stepmother and Mother-in-law of Margaret and John Findlay. Cherished Sister of Joan Chenoweth (deceased), John Brooks (deceased) and Margery West. Relatives and Friends are invited to a Celebration of May's Life, to be held in The Chapel, Brookfield Village, 139 Gold Creek Road, Brookfield, on Wednesday, 29th May, at 10 am.⁴⁰⁹



May Brooks

Her funeral service was conducted by Pastor John Williams.

⁴⁰⁸ *The Millions*, February 1962, pp. 13–4.

⁴⁰⁹ *The Courier Mail*, 27 May 2013.

Barbara Cooksey (née Hodgson)

Barbara Mary Hodgson was born in 1929 or 1930, the daughter of William and Jessie Hodgson. Her father was a pharmacist in Toowoomba.

Barbara was baptised by Rev Fred Smith in 1948 and came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1950. In 1954, Barbara was living briefly with her parents in Toowoomba, when she went to Hobart for a vacation, staying in the Nurses Club where she renewed her acquaintance with Rose Rasey, who had led her to the Lord. Rose was the first staff worker with the Australian Nurses Christian Movement in Brisbane. She had previously been a missionary.



Barbara with Rose Rasey
(Photo: *Grace in the Lamplight*)

Barbara trained as a nurse at the Brisbane General Hospital (now the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital) and then studied at the MBI for two years, where she met Frank Cooksey.

Barbara planned to leave Brisbane in 1956 for her field of service. The church prayed that God would be pleased to fill her life, having been consecrated to Him, with a power from on high and lead her forth into avenues of fruitful service to the honour and glory of His name.⁴¹⁰



Barbara, third from left with *Unara* staff,
Toowoomba. (Photo: *Grace in the Lamplight*)

Frank was born in Melbourne in 1933, the son of Harold and Myrtle Cooksey. He also undertook a two-year course of study at the MBI.

Barbara was a year ahead of him at college and was accepted for missionary service in the Sudan, arriving there a year before him. They served with the SUM in the Nuba Mountains from 1956 until 1962.

⁴¹⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1955–1956*, p. 9.

Frank and Barbara were married in the Sudan. Their daughter Ruth was born in Khartoum, a three-day train journey from their mission station.

Due to the political unrest Frank, Barbara and Ruth sailed tourist class from Aden to Melbourne in late 1960 on the SS *Himalaya*. Their address in Australia was to be in Moonee Ponds, Victoria where Frank's parents lived. However, they moved to Toowoomba, where Barbara's parents still lived, and were invited to work as pastoral assistants in the Baptist Church. Their son, David was born in Toowoomba.

In November 1962, the Tabernacle said farewell to Frank and Barbara, shortly before they left to commence service with WBT in Papua New Guinea. Frank was to engage in manual work, to release others for translation work.⁴¹¹ Barbara also worked in a support role.

They served with SIL, at Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea from 1963 until 1969 and then with WBT at Kangaroo Ground, Victoria. There is no record of Frank becoming a member at the Tabernacle.

In their first annual report to the Tabernacle from Papua New Guinea, they wrote saying that another year had passed, with its joys, sorrows, blessings and heartaches, evidence of God's mighty working, and problems yet unsolved; seeds of light sown with the promise of a bountiful harvest, and opportunities regretfully lost. The church's prayers, their hands, and God, must all work together if that corner of His vineyard was to be a fruitful field, so that it can be said of us all in the day of the Harvest, "Well done!" that He alone may be glorified.⁴¹²



Frank and Barbara in PNG, 1964

The following year was one of change, both within the group and in their own ministry. In general, the work of translation of the Word of God was expanding rapidly, and many more tribes had fulltime translators working with them. In particular, their work had altered from the regular pattern of daily service in the joinery shop and the home, to what was termed "Special projects."⁴¹³

The next year was an especially busy one as they sought to accomplish the most they could for the Lord before returning for furlough. For much of the year, Frank was

⁴¹¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1962–1963*, p. 8.

⁴¹² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1964–1965*, p. 10.

⁴¹³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1965–1966*, p. 11.

engaged in allocating new teams, helping them to build their village houses, and setting up radio contact with the Base. Other tribal houses were built for teams whose first houses had become unusable. They had served for three consecutive years on the staff of the jungle camp training for new members, teaching them practical skills, and helping them to adapt to life in Papua New Guinea. Those missionaries later went to remote villages where they lived close to the people, learnt their language and customs, and sought to reach them with the Gospel with the ultimate aim of translating the Word of God into their language.⁴¹⁴

While on furlough and engaged in deputation, they had some very encouraging meetings and completed a nine-week tour of Victoria. The church's faithful fellowship was dear to them. In Victoria, Frank had good contact with young people in high schools, university colleges and teacher training colleges, and spoke at several camps for the 16-26 plus age group during the school and college vacations. They spent several months at the new headquarters site out of Melbourne, where Frank supervised the construction of the first buildings. The Lord had challenged many through His Word ministered in country conventions and various churches during their deputation. Young people especially had yielded their lives for full-time service, and older ones had dedicated themselves to support and encourage the younger ones.⁴¹⁵

Up until the end of July 1968, Frank and Barbara were travelling on deputation. In September they were in charge of a mud brick bivouac—a camp for young people at the new WBT headquarters site. The volunteers worked hard and long making mud bricks to be used in the building of the headquarters. Each Saturday following this camp, a number of young people gathered for a picnic lunch and an afternoon of brickmaking, followed by a barbecue tea and films. About 5000 bricks had been made by the end of November. In the first week of January, however, bushfires swept through the area, destroying all of the buildings already on the property, including their house and all their belongings. The blackened stacks of bricks survived, however, and those that were not damaged were used in the building of the first accommodation unit.

A camp planned for January was held and it was an overflow camp, with much blessing. The Lord provided them with a temporary home and during May, Frank led two Vacation Jungle Camps, one in Victoria and one near Perth. During Frank's absence in Perth, the Lord took their son David, aged 8 years, to Himself. In all the concentrated trials over the six-month period, they had constantly sought the Lord to know what He would teach them and what He wanted them to do for Him. During a brief holiday, they waited on the Lord and sought His Will. Subsequently they applied for a Home

⁴¹⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1966–1967*, p. 19.

⁴¹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1967–1968*, pp. 16–17.

Assignment with WBT, to continue the youth work and camps, etc., and maintain those contacts to channel new translators to the mission fields of the world.⁴¹⁶

Frank and Barbara were living at Kangaroo Ground, on the WBT campus from 1972. They had separated by 1977. Their three older children had all established their own homes, and Jon remained with Frank in Victoria to complete his schooling. Initially Barbara lived with her daughter Ruth in Wattle Glen before they moved to Chermshire between 1977 and 1980 so that Barbara could look after her aged parents. Both of her parents died in 1985.

Barbara then purchased a house in Margate and transferred her church membership to Margate in 1984 and died from cancer in 2007. Barbara's autobiography, *God's Wonderful Grace—Sufficient for Me*, was published in *Grace in the Lamplight*.⁴¹⁷

Frank and Barbara had five children: Ruth, who was a nurse's aide in 1977; David; Andrew; Deborah; and Jonathan (Jon).

⁴¹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1968–1969*, pp. 19–20.

⁴¹⁷ B Cooksey, *God's Wonderful Grace—Sufficient for me*, in J Hopkins (ed), 2006. *Grace in the Lamplight, Life stories of twenty-five Australian Christian Nurses*, pp. 20–32.

Rev Archibald MacNicol

Archie, as he was commonly known, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1937, the son of John and Barbara MacNicol. At 14 years of age, he migrated with his parents and younger sisters Sylvia and Elizabeth from London, aboard SS *Chitral* to Sydney and then Woodenbong, North-eastern New South Wales in 1951 under the British Ex-Serviceman's Scheme. Although his father gave his occupation as sawmill worker, he was the Presbyterian minister in Nimbin, New South Wales in 1954 and Tiaro, Queensland in 1957. Young Archie gave piano-acordion solos at a Coffee Camp P & C Bazaar in Nimbin in 1952, which were appreciated by the large audience.⁴¹⁸ He continued to play the piano-acordion and also the bag-pipes until his later years. He also played soccer for the *Lismore Possibles* as a junior in 1954.⁴¹⁹

After completing high school in Lismore in about 1953, Archie worked as a clerk and trained as a commercial traveller. It seems likely that he left home soon after finishing school and moved to Brisbane. He came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1954 and was a member of the YPSCE for at least a year—1955. It is not known where or when he was baptised, as he came into membership following visitation, which suggests that he was baptised, by immersion, in another church, not necessarily a Baptist Church. He was commended by the church, to the BUQ for admission to the BTCQ for training for the ministry. In 1956 his membership was transferred to Torquay where he served as pastor.

From 1957 he was a home missionary with the Presbyterian Church in Roma, then in Townsville, Yeppoon, Thursday Island, Cairns, Millmerran, Home Hill, and Mareeba. While on Thursday Island he was a member of the local Hospital Board and was registered as a marriage celebrant. His address was Presbyterian Missions Agency, Thursday Island.⁴²⁰

Archie married Heather Meredith in 1959 at St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Maryborough. The circumstances under which he transferred his association from the Baptist Church to the Presbyterian Church are unknown.



Archie MacNicol, 1966

⁴¹⁸ *Northern Star*, 8 May 1953, p. 6.

⁴¹⁹ *Northern Star*, 4 June 1954, p. 10.

⁴²⁰ *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette*, 26 June 1964, p. 2561.

They moved to Sandgate around 1977 and while pastoring there, Archie undertook theological studies at Emmanuel College within the University of Queensland, graduating with a Licentiate of Theology (LTh). When he was ordained and inducted into the St David's Presbyterian Church Sandgate by the moderator, Rev Graham Lake in 1979, he was piped into the church by his son, Malcolm. His father and grandfather, Archibald had both been in the ministry. His father died in 1980.

In 1982, Archie transferred to St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Townsville. During his 19 years of ministry there the church celebrated its centenary and an increase in the number of worshippers necessitated two extensions to the church building. He was also the Chaplain to the Naval Reserve Cadets at TS *Coral Sea* and Coordinator of Police Chaplains, Northern Region.

Archie was the Clan Chaplain of the Clan MacNicol. In this capacity he preached on the subject *The Mount Everest of Ethics* at St Paul's Presbyterian Church, St Pauls Terrace, Brisbane in 1993.

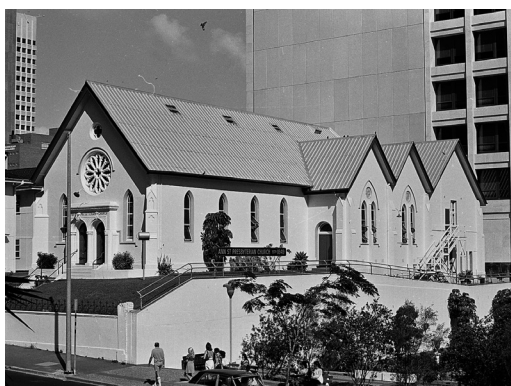
When he was inducted as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in 1995, his sermon was titled *The Kind of Church God Honours*. His two main points were that God honours a committed church and God honours a concerned church.

His final charge was minister at Ann St Presbyterian Church, Brisbane from 2001 until ill health forced his retirement in 2011.

Archie died in September 2011. At his funeral, his son Donald, in his eulogy said that Heather was his faithful companion throughout his life's journey. Over 52 years of marriage, she found in him the God given gifts of compassion, sincerity, and love. They had three sons, Donald born in Yeppoon, Malcolm born on Thursday Island, and Andrew born in Cairns. Family values of hard work, service and commitment were features of their home life. Archie and Heather



Archie wearing the MacNicol tartan kilt, 2004.



Ann St Presbyterian Church

instilled in their boys the importance of study and education. An appreciation of music by all the family saw the boys encouraged to learn instruments. Archie's love of the bagpipes and all things Scottish gave them an appreciation of their cultural heritage.

Wherever he was called to serve, Archie attracted people with his warm and caring personality and many life-long friends were made at the various parishes. His outgoing and friendly personality made people feel at ease and assured that he was interested in them and their lives.

To know Archie was to understand that his faith was central to his life. It affected every decision he made, how he treated others, his commitment to his work, and his family life. He was there to join in the saddest of times with his parishioners, and to rejoice with them in their happy times. He chose gentle moments in conversations to put in a good word for Jesus, or to help people to look to the Bible for answers to life's tough questions. He was tireless in his commitment to the church, making it a priority to visit people in their homes or in hospital. New people to church were greeted with a warm handshake and kind word often followed up with a phone call or visit, inviting them back again to church. Archie understood that spreading the word of God meant not only preaching in church but becoming involved in community groups and being a friend to people in those groups. He was respected by folk from all walks of life and cultures.

Up until his remaining days on earth he took the opportunity to share his faith with others. Doctors at the Wesley Hospital were heartened in his final days to hear him say: "I have such a lovely Heavenly Father that it doesn't matter which way things go, I win and don't lose. If He calls me away to be with Him, I'll be with Him, and if he leaves me here, He will be with me here." Right to the end he never missed an opportunity to put in a good word for his Lord and Saviour.

Those who listened to his sermons all had something from him to carry with them. He had a remarkable gift to speak right to everyone's heart. He could make you laugh and make you cry all within a 20-minute sermon. The points that were made were all based upon the Bible but illustrated with well researched stories that helped people to relate. Did you notice the glint in his eye when he did the children's address each Sunday? The light in his eyes shone very brightly for his seven grandchildren.

Archie often spoke of the great reunion that would take place in heaven, family members and loved ones would be together again in a place that knew



Rev A MacNicol, 1995

no sorrow or heartache, where every tear is wiped from your eyes. As the old hymn says so eloquently:

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
safe on His gentle breast,
there by His love protected,
gladly my soul shall rest.⁴²¹

Rev MacNicol was posthumously awarded the Order of Australia Medal for his services to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland and the community, in 2012.



Rev Archibald and Heather MacNicol
(*Northside Chronicle*, 2012)

⁴²¹ Presbyterian Church of Queensland Archives Department.

Miss Daphne Roberts

Daphne is the daughter of Reginald and Margaret Roberts. Along with her parents she was received into membership at the Tabernacle in June 1953, while living in Morningside. Her younger sister Lyn and brother Lyall joined in 1957 and 1964. Reginald and Margaret were still in membership when they died in 1960 and 1997 respectively. Lyall, who married Naomi North at the Tabernacle in 1959, transferred his membership to Enoggera in 1967.

Daphne was awarded a teacher's scholarship and after training taught in Bulimba, Maleny and in a one-teacher school at Boubyjan (north of Goomeri), under bond to the Queensland Education Department. Then in 1956 she taught for a year at the Presbyterian Girls' College, Warwick. After two years study at the Sydney Missionary Bible College, she completed the CIM's candidates' course in Melbourne.



Daphne Roberts

In May 1959, she became a member of the CIM (which became the OMF in 1964). In October she sailed for Singapore, where she was designated to youth work in Malaya. From 1960 until 1963 she worked in various towns using Mandarin, but also taught for six months at Chefoo, the OMF school, in the Cameron Highlands. John Chenoweth was a student at Chefoo while Daphne was there. After completing a Bachelor of Education degree and gaining more experience of Scripture Union (SU) work in Queensland on her first home leave, she returned in 1966 to what was by then Malaysia, being seconded by OMF to work with SU Malaysia as a staff worker, developing Christian groups in schools, holiday and training camps and the personal use of the SU method of Bible reading. From 1966 until 1971, with several local staff, she saw school groups and camps increase in number and Christian teachers develop a greater desire to share their faith within the school system.

Daphne reported to the church in 1968 that everyone in SU Malaysia was grateful to God for all He had done in the past year. New churches had been contacted and several school groups had affiliated with the Inter School Christian Fellowship (ISCF). Some other schools were also planning to begin Christian groups. Christian teachers were awakening to their opportunities in schools, partly because two of the SU staff had attended the Christian Teachers' Conference in December 1967 and challenged them with their responsibility. A strong program of leadership training for school committees was developing. The camp program was weak through shortage of sites, and lack of directors and suitable male officers. SU in Malaysia was however, given a tremendous

boost by the ANZEA Regional Conference in April 1968. Consequently, local people had a better idea of SU's aims and philosophy which they trusted would result in definite advance in the work.⁴²²

Throughout 1969–70, God's work through SU in West Malaysia progressed steadily. The number of school groups affiliated to the ISCF had grown to 44. The number of SU subscribers had also increased, and three new camps were held at which young people had put their trust in Christ. The local teacher who later replaced Daphne on the staff had been busy with leadership conferences, camp officers' training, and SU Branch Secretaries' Seminars. A small SU Bookshop had begun, and the manager was visiting schools where possible, to promote sales. However, many schools had no groups because there was no Christian teacher to lead one and a local male staff worker was urgently needed.⁴²³

Although demanding, the task of visiting groups all over the country and training the student committees, was rewarding. The young people were keen to learn and in spite of heavy school commitments made a real effort to attend leadership seminars. In some towns where no groups existed, Daphne was asked to train the leaders of Church youth groups. In these many young people whom she met month after month, there was potential for the Christian Church in Malaysia.⁴²⁴

In 1972, OMF asked Daphne to become Editorial Secretary in Singapore. As a local person was available to replace her in SU, and with the clear guidance of Scripture, through her daily Bible reading, she accepted the position.

Once again, Daphne found it beneficial to review the last year of staff-work with SU. God had been good. She had travelled many miles in safety and attended six ISCF Camps where 50 young people accepted the Lord. These groups had further increased to 63 and many non-Christians attended. She had spoken to teacher trainees, then seen them go out and begin ISCF groups. ISCF workshops were held in 13 towns. The response to team support and the SU Building Fund had exceeded expectations. She had enjoyed talking with young teachers, counselling them, and sharing fellowship. As she faced leaving SU at the end of August, her heart filled with thanks to God for all that He had done especially in her last year in Malaysia.⁴²⁵

From September 1972 until August 1974, she worked at the international headquarters of OMF in Singapore, receiving and sending prayer news and articles, and had the opportunity to visit Thailand, Japan, and Taiwan to see OMF work firsthand.

⁴²² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1967–1968, p. 18.

⁴²³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1969–1970, p. 19.

⁴²⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1970–1971, p. 22.

⁴²⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1971–1972, p. 22.

Daphne had a firm conviction that she did not want “to be stuck behind a desk”, but for two years the Lord took her to Singapore to sit at the OMF Editorial desk. Through reading newsletters, her outlook broadened to take in the full scope of God’s work through OMF in South-East Asia. Word pictures became real when she visited the tribal work in North Thailand, and the medical and rural work of Central Thailand. Names became people and friendships were formed. She was deeply concerned to see the countless opportunities for preaching the Gospel and the receptivity of so many, yet the terrible shortage of Christian workers, both national and foreign, remained. OMF had been encouraged by the arrival in Singapore of over 50 new workers during the year but “there remained much land to be possessed”.⁴²⁶

Daphne thoroughly enjoyed being home on leave in 1974 and renewing friendship with members of the Tabernacle. Seeing Rev Neville L Abrahams and others at the airport and receiving an official church welcome were heart-warming. Travel and meetings in north and south-west Queensland and the southern states, speaking at the church’s Missionary Weekend and other conferences were highlights of the year’s furlough. A number of young people had realized the spiritual need of Asia and she prayed that they would continue to be responsive to God’s leading.⁴²⁷

Due to a Singapore government ruling on visas, the Editorial Secretary position was no longer tenable after 1975, so Daphne answered a call to work with SU in the Republic of Korea. This entailed a totally different climate and a very difficult language. After arriving in Korea in September 1975, she spent two years in full-time language study. Plans to help SU did not eventuate, but opportunities gradually developed with Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) in staff training and Bible studies with graduate groups.

The Missionary Convention in 1980 was held on the weekend of 29–30 March. On the Saturday evening, dinner (which consisted of various menus from different countries where the church’s missionaries were serving) was enjoyed, after which a varied program was presented. Daphne, attired in Korean dress, played a Kayagum—a Korean musical instrument—and gave an interesting insight into Korean culture and her work with OMF.⁴²⁸



Daphne in Korean dress

⁴²⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1973–1974*, p. 22.

⁴²⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, pp. 20–21.

⁴²⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1979–1980*, p. 8.

From 1980, no longer an OMF member, Daphne worked as a full-time IVCF staff worker supported by the church and friends. With the help of the IVCF General Secretary, she began the Teachers' Christian Fellowship (TCF) to help Christian teachers look at their profession from a Christian point of view. She also travelled to regional towns to offer training to staff.



Daphne with Mr Yang and Mr Chong,
language-school teachers, Seoul

The TCF continued to grow. If teachers were not so busy on Saturdays, they would have had at least 40 at their meetings. The teachers were beginning to see the importance of practical Christian living at school. Miss Kim and Mr Kwon, part-time staff workers were now able to help her more. The first national TCF Conference was planned for August and it was hoped that, as a result, regional TCF meetings would begin, which would involve her in more travel and less speaking in Seoul. Seoul IVF staff training continued, and Daphne began travelling to a town two hours away, twice, or thrice a month to train the regional staff. Although very demanding, it was a joy to see the teachers' spiritual growth and to be able to share their joys and problems. A wide-open door was opening in Korea IVF.⁴²⁹

For the next three years, Daphne helped the Korean IVCF in the training of staff and the developing of the TCF. It was interesting to look back and see the maturing of the young men and women, two of whom went overseas for further training. One of these men was assisted financially through a Tabernacle Missions' Month project. Her program included teaching groups of staff in three cities as well as individual tuition to five teachers in Seoul. The teachers were developing a Christian view of education and trying to share this with others, but they wanted to help many more teachers throughout the country.⁴³⁰

By 1987, Daphne was doing less direct work with IVCF though still a counsellor. Various English language Bible studies had



Daphne with Campus staff, 1982

⁴²⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1981–1982*, p. 25.

⁴³⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1983–1984*, p. 23.

developed with both Christians and non-Christians and because of her interest in Korean traditional music, she had many worthwhile contacts with members of the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Centre.

Daphne retired from Korea in April 1994, but between 1998 and 2007 returned six times for short-term training, of two-three months, of Korean missionary candidates at a Missionary Training Institute in Seoul.

In her final report to the Tabernacle, Daphne wrote that she considered it a review of all the way the Lord had led her over the past 34 years: her departure in October 1959 when Rev Fred Smith was Pastor, to the Singapore language school; then Malaysia: teaching missionaries' children; village work; Scripture in a Chinese high school; secondment to SU; and editorial work in Singapore. Then the change of field to Korea: language study; staff training for IVCF; establishment of the TCF; and more recently a variety of English Bible Studies and translation at the Korean Traditional Performing Arts Centre. Through it all the Lord was her stay, in traumatic situations as well as times of joy. She felt a deep gratitude to the church for faithful prayer and financial support over this long period. It had been a privilege to serve the Lord in cross-cultural situations!⁴³¹

Daphne was welcomed home following 35 years of missionary service in Asia and the church's prayer was that she would have a retirement blessed by God.⁴³² Daphne has maintained her association with the Tabernacle while living in Wishart retirement village. She served on the Missionary Committee for seven years up until July 2002.

⁴³¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1993–1994*, p. 31.

⁴³² *ibid.*, p. 11,

Dr Joan Webster

Dr Joan Webster sailed on the RMS *Strathaird* from Sydney for Assam, India, in February 1958. Joan, Sister Betty Anderson (from New South Wales), and five NZBMS staff, were farewelled by representatives of the QFMC.⁴³³ In 1966, Joan wrote that she was still surprised that God chose her to go to Tukrajhar. Most medical missionaries were brilliant scholars, musicians, artists, or public speakers. Joan believed she was none of these, despite her qualification of MB BS. Yet God spoke to her in a way which she could not ignore, although she tried for months to do so.



Joan Webster

Joan was baptised by Rev Albert Butler in 1946 and received into membership at the Tabernacle a month later. During 1957, Joan applied for service with the ABMS. At the Board Meetings that August, Joan was accepted to be the first ABMS doctor at Tukrajhar.⁴³⁴ In September the Pastor of the Tabernacle, Rev Fred Smith, announced that Joan would be leaving for her field of service and opportunity in the near future.⁴³⁵ Joan worked as a resident surgeon at Ipswich General Hospital until the end of the year.⁴³⁶ A Valedictory Service was held on Australia Day, 1958.⁴³⁷

Joan had been advised to take whatever household items she might need for the next five years, and had crates of clothes, books, and household goods. When the ship docked in Melbourne en route to India, there were eight crates of medical equipment including an autoclave and the two primus stoves used to heat it, a water steriliser, an operating room table, and surgical instruments. Dr David Griffiths had collected the medical equipment for ABMS.⁴³⁸

The three-week sea voyage was uneventful. In that time of peacefulness Joan had time to appreciate more of the significance of God's promise to go before her, and to never leave or forsake her. The group disembarked in Bombay and travelled from there to

⁴³³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1957–1958* p. 8.

⁴³⁴ JV Webster, 1996. *A Rooster on my Handlebars*, p. 6.

⁴³⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 October 1957, p. 9.

⁴³⁶ JV Webster, op. cit., p. 7.

⁴³⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1957–1958* p. 8.

⁴³⁸ JV Webster, op. cit., p. 9.

Calcutta by train. Without knowing a word of the language, they had to organise coolies to get themselves and their luggage from the train to a ferry across the Ganges, and then from the ferry to another train. At no time did they experience any difficulty. Joan and Betty arrived in Tukrajhar in February.⁴³⁹

Assam is in the foothills of the Himalayas on the border with Bhutan. The snow-clad Himalayas, some 12 km to the north, form a backdrop for the villages around Tukrajhar. Otherwise, as far as the eye can see, the land is perfectly flat. In 1927 churches in the western end of Assam, the Goalpara District, formed the Boro Baptist Church Union, with headquarters at Tukrajhar village. American Baptist missionaries working in eastern Assam had been visiting the Boros since 1905, but no missionary had lived among them. In 1947, the American and Australian Baptist Missions agreed that Australian Baptists would take full responsibility for mission work among the Boros in the area from the Brahmaputra River north to Bhutan.⁴⁴⁰

At Tukrajhar, mail came twice a week to the market village three kilometres to the south, carried by runners, each of whom walked halfway. Telegrams came with the mail. In 1959 a Post Office was opened in Tukrajhar village to receive mail.⁴⁴¹ There was no telephone, no shops, and no public transport. All water was drawn from a well in the garden. Drinking water was boiled and stored in a clay water pot to cool. Electricity was generated for three hours at night and after that kerosene lamps were used. The ladies' house where Joan lived had a cement floor and a tin roof. Each of the three bedrooms had its own bathroom with a tin bath. There were snakes in the bathroom, snakes in the fowl house, and snakes on the veranda.⁴⁴²

Meals became a little monotonous during the rainy season—rice, with egg, sweet potato, or eggplant curry. They depended on a back garden for fresh vegetables. Lettuce, tomatoes, beetroot, sweet corn, carrots, peas, and beans could be grown in winter and spring. Any surplus food was bottled to eat during the wet season when the garden was under water. Joan had never liked eggs, whichever way they were cooked. One memorable day Joan went to the Ballagari Church. During the visit she was invited into six homes. She was served six cups of tea, four hard boiled eggs, and was given an egg to bring back.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 7–13.

⁴⁴⁰ JV Webster and DN Cheney, 2000. *Assam: Not by Chance*, pp. 9–22.

⁴⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴⁴² JV Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–43.

⁴⁴³ *ibid.*, pp. 46–49.

A new dispensary was opened in Tukrajhar in 1956, replacing an inadequate facility. That year the Indian government made it a requirement that medical work be supervised by a doctor, so Joan became responsible for the medical work in all the centres, with much of the work done by nursing staff. Joan made weekly visits to the centre at Boroputa, eight kilometres from Tukrajhar, and monthly visits to the other centres during the dry season: to Baghpara (58 km) and to Debitola (64 km) from Baghpara.⁴⁴⁴



Joan in the dispensary

The dispensary had no laboratory with technicians to do tests, only a microscope, slides, and various stains. There was no x-ray machine, but patients could be x-rayed at a Leprosy Colony about 17 km away. Sometimes the machine broke down and then the journey was wasted. On one occasion Joan had a patient with a broken leg while the machine was broken and ended up driving him a 322-kilometre round trip to Dhubri hospital.⁴⁴⁵

Patients at the dispensary often brought chickens as payment—tiny, scrawny little things. One day at the weekly clinic a patient gave Joan a large red rooster in payment. With a broad smile he tied it to the handlebars of her bicycle. In some trepidation, Joan rode off. The wretched bird stayed still and quiet till they reached the outskirts of the village and then, without any warning, it reared up and loudly flapped its wings. Joan fell off and the bike fell on top of her. She cautiously remounted, expecting every moment for it to flap its wings again. It lulled her into the belief that it would not, and just as she was regaining her confidence, it reared up again. Joan fell off again. Joan, by then, had had enough.

She decided that it would be easier to walk and push the bike. The rooster was not going to give in so easily. It turned its head and savagely pecked the back of Joan's hand. She was getting very angry. There was still the Ai River to cross with bike and rooster. She had bruised shins and sore hands, and could cheerfully have drowned that rooster, but kept thinking how nice it would taste roasted.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁴ RM Gooden, 2013, op cit. p. 169.

⁴⁴⁵ JV Webster, op. cit., p. 114.

⁴⁴⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

As well as her medical work with people, Joan was often asked to treat animals, the nearest vet being 22.5 km away. Within days of her arrival Joan was asked to treat a weak old goat with a broken hind leg and a nasty cut on the back of its neck where it had tried to get through a fence.⁴⁴⁷

Village visits could be a challenge. One August day Dulcie Cheney and Joan were returning from a village. It was a humid day of brilliant sunshine, a cloudless blue sky, and not a breath of wind. Bag in one hand and a large black umbrella held aloft in the other, they walked along the narrow-raised aisle between the flooded paddy fields. One slip would have landed them in the mud. On the pathway ahead they saw a large black snake sunning itself. There was no room for them to pass. Dulcie hit at it with her umbrella, succeeding only in breaking the ribs of the umbrella. The snake reared up. They stepped hastily back. Joan slipped into the mud, and the snake, apparently satisfied that he had made his protest, silently slithered away.

During the rice planting season there was another hazard. Farmers irrigated their fields by a series of canals. Some of the canals crossed the road and were blocked and unblocked according to which fields had to be flooded. One might cross a dry canal on the way to a village only to be faced with a canal full of water on the way back. Walking through them was always fraught with the possibility of collecting one or more leeches, often not discovered till one was confronted with a pool of blood.

Once, Joan was unable to return home as there were elephants nearby and no one was willing to walk back with her through the forest because of their fear of the elephants. Instead, Joan was taken to a house where a wooden bed, without mattress, pillow, or bedding, was brought in. Joan curled up and went to sleep. She was awakened at first light by a rooster crowing loudly in her ear. She opened her eyes to see the beady eye of a large red rooster staring at her. She leapt off that bed as if propelled by a rocket. The bed had been placed in the corner where the rooster slept.⁴⁴⁸

Joan never felt frightened at Tukrajhar even when she was there for weeks by herself. Joan said the people were courteous and gentle and really looked after her. When Joan was called to a village at night at least two men would come to fetch her, and they would bring her back home again. If she was called to a non-Christian village, a woman usually accompanied the men.⁴⁴⁹

ABMS missionaries in India and East Pakistan (Bangladesh) were probationers until they had passed the first- and second-year Bengali exams. So, the month after her arrival Joan went to Language School in Darjeeling for three months to begin her study of

⁴⁴⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 54–55.

⁴⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 115–117.

⁴⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 55.

Bengali. On Joan's return to Tukrajhar she was told by the Field Council that she should spend three months at the American Baptist Hospital at Gauhati to assist in her language learning. A language exam was held in Calcutta over four days in December. Joan passed. In March the following year, Joan again went to Darjeeling, this time for six weeks. Such was the difficulty Joan was having with the course that she asked the Field Council if her second exam could be postponed. Her request was flatly refused. After a week's intensive help from the senior lady missionary at Baghpara, Joan set off for Calcutta for the second-year exam. This went on for a week. Joan tied for fourth out of 19 with 67%. The next step was for Joan to learn the Boro language.

Joan still found communication very frustrating and made her share of mistakes. One evening she had just arrived home after a busy day at the dispensary when a man called. Joan thought he said that he had brought a patient to the dispensary with sore eyes. As Joan had medicine in the house, she asked the man to bring the patient up. He seemed a bit surprised but went off. The next thing Joan knew there was a water buffalo walking up the front path.⁴⁵⁰

The medical work made a wonderful opening for spiritual work. Joan and nursing sister Cheney conducted midwifery classes, with Win Ewing acting as interpreter.⁴⁵¹ (Win and her husband Peter served in Assam from 1949 to 1963.)⁴⁵²

Dulcie Cheney wrote of the humid weather being experienced in Assam but said it had not stopped the stream of patients coming for treatment. During May 1959 at Tukrajhar, 1154 patients were treated. Besides those treatments at the dispensary there were the callers after hours at the house, the visits to villages, and the bringing of babies into the world. Dulcie spoke of the pleasure she had in working with Joan in this work.⁴⁵³

At that time, the Boro people were animists and believed that all natural objects and phenomena have souls. Animists had no idols, for their gods were the spirits of the home, river, forest, field, harvest, air, and earth, all of whom must be propitiated, lest their anger bring disaster, even death.⁴⁵⁴ (While Joan was in India, *The New Statesman* reported, in harrowing detail, the sacrifice of a twelve-year-old boy that was made to propitiate the spirits which had stalled work on a dam.)⁴⁵⁵

When Joan arrived, there were no facilities for inpatients at Tukrajhar. Patients walked or came by bullock cart from villages up to 25 km away. Then, having received treatment, they turned around and went home. This was frustrating for patients and

⁴⁵⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 59–73.

⁴⁵¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 4 March 1959, p. 6.

⁴⁵² JV Webster and DN Cheney, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

⁴⁵³ *The Australian Baptist*, 24 June 1959, p. 5.

⁴⁵⁴ JV Webster and DN Cheney, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁴⁵⁵ JV Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

medical staff.⁴⁵⁶ Few illnesses could be cured by one visit. Joan felt increasingly the need for a place in which patients could stay. Joan submitted plans for a 12-bed hospital, which were included in a *Five-Year Plan*. This meant a hospital would not even be considered until 1964. They started to use the small room of the dispensary for people to stay in overnight, but this was not satisfactory.⁴⁵⁷

In August 1959, to test whether an inpatient house would be used, a mud floored house with bamboo walls and a thatched roof was built next to the dispensary, with a separate cook house behind it. Relatives accompanied the patient and did the cooking. Mission staff provided some food, although the relatives almost always brought their own.⁴⁵⁸

All went well for a few weeks until one of the inpatients died. Immediately his family and all the other inpatient families went home. Staff were told they would have to burn the house as the spirit of the dead person would return to the house to harm anyone who stayed there. This they could not do. They prayed and they waited. Several weeks went by. Nothing happened to the staff, to their house, their fruit trees, or to their chickens. The inpatient house stood empty. Not one person asked to stay. Joan wondered if inpatient medical work had any future at Tukrajhar. Then two Nepali men from a distant village came, stayed, and recovered. This solved the problem temporarily, but the one sure way to have no inpatients was for someone to die.⁴⁵⁹

Among the Boros, illness was interpreted as the result of offending a spirit. When patients came for treatment, they would also consult the village doctor. His treatment usually included some means of letting the offending spirit out of the patient's body. Early one morning Joan looked out of her bedroom window and saw a man in their garden. He was the village doctor, picking seeds for his medicines. Their garden was supplying him with medicine.⁴⁶⁰

Men, women, and children from all the tribes in the area used the inpatient facility. Much to the surprise of the dispensary staff, people of different tribes stayed in it simultaneously. The desire for medical care overcame deep-seated Tribal prejudices. Some patients stayed up to three weeks, but the majority for only a few days. Usually they were brought in by bullock cart, and one relative would stay with them, while the rest of the family returned home.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁶ JV Webster and DN Cheney, op. cit., p. 112.

⁴⁵⁷ JV Webster, op. cit., p. 133.

⁴⁵⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

⁴⁵⁹ JV Webster and DN Cheney, op. cit., pp. 34–35.

⁴⁶⁰ JV Webster, op. cit., p. 110.

⁴⁶¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 April 1960, p. 4.

Two rules for the sick were rigidly enforced, but still caused problems for Joan the whole time she was in Tukrajhar:

The patient must take no food except rice and salt, and if the illness persisted, rice, water, and salt.

The patient must not bathe.⁴⁶²

The small inpatient house proved its worth. In its first six months, it was

occupied by 40 patients and their relatives. On several occasions it had been inadequate, for up to ten patients and their relatives had wanted to stay at the same time. Two babies had been born in it, one of whom caused special joy as it was a first baby, and as the mother had been in labour for six days, she herself and the local midwives had thought the baby was dead.⁴⁶³

In 1960, a three-roomed house with a cement floor was built by the voluntary labour of the people of Tukrajhar and surrounding villages. Each room had two beds made of wooden slats. As the beds were being carried in on the morning of the official opening, Joan was told that the beds could not be placed as she intended because that would mean the living would be lying north-south which was the way of the dead. The living had to lie east-west.⁴⁶⁴ This was something Joan could not fight, even though it meant one could only get to one side of the bed and there was hardly room to walk between them. Another problem was the fact that patients did not necessarily sleep on the beds. Many patients had never slept on a bed, and they were not about to start. The man of the family had to sleep on the bed, regardless of who the patient was.⁴⁶⁵

The majority of inpatients were non-Christians. Some came from villages inside Bhutan, which dispensary staff could not visit. This might be the only opportunity they would ever have to hear the Gospel message.⁴⁶⁶ Staff played Gospel recordings to them in their own language, and told them Bible stories, aided by flannel graphs.⁴⁶⁷



Joan interacting with the villagers

⁴⁶² JV Webster, op. cit., p. 111.

⁴⁶³ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 April 1960, p. 4.

⁴⁶⁴ JV Webster and DN Cheney, op. cit., p. 112.

⁴⁶⁵ JV Webster, op. cit., pp. 138–139.

⁴⁶⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 136–137.

⁴⁶⁷ *The Australian Baptist*, 6 April 1960, p. 5.

By 1962 much of the resistance to staying had been overcome. Joan had the existing veranda enclosed to make a small room. People began to stay longer. Numbers kept growing. Once there were nine tuberculosis patients and six general patients. Another time there were 10 general inpatients. The word spread that tuberculous patients must stay for three or four months to have any chance of a cure. Soon the number of tuberculous patients began to grow. This strained accommodation so a separate house with six plank beds was built for them. No one seemed to mind if there was no bed for them. If they had come prepared to stay, stay they did. They camped on the veranda, under their bullock cart, or under a tree, lighting a fire, spreading out their mats and wrapping themselves in a blanket. With the encouragement of the Dispensary Committee of the Boro Baptist Union, more bamboo and thatch houses were built, six in all.⁴⁶⁸

The Boros were animists. They believed that when a person died, other members of the family were in danger of incurring the displeasure of the ghost that took him or of the ghost of the dead man himself. Only a close family member would touch a dead body.

One evening bullock carts arrived with fifteen patients from an animist village about five kilometres from Tukrajhar. The men were suffering from a cholera-like illness. One man with no close relatives died during the night. The men who had brought him were not willing to take the body back in their cart and left as quickly as possible. There was nowhere to keep the body. Joan sought help from the pastor of Tukrajhar Church. The sound of repeated triple rings on the church bell was soon heard, calling the men of the church to assist at a burial. The men responded and the dead man was buried.

Word of this extraordinary event spread rapidly. The head man of the affected village had, until then, refused to allow any Christian preaching there. He sent to ask the pastor if he would go to their village and tell them about the God who was so powerful that He could even take away the fear of the evil spirit of the dead.⁴⁶⁹

In January 1964, following brutal persecution of non-Muslims in East Pakistan, there was a mass exodus of Garos who travelled north into Assam.⁴⁷⁰ This resulted in a report that the Garo Baptist Union in Pakistan had lost half its membership through migration to Assam.⁴⁷¹ In March that year Joan was asked to send staff to a refugee camp on the south bank of the Brahmaputra River where Garo refugees were living. Joan spent a week there, staying with three Garo nurses who themselves were refugees. To Joan, it was a dreadful place. The weather was hot. There were many people with inadequate food and shelter. Smallpox had broken out, and the day Joan arrived two new cases were

⁴⁶⁸ JV Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 139–142.

⁴⁶⁹ JV Webster and DN Cheney, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36.

⁴⁷⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 64–65.

⁴⁷¹ RM Gooden, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

brought to them and two other patients died. Joan had never seen smallpox before and was appalled. There was really nothing effective she could do.⁴⁷²

The first cases of smallpox arrived at Tukrajhar on the Tuesday after Easter in 1967. By the end of the week there were 25 cases. There were no available beds so sufferers camped in and under their carts. Joan described the situation as an utter shamble. Joan could do nothing to stop the inexorable progress of the illness. All she could do was to try to keep sufferers hydrated and control secondary infection. Vaccines were obtained and vaccination was offered to everyone who came to the dispensary. Vaccination visits were made to villages with the head man of each village being asked to gather the people ready for the team's visit. At Lauripara, the village farthest out, the people were vaccinated after the Sunday church service. Almost all the church folk responded and about a quarter of the non-Christian folk, 84 in all.

Not everyone accepted vaccination. When Joan arrived in one village all the men were absent, and the people who were there would not accept the vaccination. Their excuse was that the head man was not there to give his consent. The trip was not wasted as they stopped at the local bazaar on the way back and vaccinated 100 people. During 1967 over 6000 vaccinations were given. The following year there were still entire villages that had not been vaccinated. Around this time Joan described medical work as frustrating, exhausting, frightening, discouraging, interesting, and rewarding. Joan added that this was not peculiar to missionary medical work.⁴⁷³

To Joan, obstetrics was a recurring nightmare. The Boro word for pregnant woman meant *dead body*, as so often the mother and/or the baby died. There was always surprise if mother and baby both survived. Dispensary staff had some happy outcomes. One woman at a village confinement was the wife of the Boro Baptist Union treasurer. The couple had been married for several years and this was their first pregnancy. Twelve ladies were in attendance. Village children peered through cracks in the walls, and the men gathered to sing the three hymns which were always sung during a confinement in a Boro Christian home, *I need Thee every hour*, *Pass me not O gentle Saviour*, and *I'm coming home, I'm coming home*. When Joan safely delivered a lusty baby boy low forceps there was great rejoicing. In another home, a pig and three hens and their chickens shared the delivery room. Joan suggested the father take the pig outside.⁴⁷⁴

The likelihood of a hospital being built at Tukrajhar grew less each year. Joan wrote that from January to June in 1966 they had 95 general inpatients, 24 Tuberculosis inpatients, and 33 confinements. They were almost continuously overcrowded with patients on the floor, on the veranda, and in the back room of the dispensary, so Joan

⁴⁷² JV Webster, op. cit., pp. 127–128.

⁴⁷³ *ibid.*, pp. 128–130.

⁴⁷⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 145, 148–150.

decided to put up yet another temporary building. In 1967, ABMS agreed that a Maternity Centre should be built. Rooms in the centre included a six-bed ward, two delivery rooms, and an operating theatre.⁴⁷⁵

Joan missed not having another doctor with whom to discuss cases. Her brother, Dr Colin Webster, and medical friends were very helpful, but their advice had to come by letter. Joan was a member of various medical associations and received medical journals which helped her to keep up to date with new drugs and treatments. There were times of spiritual struggle. Joan did not hear the Bible read, prayers said, hymns sung, or a sermon preached in English in church. Sometimes Joan was the only Australian at Tukrajhar. There were no other missionaries to pray with. Joan could not pick up a phone and ring anyone. For the first few years, there was not a wireless to listen to.⁴⁷⁶

In mid-1967, Joan reported that for almost two years there had been no trained nurse in Tukrajhar, either national or Australian. Requests were received from four villages asking for dispensaries to be established, but the requests had to be refused. The following year Joan expressed her concern that no doctor had been found to replace her as the medical work could not continue without a doctor. Closure of the medical work would bring much hardship to the villagers as well as lost opportunity for the Gospel. Joan wrote that time and again folk were first contacted and influenced by taking treatment at a Christian dispensary.⁴⁷⁷

During 1967, the hill tribes of Assam were agitating for a separate state and the removal of all non-tribal people from their subdivision. Missionaries were accused of encouraging them in this. Word was received that all foreigners were to be registered. In September, the *New Statesman* reported that all foreign missionaries working in the area north of the Brahmaputra River would not have their Residence and Restricted Area Permits renewed. As Joan was due for Home Assignment in December, she began preparations to leave, knowing she would be unable to return.⁴⁷⁸

Leave-taking was difficult as each outpatient wanted to sit and chat. During Joan's last week she was out each evening to curry and rice, at the invitation of the schoolteachers, the hostel girls, the dispensary staff, and the Union leaders. There were farewells at the school and during a women's meeting. The Union farewell to Joan took place in the Tukrajhar Church.⁴⁷⁹

On the night of 16 December 1968, Joan and Gwendy Ridden left Tukrajhar. People of all ages, rugged up against the cold, lined the sides of the road. They held lamps and

⁴⁷⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 143, 144, 158.

⁴⁷⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 160–161.

⁴⁷⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1967–1968* p. 20.

⁴⁷⁸ JV Webster, *op. cit.*, pp. 181, 182, 185.

⁴⁷⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 187–188.

called out *Goodbye* or *Thank you*. The jeep passed under a large archway and the word *Goodbye* overhead. For some distance along the road three to four-metre-high bamboo poles with a cloth soaked in kerosene on top of each stood along the sides of the road. The cloths were progressively lit as Joan and Gwendy moved slowly forward. It was a spectacular send off.⁴⁸⁰

Joan returned to Brisbane and was welcomed by the Tabernacle on 12 March 1969 after 10 years of service in Assam.⁴⁸¹ Throughout her time of service, Joan was supported financially by the SGMU.

Joan qualified as an anaesthetist and worked as an Anaesthetic Registrar at the RBH.⁴⁸² During the 1987–88 church year Joan, with support from a Tabernacle Missions' Project, travelled to Thailand to teach anaesthetics to a young Christian doctor in Manorom Christian Hospital. The hospital had been established by the OMF 30 years earlier. That Joan was able to work there was an answer to prayer, as foreign doctors were not able to practise there unless they already had held a work permit for many years.⁴⁸³

Between 1977 and 1993, no visits by ABMS personnel were permitted to the area where Joan had served.⁴⁸⁴ Then in 1994, former missionaries Peggy Glasby, Beth and Heather McDonald, and Joan, together with Rev Chris Pittendrich, the Overseas Secretary of the ABMS, were given a two-week permit to attend the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Rabha Youth Fellowship. At first Chris and Joan went to Tukrajhar while the others went to Debitola.

It was dark long before they arrived. At the turnoff to Tukrajhar village the driver stopped, blew the horn, and asked Chris and Joan to get out of the car. People appeared from all sides, and kerosene-soaked flares were lit along the road up to the house. It was a very moving moment as the secretary of the Boro Union explained that this was done to symbolise the light of the Gospel that ABMS missionaries had brought to the Boros.

At first, after an absence of 25 years, Joan struggled to use the Boro language. Joan learned of the persecution Boros had endured and of the murders, arson attacks on their homes, the forcible taking of young men into the army, and the closure of schools. In spite of these things, Joan found a church that had grown. The people explained that

⁴⁸⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 188–189.

⁴⁸¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1968–1969* p 7.

⁴⁸² JV Webster, *op. cit.*, Foreword.

⁴⁸³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, p. 25.

⁴⁸⁴ RM Gooden, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

Joan Webster

God had been good to them. In the darkest days they held all night prayer meetings, and God strengthened them.⁴⁸⁵

While Joan was in Assam she expressed her thanks to all those who had written to her, stating that she appreciated their letters and prayers.⁴⁸⁶ Such support from the Tabernacle congregation was again evident in Joan's ministry in Thailand, 1987–88. Joan wrote that the prayer support and the caring interest made a tremendous contribution to the success of her visit.⁴⁸⁷ Unlike the experiences of many returned missionaries who told of neglect and loss of interest in their service, Joan always felt that she, herself, and her years of service for her Lord, were deeply appreciated by the Tabernacle.



Joan Webster

Following Joan's retirement, she was involved in several ministries at the Tabernacle. Joan was a member of the Missionary Committee for many years until August 1992. Other ministries Joan was engaged in during the 1990s were choir secretary, administrator of the Ministry of Helps, and treasurer of the Ladies' Evening Fellowship. In January 2002 Joan was one of the leaders of the Summer City Kids' Club.⁴⁸⁸ In later years Joan was a church visitor in the Ministry of Special Care and taught in English Connection. Even after Joan could no longer attend Tabernacle services, she remained a valued member of the Northside Home Group.

⁴⁸⁵ JV Webster, op. cit., pp. 193–196.

⁴⁸⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1965–1966, p. 12.

⁴⁸⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1987–1988, p. 25.

⁴⁸⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2001–2002, p. 28.

Rev Donald Hume

Donald Leonard Hume, who was commonly known as Don, was born in Sandgate in 1933, the son of Andrew and Florence Hume. He lived with his parents in Paddington, and attended Brisbane Boys' Grammar, where he competed in the open one-mile race in 1949, coming second. His father and mother died in 1994 and 1995.

Don received the call to ministry while a member at Taringa. He became a member at the Tabernacle in 1954 on transfer. He was living in Taringa, while a student at the QBI. His parents were Presbyterian and not in membership at either Taringa or the Tabernacle. Don was a member of the YPSCE at the Tabernacle in 1954-67 and was prayer convenor in 1955. In 1955-56 he was commended to the BUQ for admission to the Baptist Theological College of Queensland for training for the Ministry. He was living at 55 Gray Road, West End in 1958 while studying at the College, which was located at 47 Gray Road.

In 1959, the Queensland HMC appointed Pastor Hume to Bunyaville and Grovely.⁴⁸⁹ In 1960, the QHM Superintendent advised that he had completed his six months' probation and had been accepted as a Home Missionary in full standing. He was still serving the Grovely-Bunyaville Churches.⁴⁹⁰

Congratulations were extended to Pastor Hume and Alma Smith, of Maleny, on their engagement, which was announced on 10 December 1960. Alma is the daughter of Leslie and Evelyn Smith, who died in 1984 and 1972 in Margate. Alma grew up in Paddington and had been living in Maleny since 1932.

Pastor Hume was appointed to Thangool-Biloela, commencing in November 1960.⁴⁹¹ Don and Alma married in Maleny in July 1961. Alma was a trained nurse at the Maleny Hospital when they met. Pastor SM Kean and his wife and family of the Maleny-Beerwah Churches moved



The original Maleny Baptist Church
(Photo: John Huth)

⁴⁸⁹ *The Australian Baptist*, 26 November 1958, p. 11.

⁴⁹⁰ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 September 1959, p. 9.

⁴⁹¹ *The Australian Baptist*, 21 December 1960, p. 11.

Don Hume

to the Bunya Ville-Grovely circuit exchanging with Pastor Hume because of a lack of accommodation for a married pastor at Maleny.⁴⁹²

Don transferred his church membership from the Tabernacle to Biloela in March 1961. Don and Alma were living and serving in various Baptist Churches at: Lakes Creek and Park Avenue, North Rockhampton (1963–65); Minden-Marburg-Tarampa (1965–70); Warwick in (1970–74); and Upper Mt Gravatt, later known as the Hertford Street Church (1974–79). The Lakes Creek and the North Rockhampton Baptist Churches combined in 1968 to form the North Rockhampton Central Baptist Church, which in turn became the Peace Memorial Baptist Church in 1973.

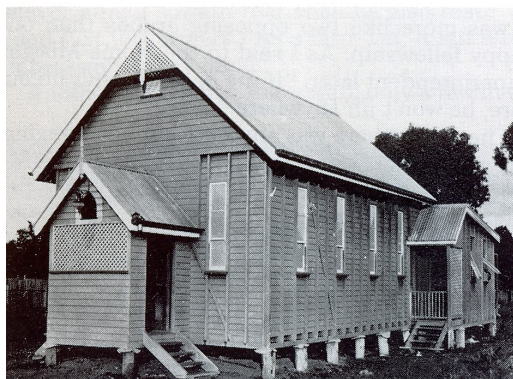
When he was serving in the Lockyer Valley, Don preached three times each Sunday—morning, afternoon, and evening—at the three churches, in rotation.

In his history of the Warwick Church, Rev John Churchward, described Rev Hume as a quiet, likeable man and a good listener who was anxious to cooperate with everybody. He gave very long and careful consideration before making a decision. A member of the church recalled that Rev Hume was a faithful preacher of the Word, a steady reliable man of God and the church remained in good heart during his ministry. He was an excellent preacher and his teaching ministry was highly thought of by the congregation.⁴⁹³

Don loved singing but did not enjoy much success in harmonising. When at Upper Mt Gravatt, he used a pulpit microphone. If he was singing too loudly, out of tune, Alma, who was always sitting within eye-sight, would



Rev Don Hume, 1960.



Park Avenue Church (Photo: QB Archives)

⁴⁹² *The Australian Baptist*, 23 March 1960, p. 5.

⁴⁹³ J Churchward, 1986. *By Thy sovereign grace: a history of the Warwick Baptist Church, 1911–1986*.

tweak her ear to indicate to him that he could be heard.

In 1980, although still living in Wishart, Don was working as a medical storeman at the Wesley Hospital and Alma had returned to work as a midwife. He died in 2011 in Brisbane, aged 77. Alma is a resident at Carinity, Wishart Gardens.

Don and Alma had three children, Paul, Leonie, and Alison, born in 1962, 1963 and 1966.



Don and Alma in retirement at
Carinity

Bruce and Leone Haste (née Tacon)

Bruce Herbert Haste was born in 1939 in India, migrating as a seven-year old, from Bombay, to Liverpool, England with his parents Rowland and Jessie Haste and four siblings aboard the *SS Empress of Scotland*. Rowland and Jessie had been missionaries, in Mussoorie, Uttaranchal, India from 1934 until 1946.

Bruce came to know Christ as his Saviour in Rattray Street Baptist Church, Scotland as an 18-year old. Two months later he migrated to Queensland, arriving in March 1958 aboard the *SS Oronsay*.

At the Tabernacle, he joined the YPSCE and transferred his church membership from Dundee in 1959. He completed missionary training with New Tribes Mission (NTM), where he met Leone Margaret Tacon who he married in Lambton, NSW in 1961. Lee, as she is generally known, is the daughter of Arthur and Hazel Tacon.



Bruce Haste

Bruce and Lee have served in the Republic of Panamá with NTM since 1961, having been given the Guaymí names Chigon and Hedi, by the local Christians. Lee now goes by the name Hedi-Lee.

Through their work, many people have heard the Gospel for the first time, been saved and had their lives changed. Through Bruce and Lee's work in Galique, God has built His Church. They trusted that God would continue to bless the Tabernacle's witness at home and "unto the uttermost parts", praising Him for the privilege of seeing His Hand at work.⁴⁹⁴

With the Panamá government changeover in 1968, they wondered how much time was left for them to preach the Gospel. There were thousands of Guaymí living in remote mountain areas reachable only after hours or days on horseback or foot who still had not heard of Jesus, and barriers of distrust, superstition, ignorance, and witchcraft made for complexities in their work. Believing that "He is not willing that any should perish" and is able to break down barriers and meet all needs, to achieve lives completely

⁴⁹⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1966–1967*, p. 19.

available to Him, they made themselves available through all channels to reach the rest of the Guaymi Tribe.⁴⁹⁵

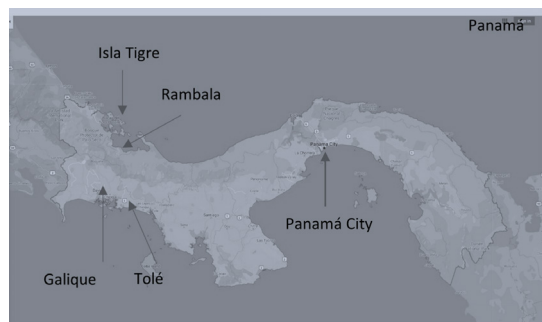
Very good meetings at Easter 1968, included a baptismal service at which eight Indians were baptized. Subsequently, four more were baptized in the Juay River and, Pablo, for whom they had been praying for some time, accepted Christ as His Saviour. They were always thrilled to hear the Indian Christians share from the Word. The Holy Spirit was their teacher and through them, not only the Indians but they also received teaching enabling them to grow. The Guaymis were not coming to the Saviour in great numbers, but God was establishing His church. It was their prayer that it would be an indigenous church that would reach out to its own people and to other peoples.⁴⁹⁶

Leaving for England in July 1968, they were sad parting with their friends and brethren in Panamá and looked forward to returning if God made it possible. Central America, passing through a time of political and economic crisis, resulted in the local people experiencing fear, anxiety, despair, and anger, blaming others, but very few acknowledged man's sinful nature as the cause nor their real enemy. Bruce and Lee focused on being to be alert to Satan's devices and being more effective in using their Spiritual weapons to tear down strongholds. The enemy used false teaching, attitudes that reflect the old Guaymi life-style, and nationalism to weaken the Church and keep unbelievers in their blind state.

It was a strange and sad experience to be in England watching the troubles in Panamá on television. Sometimes they felt guilty that they were at home in safety and ease while others were going through difficult times. Because of the crisis, God's people had drawn close to Him. They were praying, witnessing, and growing. Backsliders were being restored and souls were being saved.

Enabled by God, they left Sydney in June 1969 on their way back to Panamá. Although parting with family and friends at the wharf was hard, they felt a greater tug to go then to stay. They thanked God that they did not go alone.⁴⁹⁷

Once again, the unexpected and unplanned happened. They were no longer living in Galique, having



Panamá

⁴⁹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1967–1968, p. 17.

⁴⁹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1968–1969, pp. 20,21.

⁴⁹⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1969–1970, p. 18.

moved into the Mission house in Tolé, where Bruce had been busy making alterations and repairs. Brother Victor from Cabecra de Loro went with them to the Guayal Conference. They had the distinction of having travelled the farthest, and Victor was not prepared for the welcome he received from strangers. Overwhelmed, he exclaimed: “These people love me because I travelled so far to be at their Conference, how much then should we love Jesus who came so far for us?”⁴⁹⁸

Bruce and Lee praised the Lord for His protection and care, and the steady growth of the Church in Loro, praying that each Christian would be effective for the Lord and that they would be faithful to teach and encourage new converts. While in Loro, a young man, suffering from witchcraft, was brought by his family to Tolé. Fear and spiritual darkness showed on their faces. Bruce and Lee’s co-workers shared the Gospel with these people daily and eventually the sick man, Cipriano, and a brother, Faustino, accepted Christ and the change in them was wonderful.

Bruce and Lee looked forward to celebrating the completion of the Guaymi New Testament. There were approximately 50,000 Guaymi Indians scattered over mountainous terrain in three provinces. Although they spent much time on the trail, they had only been able to visit nine of the more than twenty groups of believers. Many of these believers were young in the Lord and needed to be grounded in the Word before false cults reached them with deceitful doctrines.⁴⁹⁹

Five brethren from Tolé district went with them to help teach at a conference at Rio Pita. Fifteen souls were saved.

Spending most of 1976 on furlough gave joy to meet personally with many who had shared in the work amongst the Guaymi. One key message was that despite the tendency to exalt the Missionary “for the wonderful work he is doing” the Scriptures say that “neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. For we are fellow workmen for God”.⁵⁰⁰

Shortly after their return to Panamá, the Hastes witnessed the birth of more local Churches through the ministry of Guaymi missionaries and were thankful for the continued function, growth, and outreach of the indigenous church. They continued travelling amongst the various groups teaching the Word and seeking to apply it in a meaningful way in their cultural setting.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1972–1973, pp. 23,24.

⁴⁹⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1973–1974, p. 21.

⁵⁰⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1974–1975, pp. 18,19.

⁵⁰¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1976–1977, p. 17.

1977-78 had been a year of sickness, disappointments and changed plans, and they had had to leave Tolé so Lee could have complete rest. These experiences were not wasted but used to refine them and make them into the vessels through which He could reach out in His love to others and to the Guaymi Church.⁵⁰²

From their palm-roofed, bamboo-walled, dirt-floored home in “Guaymiland” they sent greetings. They had seen progress in terms of souls saved, churches established, and Christian workers helped to better effectiveness through their ministry, but there were times when God chose to draw them aside so their thoughts were focused entirely on Him and what He desired to accomplish in their hearts and lives.⁵⁰³

They were thankful to God for the privilege of seeing Guaymi lives transformed and indigenous Churches established, with God preparing His mountain people for persecution and the possible withdrawal of the missionaries.⁵⁰⁴



Bruce and Lee Haste

Furlough can be frantic, fulfilling, fruitful, frustrating, and fun! During their September-October 1982 return to Australia, it was all of this and more. It meant that being thousands of miles from Panamá, their ministry had taken a different form as they used letter and cassette to bridge the gap and send encouragement to their Tribal brethren. They visited many small groups in various homes, enabling the congregation to get to know them and hear details of their labours for the Lord. Many opportunities arose to share about God’s work, stimulating increased prayer support for the Guaymi Church.⁵⁰⁵

Back in Panamá, carrying the burden of their work on their own shoulders resulted in frustration and failure. However, God reminded them that the battle is His and that without Him they could do nothing. They praised Him for His strength and wisdom in the many activities: moving into, cleaning and renovating an empty house; travelling and teaching amongst the Guaymis; helping those coming to their door with spiritual, physical and material needs; and many hours spent at their desks in language study;

⁵⁰² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1977–1978, pp. 17,18.

⁵⁰³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1978–1979, p. 19.

⁵⁰⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1980–1981, pp. 19,20.

⁵⁰⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1981–1982, pp. 24,25.

Bruce's preparation of teaching materials on basic doctrine and a chronological study of the Old Testament; and Lee working with team members on the translation of the Scriptures into Guaymi. As they sought to teach, especially amongst the younger and more isolated churches and give the whole Guaymi church God's Word in their language, they realized that to not hinder God's work, it was essential that they live obedient, godly lives.⁵⁰⁶

In addition to the Tabernacle's regular financial support, the church's annual Missionary Projects provided funds for video equipment, an electronic typewriter, Ignacio Haste's Bible study fees, teaching aides and Christian books in Spanish, building maintenance work, a 5-HP outboard motor for their dug-out canoe, furlough expenses, and the training and support of Guaymi missionaries involved in evangelizing and church planting.

A successful Missionary Weekend was held at the Tabernacle in April 1989 at which Bruce and Lee and their adopted son Ignacio reported to the Church of their missionary work over the past four years and outlined their vision for future outreach among the people living on the islands off the coast, who were largely unreached with the Gospel.

The new decade brought a new ministry but with the same good news of redemption, but in a new location, a new climate, a new lifestyle, a new people, and a new dialect. In 1990-91, much prayer was focused on Isla Tigre (Tiger Island) and other communities in the remote Bocas del Toro province which briefly captured world-wide attention due to a major earthquake which brought death and destruction.⁵⁰⁷

In 1992, history was made in Isla Tigre. For the first time God was praised in song, spoken to in prayer, and spoken about. His word was being studied, memorised, and applied by those who hearing of God in their native language, had been born again. The church's prayers, faith and vision had enabled more effective teaching, with the goal of continuing outreach and significantly effecting the community through a transformed lifestyle with Christ at the centre.⁵⁰⁸

The Lord was calling a people for Himself. In spite of the "storm of the century" with its hurricane force winds and drenching rains, a tragic drowning, the fear and superstition instilled by the indigenous "Little Mother" cult with the witch doctress and her family taking up residency on the Isle and performing ceremonies for protection from evil spirits, her curses together with those of the young man said to be the "incarnate Holy Spirit", and the confusion of false teachers of baptismal regeneration, the first baptismal service of 10 believers was held in October, 1992. The church

⁵⁰⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1982–1983, pp. 23,24.

⁵⁰⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1987–1988, p.24.

⁵⁰⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1990–1991, p.12.

celebrated the Lord's Supper together for the first time in November and souls were saved. Translating and teaching God's Word was thrilling but exhausting work, together with surveying other island communities to assess needs and openings for missionary work.

The safe arrival of Ignacio and Magdalena's daughter, Hazel, in May was a joy for the family.⁵⁰⁹

The beginning of another furlough was a good time to reflect on their 31 years service. Teamwork accomplished much. Spiritually, emotionally, and physically the last term had been difficult, but a beachhead had been established, a great amount of translation and teaching had been done, and three new churches had been born.⁵¹⁰

Returning to Panamá was not "old hat". Although in a sense they were returning "home" there was still an element of "fear and trembling" because of the known, not the unknown. They were aware of the struggles, stress, opposition, risks, and hard work that lay ahead and knew that in themselves they were not equal to these things. Instead of being known for its degradation, they requested prayer that Isla Tigre might become a lighthouse from where the light of the Gospel would shine forth to the rest of Bocas del Toro.⁵¹¹

In answer to prayer the young church on Isla Tigre continued to grow—both in numbers, spiritual maturity, and concern for others. The Tabernacle's giving also made a difference to their lives—lights in their house from solar power; piped water to the "out window" kitchen sink, cold shower, and reliable transportation.⁵¹²

They sometimes felt that they were getting old, or maybe it was just the pressure of living on a tropical island in the beautiful Caribbean, but spiritually seeming to totter on the brink of hell. Sometimes as they sought to share the gospel and looked into peoples' eyes, it was like looking into nothingness: they were so lost, so dead. When they first went to Isla Tigre, Bruce and Lee had been told that they would never be able to change the people, and they believed it. They could never change them. But God could, and was, and would continue to do it. There were believers, there was a church, and they saw change. They longed to see those people turned from darkness to light, from Satan to God. They were not discouraged but claimed the pulling down of strongholds, the breaking of chains, so that these people would be set free.⁵¹³

⁵⁰⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1992–1993, pp.31,32.

⁵¹⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1993–1994, p.29.

⁵¹¹ *ibid*, p.29.

⁵¹² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1997–1998, pp.38,39.

⁵¹³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1996–1997, pp.36,37.

The following year was one of strange trials, special blessings, unexpected experiences, opportunities, and trials, in which the Lord met them and through which He brought and taught them, blessing them with His special peace.⁵¹⁴

Many were anticipating great changes in 2000, but in Panamá there were some big ones still ahead: a new government, the handing over of the canal by the USA to Panamá, and the implementation of new Guaymi Comarca (reservation) laws. Knowing that the door of opportunity would remain open as long as the Lord chose, Bruce and Lee sought to use the time wisely to disciple believers and develop church leadership, that the believers in Isla Tigre would be willing to expose their old cultural ways to the light of God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to renew their minds and change their way of life.⁵¹⁵

Bruce and Lee's big boat (their dugout canoe) had to be dry docked for repairs. It had been in the water too long! After it had been scraped, repaired, sanded, and painted, they stood admiring its renewed brilliance, running their hands along its smooth surface, and thanking God for what a good boat it had been, as though they were discussing the faithfulness of an old friend! (They had had it for over ten years.) They thought of the many times it had ploughed through rough seas: transporting missionary families and others, making emergency trips to take sick islanders to medical attention, carrying supplies and building materials, hauling roofing palm, and travelling the tricky waters to Rio San Pedro. God was at work and many had responded to the Gospel, and the church was being established but they knew that the church's vision and theirs was far beyond Isla Tigre. Their desire was that the local believers would share that vision, feel personal responsibility, and take up the challenge. Then they would see their "trusty boat" filled with faithful messengers heading to other islands and coastal communities to share God's Good News.⁵¹⁶

In 2001, Bruce and Lee were looking forward with anticipation to returning to Brisbane and sharing face-to-face the joys, struggles, needs and victories in the work among the Guaymi, Panamá's largest indigenous people group. It was an encouragement to see the Guaymi Church Association in Chiriqui sending out missionaries, and the



Guaymi Women's Convention

⁵¹⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1997–1998, pp.38,39.

⁵¹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1998–1999, pp.38,39.

⁵¹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1999–2000, pp.39,40.

young church supporting them through prayer and giving. Their WBT friends had made great progress on the translation of the Guaymi New Testament and Guaymi literacy was being promoted in the local churches by pastors and teachers. The believers were also learning to produce their own literature. Others were involved in hymn translation and revision. Some had expressed a desire to be His “useful vessels”. In a community where almost no-one does anything without expecting payment or reward, to become a “servant” truly needed the “renewing of the mind” for which they were praying. They requested prayer for Ignacio, as he continued to serve, teach, and disciple the believers during their absence.⁵¹⁷

Bruce and Lee were in Brisbane for two weeks in October 2001, to coincide with the Tabernacle’s missionary weekend, participating in meetings, showing slides of where they live and work, and giving the church an insight into their life and ministry.

2001-02 was a year of comings and goings, and varied experiences: a furlough in Australia, mini visits to family and friends in California, a family reunion in England, a marvellous church planting conference at NTM headquarters in the US, a car wreck in the Chiriqui province, and a fantastic Easter conference with hundreds of Guaymi believers; opportunities to minister and be ministered to as members of the Body of Christ. Isla Tigre, where only a tiny percentage of the 120,000 members of this people group lived, they called “home”. When they first went to Bocas del Toro, it was quite isolated from the other provinces. Now with a highway linking it to the rest of the country, and as a popular “last frontier” for tourists, things were very different. The Guaymi Churches in Chiriqui had made this province part of their missionary focus, sharing Bruce and Lee’s burden, and sending workers to this unreached field. One thing that impressed their hearts was that before the area was “discovered” by so many, it had already been “known” by God’s people and influenced by their prayers. The need for prayer continued to be great as Satan fought to hold on to what had been his for centuries. They rejoiced that many had heard the Gospel, some had a life-changing experience through their Christ, and now prayed for the salvation of others.⁵¹⁸

January 19, 2003 marked the 40th anniversary of the Haste’s arrival in Panamá and they saw themselves coming to the close of many years of evangelism and church planting. They had a tentative plan to return to Chiriqui within two years. In accordance with team strategy they were beginning a gradual God-led withdrawal. Their desire was to stay focused on finishing strong. 2003 had seen several NTM families say goodbye to Panamá. There would be a small NTM presence for some years as missionaries assisted indigenous churches, especially with the Naso tribe with whom work was just beginning. The Guaymi Evangelical Church Association, which had existed for several

⁵¹⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2000–2001*, p.35.

⁵¹⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2001–2002*, pp.41,42.

years, consisted of about 50-member churches, with several thousand believers. The Guaymi Tribe itself had increased to over 138,000. As foreign missionaries, Bruce and Lee were to continue assisting the Association's churches and activities as needed and invited by the leadership. This would include periodic visits to Isla Tigre. Their time in Isla Tigre had been hard! Not so much physically, but because of the spiritual battle, the syncretism, the cultural barriers, and the core values of people who were so opposed to God's Word and will. Every step forward had been counter-attacked. The enemy did not want a strong church there or among any of the tribes in Panamá. They praised God, that He was building His church.⁵¹⁹

For three months in 2004, the Hastes were based in Weymouth, England. They left Panamá exhausted but with the anticipation of some time to "come aside" for spiritual and physical renewal. They enjoyed a week-long Haste family reunion in Suffolk. They had been refreshed by fellowship with the Lord's people, been generously fed by them, had time to read some good books, and planned for times of quietness and being alone with the Lord. Their "home-assignment" was mainly about sharing in a detailed and personal way about the Lord's work in Panamá—a privilege and opportunity that they found challenging and could only accomplish with His enabling. With the wonders of modern technology, it was possible to receive news from Isla Tigre daily. Such a contrast to when they first went there and had absolutely no contact with the outside world! Ignacio and Magda sensed the increased responsibility in their absence. Bruce and Lee rejoiced that their goal for increased opportunities for fellowship and training for the scattered believers in their province was being met. The Guaymi Church Association anticipated the release of the Guaymi New Testament.⁵²⁰

In 2005, the Tabernacle celebrated its sesquicentenary. Bruce wrote to the church, saying:

Our Dear Tabernacle Family,

Many thanks to all those who have made such an effort to include us in this special year of celebration. We really did feel as though we were there!

God, in His great love and faithfulness has blessed the Tabernacle over the past 150 years and only eternity will show how far the blessing has reached and how many lives, families and places have been touched, strengthened, encouraged and enabled to live fruitfully for His glory.

Bruce and Lee were thankful to the Lord for His leading and undertaking for them to move to the small town of Rambala in the Chiriqui Grande district. Being distanced from the island was designed to help the believers take more responsibility for ministry and outreach, but to be close enough to have some involvement in the work and be available when needed. They kept in regular contact with Ignacio and Magda as part of

⁵¹⁹ *ibid*, pp.44,45.

⁵²⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2003–2004*, pp.42,43.

their back-up team. Part of their job description was to promote the use of the Guaymi New Testament and the revised chronological Bible lessons, so the opportunities and challenges were many. They also looked forward to working with Guaymi missionaries in outreach among the many Guaymis in that district. Lee continued to be involved in the revision and dialectical change of the Guaymi Bible lessons.

The move from Isla Tigre coincided with their granddaughter, Hazel, beginning secondary education. She adjusted well to the local junior college and completed successfully her first semester. Bruce and Lee took seriously the responsibility to shepherd her through these years and to influence her friends, their families, and her teachers, for Christ. They also often had children from different schools come for help with their English homework, providing opportunities to show His love and make friends. Another aspect of their ministry was the opportunity to offer hospitality or help to missionaries and friends passing through to the Naso and Buglere tribes.⁵²¹

A highlight for the Tabernacle in August 2005 was to accept Lee into membership. The right hand of fellowship was extended by a telephone call to Lee in Panamá. Lee's home church, Lambton Baptist Church (NSW) had closed, so she was "churchless".

Bruce and Lee had prayed for and anticipated the accomplishing of their goals in Panamá to see the indigenous people reached with the Gospel, and Churches established and equipped to carry on the work so that the majority of the missionaries could move onto other fields. They were part of the remnant serving with NTM in Panamá where there was still much to do. Other, unexpected departures had taken place. Their dearly loved Guaymi daughter Minta and son-in-law Bernardo Vega and their granddaughters, Melisa and Itzari, due to a terrible highway accident, went very suddenly home to their Saviour. They did not question the ways of God but marvelled at His amazing grace that carried the children, extended families, themselves, and many others through that trial. Through the life and death of those four special people God was doing great things. God had given them the task of sharing in the shepherding of Minta and Bernardo's family through that time. They continued to pray, encourage, and support the Vega family, the young Hastes, the Church in Isla Tigre, the Guaymi missionaries serving in this area, precious believers, and the Venado family.⁵²²

Several of the remnant missionaries served in leadership, support, and consultant roles from Headquarters in Chame. For the Hastes, it was a continuing and growing joy to work with the Guaymi missionaries and pastors serving in Bocas and Chiriqui provinces and with their own Guaymi family. Opportunities to serve the Lord, His church and those around them, abounded. Bruce was kept busy preparing messages to share with

⁵²¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2004–2005, p.41,43.

⁵²² *ibid*, pp.49,50.

Guaymi missionaries and pastors and had unexpected opportunities to share the Gospel with local officials. Lee enjoyed her weekly Bible study and prayer time with Aminda the wife of Roberto and with a Guaymi missionary/pastor with whom Bruce met weekly. On one occasion, Lee answered a call on her mobile phone to hear a very excited Guaymi man asking if she was “Hedi” and if her husband was Bruce. The caller was Elias who was very anxious to see them, and to Bruce and Lee’s great joy, he and his wife were now believers.⁵²³

The year 2007-08 would go down in “Haste History” as “the year they built the house.” The Hastes had built several houses, including a few one-room ones, during the past forty-five years but those were short-term projects by comparison. As they looked back, they praised the Lord for bringing them through the challenges, frustrations, exhaustion, and sometimes painful learning experiences of making each home, no matter the size, the building materials, or the location, a place of blessing, service, and great memories. They trusted this would also be true of the “casa verde” (green house) found along a gravel road by the Rio Guarumo in a small sector of Rambala called “La Milagrosa” (the miraculous). They anticipated taking up residence with a great sense of thankfulness and by faith foresaw the vision of ministry opportunities becoming reality for the glory of God, the strengthening of believers and the salvation of souls. They requested prayer for the Christians, that they would not be “swept off their feet” but be wise and apply Biblical values to their daily living and be an example to others in those changing times, that many would be drawn to Christ. The Haste’s desire was that they would be wise counsellors to the many who were needing direction.⁵²⁴

Earthquake, landslides, torrential rain, raging floods, the only access highway damaged beyond belief, their neighbourhood almost unrecognizable. The Hastes praised God, knowing Him and His peace which passes all understanding. Bruce and Lee had moved into their new home five months before the wild weather and were thankful that although the damage to their property was extensive, the flood waters did not enter the house. They were thankful for opportunities to use the large front terrace which was especially designed for ministry. On Sunday afternoons, Guaymi neighbours met to listen to the narration of the Scriptures in their own language. The Hastes enjoyed this time too and prayed that more would come. They hoped to have more individual and group Bible studies. It was a great encouragement to have the region’s Guaymi missionaries and pastors meet for discussion, prayer, and planning. Spiritual growth in the lives of the believers in Isla Tigre resulted in more active participation in the ministry of the church brought joy, especially to Ignacio and Magdalena who continued to pray and work to see a more vibrant fellowship and increase in outreach and evangelism.

⁵²³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2006–2007*, pp.56,57.

⁵²⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2007–2008*, pp.60,61.

Visits to Isla Tigre, with opportunities to interact and share the Word with the believers were among the highlights. The number of NTM expatriate missionaries had decreased to eleven while the privilege of serving and supporting the indigenous and National believers in different ways seemed to increase. It was a great privilege to be co-workers with the men and woman of the Guayml church. As Bruce celebrated his seventieth birthday, he realized not how old he was but how blessed he was and how gracious the Lord was to have given him the privilege of these years of service. Bruce and Lee sent their thanks “de todo corazón!”⁵²⁵



Bruce and Lee, 2012

Although they were getting older, the long treks by horse or foot through the mountains had become things of the past as the steep rugged trails were replaced by roads, so that places and people that had been out of physical reach were again accessible and they had the joy of surprising mountain congregations with a visit and a message of encouragement. They had been able to visit several Guaymi communities enjoying fellowship with local believers in the context of church meetings and visiting families in their homes. They visited a man who was among the first Guaymi Christians they had met when sent to Tolé in 1963 and had given them their Guaymi names “Chigon” and “Hedi”. It was impossible to express the joy they felt when they met up with old friends and found them still fervent for the Lord, together with their children and now grandchildren. The Guaymi Church Association continued to send out missionaries to the unreached. One of those, Pedro, aged 53 (who they had known well since he was a teenager) was there, on his way to isolated communities where he had been preaching the gospel and had established churches. They were privileged to pray for and support the Guaymi. Local Guaymi missionary, Marcelino and Bruce had been visiting one of the mountain churches to help the leadership and congregation and were encouraged to see a positive response to the Word and the working of the Holy Spirit. They continued to be encouragers and counsellors of Ignacio and Magda and the Isla Tigre church and closer to home, they wanted to continue to reach out with Christ’s love to their neighbours on the street where they lived.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2008–2009, pp.66,67.

⁵²⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2010–2011, pp.55,56.

One of the highlights of 2012 for the Tabernacle was the visit of Bruce and Lee, who were able to spend a couple of weeks in Brisbane, share in the services and partake in an informal luncheon after a morning service.

Bruce and Lee. became the great-grand-parents of two boys, Kevin and Kaleb, and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and Lee turned 70. They were blessed with a seven week visit to Australia during which God met them with His loving kindness all along the way, being reunited with family and friends whom they had not seen in 10 years. They had some great days of rest and relaxation at the CrossView HQ.

In Panamá they focused on catching up with old friends and visiting places where they had lived or ministered. It had been wonderful to reminisce about old times but mostly the joy came when they saw the love of Christ still evident in their lives. One of those, Marcario, is believed to be the first Christian in what is now the Guaymí Evangelical Church Association. It was lovely to see the same old smile lighten his now old and wrinkled face. During the year they hosted various ministry events at their home. One special event had become meaningful to their family. They hosted the Haste/Vega Christmas at their home in Rambala. Besides the usual meal and gift giving, it was an inspirational time as they joyfully sang carols accompanied by guitar, listened to Ignacio's message asking *What is the most important gift you can give your child?* as most of the adults shared something of their own spiritual journey. As they looked back, they all thanked God for that significant time together as it was the last time they (except for Noemí and little Jerry) were to see Jerry Nunez, husband of their granddaughter, Noemí Vega,. As at the Vega funeral, the message was one of Hope: the Gospel was proclaimed. Jerry's testimony continues on Earth as he catches up with loved ones in Glory.⁵²⁷

In January 2012, the Hastes began their 51st year in Panamá. In May, their NTM office closed and "Phase Out" was brought to completion, so they were the only active expat NTM staff to remain. There was also an NTM National couple and a retired veteran. They were blessed to have great friends still serving there with other organisations and independently. As missionaries, working themselves out of a job was always a real goal. Dedicated indigenous church leaders and congregations capably continued the ministry of the Gospel in which they had been co-labourers for many years and sending out their own missionaries. As a family they faced challenges personally and in the work, but God faithfully undertook for them. Bruce's knee injury kept them from visiting the mountain churches as they would wish but they trusted God for strength and healing to

⁵²⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2011–2012*, pp.38,48,49.

enable them to fulfil that ministry. They continued to be a back-up for the family and church in Isla Tigre as they supported, encouraged, and prayed.⁵²⁸

NTM was renamed *CrossView* in 2011 and subsequently *Ethnos360*, although in Australia it retained the name *CrossView Australia*.

They praised God for the time they had in the UK. After 10 years absence, it was wonderful to catch up with family, friends, and faithful prayer partners. Most of their time was spent in the South of England and in East Anglia. They travelled to Birmingham to be with one of Bruce's sisters and her family for a weekend. Although only a short visit, it was meaningful and a time packed with love, blessing, fun, prayer, meals together, yet not rushed or hectic. Down South, they stayed with Bruce's brother and his wife, later with his eldest sister. Lastly, they were in Felixstow (where the Haste family was from) and enjoyed walking and visiting Bruce's boyhood haunts, the churches, and walking the long beach promenade. They stayed with an elderly aunt, a faithful Christian, and a great encouragement. They also were able to tidy Bruce's parents' grave. Bruce's father had died in 1993, aged 97 and his mother died in 2003, aged 101. He had not attended their funerals.

There was concern for Lee's health and her need for time without the pressures of work. They also had a serious problem with their computer. Although they were able to use computers of family members occasionally, not having theirs functioning kept Lee from quite a bit of pressure and they felt free to rest, walk, visit, and read more than normal. Back in Panamá, Bruce was trying to help more with emailing and letter writing and their letters were usually a team effort.⁵²⁹

January found them distributing beautiful Scripture calendars and tracts in the streets of Chiriquí Grande and Rambala. Their four-year old great grandson, Kevin, enthusiastically helped in the distribution on a walk through Rambala. They were in frequent contact with Ignacio and Magda to encourage and support them in the ministry on Isla Tigre. Their grandson Bruce continued to live with them and would soon finish his 6th year of high school. Bruce continued in his favourite ministry of personal evangelism, as well as the frequent opportunities to encourage and counsel Guaymí believers via telephone as he received calls from different areas of the country. Lee was often called upon by students for help with their English language study.⁵³⁰

The Tabernacle brought Bruce and Lee to Australia in May-June 2015 for the Church's Missionary Month. During that time, the Church acknowledged their decades of service to the Lord and the Church in Panamá and were encouraged by their ministry as they

⁵²⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2012–2013, pp.48,49.

⁵²⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2013–2014, pp.45,46.

⁵³⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2014–2015, pp.44,45.

again shared of their call to serve the Lord and of the keeping and sustaining work of the Lord in their years of missionary endeavour. Following their visit to Australia, Bruce and Lee reported that it had taken them a while to get over jetlag, feel normal and begin to get into the swing of things back in Panamá. They had enjoyed fellowship at the area Guaymi church and also had opportunity to counsel believers and share the Gospel.⁵³¹

While in David City they made a day trip to the Guaymi villages of Buenos Aires and Alto Caballero to visit Christian friends. Although it was hot and humid, they were thankful for the beautiful green trees and the river just across the road and down the gully from their home. They regularly went out walking along the gravel roads, or sometimes muddy tracks and sometimes better roads for exercise but with the purpose of meeting people and making friends. There is quite a large Guaymi settlement not far away and when they surprised them by speaking their language, they were more open to them. They enjoyed fellowship at the Guaymi church in the swamp village in Chiriqui Grande, where the boats come and go to places like Isla Tigre.⁵³²

During 2017-18, most of their ministry had been with the Panagos Guaymi Church in Chiriqui Grande. Leaving the road, they would cross over on the high, side-less, narrow cement bridge hoping not to be knocked in as locals rushed by not liking to be slowed down by doddering oldies. One of their favourite things from their home in Rambala had been to encourage reading especially among the local Christians and unbelievers. They used the *Christian Heroes of Yesterday and Today* series. With the access and use of mobile phones, even in the far indigenous villages, they were able to catch up with Guaymi believers, who were often sons and daughters in the Lord. This included the possibility of keeping in touch with their Haste family on Tiger Island and joining with them as they shared blessings for rejoicing and urgent needs of prayer. Often Guaymis visited them at their home in Rambala and they had the opportunity to share the Gospel with them and encourage them if they were Christians.⁵³³

Bruce and Lee became the much-loved elder citizens of the church which owed so much to their faithful service as ministers of the Gospel. Travel was no longer easy, so many aspects of their service involved people coming to them. As examples, the Isla Tigre church ladies came to their home for their monthly meeting, a lovely little Guaymi family came and they received a phone call from a pastor in one of the villages asking if they could buy a Bible for his son-in-law when next in David City. Their ministry continued in many ways. They received beautiful Scripture calendars from Northern Ireland and delivered them house to house; they enjoyed daily Bible studies—Bruce with a neighbour friend, Jaime, and Lee with Sandra, a girl who helped her in the

⁵³¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2015–2016, pp.39,40.

⁵³² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2016–2017, pp.38,39.

⁵³³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2017–2018, p.46.

mornings. Sadly, Bruce's only brother, Malcolm died in March 2019 in England. They were a little restricted due to leg problems but were both receiving treatment and it meant that Bruce could not do much driving. All of their emails come from "Hedi Lee Haste". It was just a local name and she did not imagine it appearing on any legal document—It was just a matter of life when one became part of several cultures.⁵³⁴

⁵³⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 2018–2019, pp.49,50.

Pastor Donald McGregor

Donald Martin McGregor, or Don as he was generally known, was born in Brisbane in 1941, the son of John and Adeline McGregor. His parents married in 1938, but his father died while Don was quite young, in 1949. In 1957, Don was appointed as a junior assistant, fourth division in the Office of the Public Service Board.⁵³⁵ He was promoted to clerical assistant grade two in the National Health Division, Pharmaceutical Section, in Brisbane, in 1959.

Don was received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1959 following his baptism the previous year by Rev Fred Smith. He was a member of the YPCES and convenor of the lookout committee in 1960. Neither of his parents were in membership at the Tabernacle.

He commenced a two-year course at the QBI as a full-time student in 1961, with a view to full-time missionary service.⁵³⁶ He was living in Enoggera with his mother and brother Ian, while a student.

While at college, he met Maureen Rogers from the Vulture Street (South Brisbane) Church, who was also at QBI, a year behind Don. When Maureen commenced in 1962, she was told by the senior student not to talk to “that” student (Don) as his girlfriend had died the previous year. One of the rules in those days was that you were not to talk to students of the opposite sex—a rule they managed to break.

After finishing Bible College Don went down to Adelaide for a year selling books, door to door. On arrival back in Brisbane he applied to work with Campaigners for Christ (CfC) and was assigned to the Everyman’s Welfare Society (EWS) hut at Enoggera Barracks working with the soldiers in their recreation hut. He wore an army uniform, but that was the only similarity to the soldiers!

Don and Maureen were married in 1964 in Maureen’s home church, by Rev Norm Mergard. Don continued working with EWS for the next two years. His name was removed from the Tabernacle members roll in 1965, but the reason for this is unknown.



Don in EWS Uniform

⁵³⁵ *Commonwealth Gazette*, 9 May 1957, p. 1379.

⁵³⁶ *City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1960–1961*, p. 9.

Don and Maureen had four children, Dwight who died aged 28 in 1994, Timothy, Wesley, and Kirsty Jones.

He became a storeman with Woolworths in 1968 when living in Inala, then worked as an insurance inspector with Ansvar, a church-based insurance company. During these three years, Don preached in various churches in and around Brisbane.

In 1971 Don resumed full-time ministry, describing himself in official records as a youth director, while working with Youth for Christ where he set up the first Youth Guidance section of YFC in Australia. They were amazing years. Don and Maureen also set up a home for girls who were referred to them by the police or children's services. When they left YFC they continued to work with delinquent and neglected children and started up an organisation—Youth Care Counselling. They held their own mid-week home group style meetings called Care Groups also their own Chapel, as mainstream churches did not know how to cope with a group of what was known as delinquents at their churches.

In the late 1970s, Don took groups on ministry visits to remote villages in India and held evangelistic meetings. He also baptized the converts, and as part of the baptismal service, when they came up out of the water, they were given a new, Biblical name.

Maureen can't remember how many were saved and baptized, but it was rather a huge number.⁵³⁷



Don, evangelising in India.

Eventually, in 1985 they left working with delinquents, and accepted a call to an Assemblies of God Church in Moura, central Queensland, when their daughter was about to start grade one, and Don pastored there for three years. Don then had a call to a church on Bribie Island where he pastored for the next seven years, until he had to resign because he had lost an eye to cancer and had other health problems. They had not been back in their home in Caboolture very long when Don was asked if he would look after a little home group in Beachmere for their local Assemblies Of God Church. He quickly agreed, and as it grew, he decided they should move to Beachmere and start a church meeting as well. They did this, but two years later in 1998 aged 56, riddled with

⁵³⁷ M Slight, Personal communication, 2020.

Don McGregor

cancer, and with the whole church, plus others in his bedroom, he went to be with the Lord that he loved. Don had preached his last sermon on the morning of 31 January.

In 2004, Maureen married Edwin John Slight.



A Baptism in Moura
(Photo Maureen Slight)

Rev Graham Roberts

Graham Martyn Roberts was born in 1941. Along with his older brother David, he was brought as a child to the Tabernacle by his parents, Harry and Eileen Roberts. Graham came to faith in Jesus at the age of six under the Gospel ministry of the Rev John Ridley in Toowong in 1948. He was nurtured and strengthened in his faith through the ministry of faithful Sunday School teachers, the leaders of CE, the BYF, and Boy's Brigade. After his baptism aged 15, Graham was received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1957. David also came into membership on the same day.



Graham Roberts

In 1961 Graham left home aged 19 to study in the United States in preparation for a life of Christian service. He began his Bachelor of Arts studies at Northwestern College, Minnesota (now called the University of Northwestern St. Paul in Minneapolis) and the following year transferred to Wheaton College in Illinois.

Graham married Frieda Baris in 1963 following the completion of Frieda's studies at Northwestern College. The following year, Graham graduated from Wheaton and they spent the summer in Western Austria on a Summer Outreach organised by Operation Mobilisation (OM).

Upon their return to the States, Graham began studies in divinity at the Gordon Divinity School (now called Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary), in Massachusetts qualifying with a Master of Divinity qualification. During his three years of study, Graham and Frieda served as Senior High Youth Leaders at Grace Chapel, Lexington, Massachusetts.

While ministering at Grace Chapel in 1965, Graham heard the missionary call and knew that God had called him and Frieda to serve on a foreign mission field. In the following months, God led them to seek missionary work with Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF).

At the conclusion of his seminary studies in early 1967, Graham was ordained to the ministry. Several months later, they attended OMF's Candidate School in Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania and were then accepted into OMF and were later assigned to serve on the Indonesia field team.

In mid-1967, Graham returned to Australia with Frieda and their one-year-old, Alison. During their four months back home, Graham was received into the BUQ as a minister.

Although Graham and Frieda considered it a privilege to be present at the Tabernacle's Annual Meeting in 1967, it was a greater joy to be in South-East Asia serving in the place of the Lord's appointment. In November, they sailed for Singapore where they attended OMF's Language School. Each Sunday afternoon, Graham served in an English-speaking church in Singapore.

They found their relocation to the multi-lingual, multi-racial, and multi-religious society of Singapore both fascinating and exciting. They felt their "whiteness" as never before. Consequently, they had to accept who they were in this new environment. The climatic change was not as difficult as they had anticipated, mainly because of God's help.

The change in their work was significant. Their primary work was to study bahasa Indonesian at the language school. Though it was definitely "work", it was an enjoyable experience. The course was excellent and they had the help of a very pleasant and good teacher. Their change in ministry had been from testifying concerning their calling into missions to engaging in the work of missions with a focus on teaching ministries in local churches and Christian youth clubs.

Anticipating their move to South Sulawesi, Indonesia among the Toraja people, they readied themselves for more changes to their living conditions. They trusted that their ministry reports and testimonies sent back to the Tabernacle would remind their supporters of their missionary labours, and that their supporters would continue to partner with them in prayer.⁵³⁸

They waited six months for the completion of discussions with the leaders of the Toraja Church. Five more months were spent waiting for their Indonesian visas, and a further two months waiting until some health concerns were taken care of. In the middle of it all, they welcomed David, in 1968, born at the Kandang Kerbau Maternity Hospital in Singapore. (In Malay "Kandang Kerbau" means "buffalo stable"!)



Graham and Alison

⁵³⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1967–1968*, p. 19.

Finally, they received their Indonesian visas and left for Indonesia at the end of 1968, just in time to celebrate Christmas in Jakarta. They praised God for His sovereign overruling in all these events.

Graham and Frieda were seconded by the OMF to serve in the Toraja Protestant Church of South Sulawesi in the Makale region. Their primary area of ministry was training. In the following three years, Graham travelled widely among the village churches in the eight church districts scattered over the mountains of Toraja Land. On these journeys he conducted lay leadership courses for elders, deacons, and leaders of youth and women's ministry groups etc. Frieda's open door was among the ladies in the Toraja Church congregation in Makale.

The spiritual needs of the local believers were such that Graham taught the basics of what it means to be a true Christian. More than just a few church members including the youth knew they were "Christians" but did not have a personal, living faith in Jesus. Consequently, the Roberts were wanting to see a genuine spiritual revival within the church.⁵³⁹

As they reflected on the variety of their experiences, they recalled some of the personal battles and struggles God had taken them through. With thanksgiving, they could say that God had continued to teach them in His School of Field Experience. The inner work of the Holy Spirit within them was of greater importance to God than the work they accomplished.

Graham was given a few challenging teaching responsibilities in a couple of training colleges. One such task was the training of religious instruction teachers. They prayed that there would be lasting positive results from this teaching and from the classroom discussions. They were amazed at the number and variety of opportunities to share Christ. During a two-week trek on foot to numerous villages, every day brought more thrilling opportunities to teach from God's Word to people who listened to the teaching with open hearts.⁵⁴⁰



Frieda with her neighbours

⁵³⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1968–1969*, pp. 22–23.

⁵⁴⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1969–1970*, pp. 19–20.

There were many aspects of their “work”: teaching in a few Christian Schools, visiting villages for Bible teaching, giving a guiding hand to the youth work in Makale, preaching in various congregations, and Frieda's special ministry with the ladies. They believed that through these ministries there had been a quiet but constant working of the Holy Spirit. Only God knew what changes had taken place in people's hearts. But their lives consisted of much more than their “work”. There was much more to the humdrum of daily living—attending to the many needs and wants of the children, receiving visitors and drinking strong black coffee with them, selling books from their home, writing letters, doing mission business, fixing broken house appliances, and working on the car. Graham also supported Frieda and helped the local midwife in the home birth of their son, Scott.

In 1971 the Tabernacle welcomed Graham and Frieda home on furlough. A large group gathered again in early 1972 to bid them farewell as they left to continue their furlough in the United States and then return to the mission field.⁵⁴¹

Their lives changed drastically during their year's furlough. They particularly wanted prayer for the out-working of all their plans for their future ministry in Indonesia. When Graham and Frieda looked back, at the conclusion of their furlough, they humbly recognised God's innumerable blessings upon their lives and all the ways He had guarded them from danger. They had not regretted, even for one moment, stepping out in obedience to the Lord's leading and call. More specifically they wished to praise Him for His power as evidenced in their lives.⁵⁴²



A lay leadership training group in Toraja

As their first furlough concluded and they were about to return to Indonesia, Graham and Frieda reported that they again found themselves anxious to return to Indonesia. They had enjoyed their visits with family members and had many praying friends in two continents. They had had opportunities to share their work many times, and many people had ministered to them, both physically and spiritually. They were a little physically weary but it was anticipated that a short vacation in West Malaysia before returning to Indonesia would take care of that. They had been spiritually renewed beyond what could have been expected. They had experienced a new divine empowering and had taken

⁵⁴¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1971–1972*, p. 23.

⁵⁴² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1970–1971*, pp. 22–23.

William Carey's motto as their own for their second term: "Expect great things from God; Attempt great things for God". They returned to Indonesia, in the Name of Jesus, to follow their Master in His will for their lives.⁵⁴³

During their first year back in Indonesia, the Lord's guidance, help, over-ruling in circumstances, and His enabling was evident. They especially experienced the Lord's protection in their return to Indonesia in late 1972 and rejoiced in the Lord's help in Alison's life as she settled in well to her new life as a schoolgirl in the OMF boarding school (Chefoo) in Malaysia, while the family were in Malaysia. The OMF Holiday Bungalow was about a kilometre from Chefoo School.

The Lord was good to them in His over-ruling in the shipping of their Land Rover and several crates, and during their experience with Indonesian Customs. The Lord's guidance in leading them back to work in the Toraja Churches was a matter for much praise to Him. They were filled with gratitude for all His enabling in their move from Makale in the Toraja mountains to steamy-hot Palopo and the establishment of new relationships with the church leaders and members in the new area.

Palopo, in the province of Luwu, was a strong Muslim area where Christians had been attacked and persecuted by a terrorist group until just 7 years before they arrived. This new area also affected the primary focus of their ministries—to help equip the Toraja Christians to reach out to their Muslim neighbours with the Gospel. With a new year in front of them, many of the things they saw and experienced burdened their hearts. They longed to see lives permanently changed and fruit that remained.

Above all was their concern that their daily living in the home and in contacts outside would be a constant witness to the power of the Spirit in lives of ordinary people who are fully surrendered to Him. Graham and Frieda continued to press on with an ever-deepening trust in their mighty God. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. 4:6 KJV).⁵⁴⁴

In their second term, Graham and Frieda served among the Toraja Church congregations along the coast north and south of Palopo. Graham continued his lay training ministries, focusing on training church members to know and share their faith.

Preparations for the Bible Week that was held in late 1974 were going ahead in full swing when Graham wrote that the need for Christian families to open a Bible was urgent. General Bible distribution moved painfully slowly. Most Christians were satisfied if their minister knew about the Bible. Thus, they were not really interested in owning a Bible or reading one. He believed that this was a very important step towards

⁵⁴³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1971–1972*, p. 9.

⁵⁴⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1972–1973*, pp. 24–25.

achieving spiritual growth and maturity in the lives of the nominal Christians in Indonesia. His prayer requests were that all the Bibles and tract orders would arrive on time, that all financial needs would be supplied, that God would break down barriers of unbelief from Christians and overt opposition from non-Christians, and that God would begin preparing the Christians' hearts to buy the Word of Truth for themselves.⁵⁴⁵

Graham and Frieda communicated their sincere appreciation to the Tabernacle for their enthusiastic involvement in this outreach, through numbers of gifts sent towards the Bible subsidy fund as well as the many prayers that were made for the ministry.

Reflecting on the 1974–75 year of ministry, it seemed that the appropriate theme was “unexpected things”. Two items stood out in their minds: the unexpected blessing of the Lord upon the Palopo Bible week, and the unexpected move to Ujung Pandang. Much of the second part of 1974, was spent organising the preparations for the Bible Week. Numbers of unexpected obstacles were faced, but in each instance, they experienced the mighty intervention of God. Then when the days of the Bible Week came and many people witnessed and experienced the unusual workings of their Lord, they rejoiced to see the might, and power of God clearly evidenced in their midst. For many, not a few unexpected miracles took place.

Not long after the completion of Bible Week, they received a letter from the Theological College of East Indonesia in Ujung Pandang (now known as Makassar), South Sulawesi—its contents were most unexpected. They were being invited to fill a temporary teaching position at the Seminary in the Practical Theology Department. Yet God had already been preparing their hearts to accept this position by laying the desire for involvement in the training of future ministers on their hearts for over a year. So, at the end of January 1975 they left all their loved friends in Palopo and moved to Ujung Pandang to begin a new ministry. At this time there were only 18 months left in this term. Despite some misgivings, they experienced clear guidance from the Spirit, and He confirmed His will by opening the way in many miraculous ways. Since beginning their ministry, they experienced the help and empowering of the Spirit in their teaching and pastoral responsibilities. Perhaps there were still many unexpected things awaiting them in the future, in their final year before furlough. As they moved ahead with Him, through all the unexpected things that took place in their lives, they experienced that in all of them He was working out His beautiful and perfect plan and purpose in their lives.⁵⁴⁶

In 1976, they arrived home on furlough at the completion of their second term. Their minds were reflecting on what they had done and what had been accomplished over the previous four years. There was both finished and unfinished business.

⁵⁴⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1973–1974*, p. 22.

⁵⁴⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, pp. 21–22.

They could apply what the Apostle Paul said to the Ephesian elders—they had delivered the whole counsel of God to those who had sat under their teaching and preaching ministry, both in the Indonesian Churches and in the Ujung Pandang Seminary. They wanted to be able to say that they had finished the task which God called them to perform over the four years of their second term.

During their furlough, Graham had the opportunity to study at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in the United States, completing the requirements for a Master of Theology degree. God was faithful in guiding him in selecting timely and important subjects for research. As a result, he felt much better equipped for a further term of service. The year was one of growing in Christ.

They returned to Indonesia in 1977 to a new and exciting ministry in the Indonesian Bible Institute (IBI) in Batu-Malang, East Java, the scene of a genuine concern to take the Gospel throughout Indonesia and to the ends of the earth as a committed team of international Christian workers.⁵⁴⁷

Their main task for the next three years at the IBI was teaching and counselling some of the 150 students who came from all the major islands of Indonesia. There was a tremendous potential among this student cohort, and they counted it a real challenge to share in the ministry of training evangelists and ministers for God's work in Indonesia.

During the year they had the joy of having Alison, David, and Scott at home with them, attending the Wesley International School in nearby Malang.

They once again expressed their sincere appreciation to the whole Tabernacle family for its continuing support for their ministries both through prayer and gifts towards their financial support.⁵⁴⁸

Their hearts were full of praise to the Lord for His goodness and faithfulness to them. He had continually strengthened them in their work at the IBI, in both their teaching and leadership responsibilities. He had kept them as a family in good health and joyous in their service for the King, and His gift of Elizabeth in 1979, their fourth child, who made their quiver full! Elizabeth was born in the Baptist Hospital in Kediri, East Java.

However, the year had not been without its spiritual struggles. Being thrust unexpectedly into a position of leadership at the Institute; the continual spiritual “growing pains” as children of God and disciples of Jesus Christ, and though those growing pains were sometimes painful, they were absolutely necessary if God was to accomplish His glorious purposes through their lives. The certain factor, however, was God’s ever-abiding, never-changing love. Also, as parents they continued to learn more

⁵⁴⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1976–1977*, pp. 18–19.

⁵⁴⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1977–1978*, pp. 18–19.

of God's will and God's ways in nurturing and training their children in the constant comfort and reassurance of knowing and experiencing God's love and faithfulness.

They appreciated and valued the continuing prayer and financial support of the Tabernacle family. Often, this prayer support was genuinely sensed as they served the Lord and faced many trials and decisions.⁵⁴⁹

Subsequently, God redirected them to a pastorate back in Australia. In 1980 Graham accepted the call of the Baptist Church in Hornsby (now Northern Life Baptist Church) in New South Wales. At the end of the year, the family, with four children, Alison, David, Scott, and Elizabeth, arrived back in Australia. They transferred their church membership from the Tabernacle to Hornsby in 1981 and Graham transferred his ministerial credentials to the Baptist Union New South Wales.

In their final report to the Tabernacle, they wrote of their feelings of nostalgia since this was to be their last, as missionaries and members of the Tabernacle. In early 1981, they entered upon a very new phase of their ministry and life's calling. Looking back over the 13 years that Frieda and Graham had been members of the OMF, their hearts were filled with gratitude to the Lord who had called them to serve Him. They had not found Him a hard taskmaster but a loving Shepherd-Leader. It had been the greatest privilege to have been sent out as His under-shepherds to feed the Church of God in Indonesia.

They were very thankful to God and to His people who had stood with them over those years, including their Tabernacle family who commissioned them in 1967 to their ministry with OMF in South-East Asia and had stood behind them with prayer and faithful giving.

Looking into the future, they believed that they would continue to support each other and stand together in service for the Lord. They prayed that God would raise up from among the young people of the Tabernacle others who would respond to the call of the Lord of the harvest to become His co-labourers in the Gospel ministry around the world, that the Tabernacle would continue to have a real heart for God's work in other countries, and that they and the Tabernacle would remain faithful to our God-given tasks until the King returns.⁵⁵⁰

Graham served as senior pastor at Hornsby until May 1983. Following his resignation, Graham, Frieda and their four children, continued living in the Hornsby area. In God's kindness, He provided a way for them to purchase a home in Thornleigh in 1984.

Then from mid-1983 until early 1988, Graham pastored a new church community known today as Community Church Hornsby.

⁵⁴⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1978–1979*, p. 18.

⁵⁵⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1979–1980*, pp. 19–20.

In 1987 Graham and Frieda again heard God's call to return to missionary service. God guided them to join OM, an international missionary organisation that aims to mobilise ordinary Christians (mostly younger singles) in short-term mission opportunities. (Graham and Frieda had previously served with OM in Austria in 1964.)

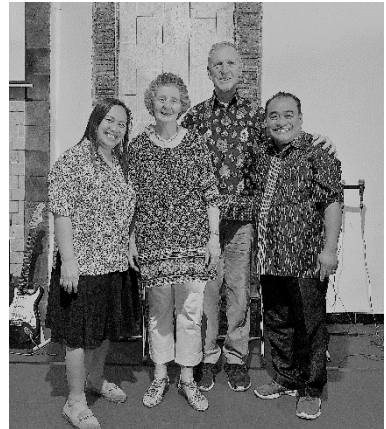
At first Graham stepped into the role as the OM representative and leader in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Then, shortly after the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe the Lord opened the door for them to serve there. Graham was invited to oversee the training of all new OM recruits.

After the Community Church commissioned them for this new ministry Graham, Frieda, and Elizabeth left for Vienna in mid-1991. For the next nine years, Graham and Frieda led OM's Missionary Training School based in the South Bohemia Region of The Czech Republic. Together with a small staff, they conducted a 12-week training course twice a year for all new OM workers on their way to work in the Communist Block—Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Albania, Croatia etc. Graham and Frieda helped train close to 400 new workers some of whom later heard God's call to become full-time missionaries or Christian workers.

In 2000, Graham and Frieda returned to Hornsby to wait on God for His direction for the next phase in their lifetime of Christian service, seeking to understand the Lord's mind concerning the next step.

By this time, Elizabeth had finished high school at the Vienna Christian School and completed her college/university studies at Graham's alma mater, Wheaton College in Illinois, USA.

Her three older siblings had already completed their university studies. Alison had become a medical doctor, David a computer programmer, and Scott a pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force, and later a commercial pilot with Cathay Pacific. God blessed each of Graham and Frieda's children with life partners and children.



Graham and Frieda Roberts with
Pastor Bambang and Nita

Following their return from Central Europe, Graham and Frieda have continued serving the Lord in a family partnership ministry called *Equip and Encourage International*. They continue to have contact with and minister to encourage some of the people they trained in Central Europe, and some of the people they trained during their earlier years in Indonesia.

Graham Roberts

Until recently, their ministries were a combination of writing books and tracts, posting daily reflections on *Facebook*, mentoring, and encouraging pastors, counselling couples going through marriage crises, taking annual short-term ministry trips to Indonesia, and preaching.

Frieda and Graham were thankful to God for their good health. In 2013 they moved to Woy Woy on the New South Wales Central Coast. There they joined Coast Community Church, a Churches of Christ fellowship, in Bensville.

For several years, they returned to Indonesia for ministry in East Java upon the invitation of the Rev Stefanus Bambang and his wife, Nita. (Bambang and Nita pastor a local church beside caring for children from poor and troubled family backgrounds.)

Then on 14 June 2020, Frieda suffered a cardiac arrest and went home to be with her Lord and Saviour whom she had served so faithfully alongside Graham for over 50 years. Graham and Frieda had shared 57 blessed years as life and ministry partners.

When Graham read this account of Frieda and his ministry, he commented that it was a blessing to read through “all the ways the Saviour led us.” Praise HIS holy name.⁵⁵¹



Graham & Frieda Roberts, 2019

⁵⁵¹ G Roberts, Personal communication, 2021.

Delwyn Barwick (née Halling)

Delwyn Joan Halling, or Del, as she is generally known, was born in Gympie in 1935, the daughter of Albert and Doreen Halling, who had been married in the Gympie Baptist Church in 1930, by Rev Robert McAllister. The family attended the Gympie Church. All of the children attended the Sunday School and church and Del and her brother went to CE on Sunday afternoon. Del made a public declaration of her faith in Christ as her Saviour in Baptism aged about 16. After completing Junior, Del went out west where she worked as a governess for several years.

After Valmae completed Junior she was offered a position as clerk/typist in the Education Department in Brisbane. As she was only 16, Doreen asked Del if she would like to go with her. Del's mother contacted the Rev Fred Smith at the Tabernacle. He recommended Mrs Essie Parker who had been a member at the Tabernacle since 1916 and was looking for boarders, so Del and Valmae went to live with her at Teneriffe. Essie, who Del described as a very nice lady⁵⁵² was the widow of Cecil Parker, and brother of Rev John Ward. Del obtained a position in McLeod's Bookstore in Elizabeth Street, where she worked until the shop closed.

Del and Valmae became very active in the life of the Tabernacle, working in the Sunday school, attending Bible class on Sunday mornings before church, going to the youth meeting in the afternoon and then church at night. They also sang in the choir. They attended the Young People's Christian Endeavour Society (YPCES) meeting on Monday night where Del became Treasurer. They were also in the Youth Choir which practised on Thursday afternoons. Del transferred her church membership from Gympie to the Tabernacle in 1961. Valmae became a member at the same time. On Tuesday afternoon after work they attended a Business Girls' Bible Study in Brisbane where they both heard about TBC. A couple of the girls had sisters who were students there.

After some time, Del felt that God was speaking to her about going to a Bible college. She had previously responded to a missionary call at the Tabernacle when Evangelist, Oswald Chambers, was the Speaker. She applied to the College and was accepted and entered TBC in May 1963. She was a student there until the end of the first term in 1965.



Tahlee Bible College (Photo: YWAM, Newcastle)

⁵⁵² D Barwick, Personal communication, 2021

The annual report of the YPSCE in June 1963 reported that they were very sorry to lose their treasurer, (Del) who had given much valuable service to the society. The society presented her with a book which they hoped would help her in her studies at TBC.⁵⁵³

At TBC, apart from Bible studies, students were taught practical skills such as basic mechanics, carpentry, electrical and how to survive in primitive conditions. The routine was very “full-on”. Students had to rise at 6 am and do chores around the farm before breakfast and then attend lectures until lunchtime. There was a short siesta period in the afternoon and then students were either engaged in study or practical activities in the workplaces. Del was Senior Lady Student in the last term of 1964 and Sub-senior in the term before. These student positions were chosen by the staff.



Del steering the Mission launch

Edwin (John) Barwick was born in 1939, in Brisbane, the only child of Edwin and Beryl Barwick. He and his parents attended the Eagle Junction Congregational Church, where John began to study his Bible. He became a Christian and later was baptised by the Rev Smith at the Tabernacle, where he had been attending with his parents on Sunday nights. He did not become a member there but joined the Joyful News Mission in the Valley. Sometime later, John felt the need to do further study of God’s word and applied to TBC where he was accepted as a student and entered the College at the beginning of first term 1964.

Del and John met at Tahlee. If couples became interested in one another, the fact was reported to Mr and Mrs Godfrey Theobald, the directors. The couple were immediately put on ice and not allowed to have any contact except in a group for a couple of months and were not put on TBC activities together. However, if the Theobalds were asked, the couple were allowed to have some time together at their house to talk or play chess.

Del and John were engaged in 1965. Del had finished her course but had to wait until the end of the year to graduate. John graduated at the same time at a ceremony in the Newcastle Baptist Church in late 1965 with evangelist, Robert Lee as speaker. They were married in Gympie in 1966. Del had transferred her church membership back to Gympie in 1965.

⁵⁵³ City Tabernacle, *YPSCE Minute Book, Annual Report*, June 1963.

They then completed a Sydney University layman's course in Tropical Medicine, designed to fit people for working in other countries. While in Sydney they stayed at the Missionary Home at Turramurra run by ex-missionary friends, Keith and Phyllis Browning.

They felt called to apply to the Red Sea Mission Team which had a work among the Arab people of the area. They were interviewed by the director, Dr Lionel Gurney, and accepted to go out as missionaries but trouble broke out in the area (the Six-Day War in the middle east in 1967) and foreigners were not permitted to travel there, so the mission cancelled their appointment. Westerners were being shot on the streets of Aden.

Following some pastoral work in North Queensland, the Mission suggested that they go to East Pakistan (Bangladesh) to start a new work there as they did not want to take fully trained, language-savvy missionaries from the Red Sea area. Amidst the arrangements trouble again started in this area, so they decided that God was trying to redirect them.

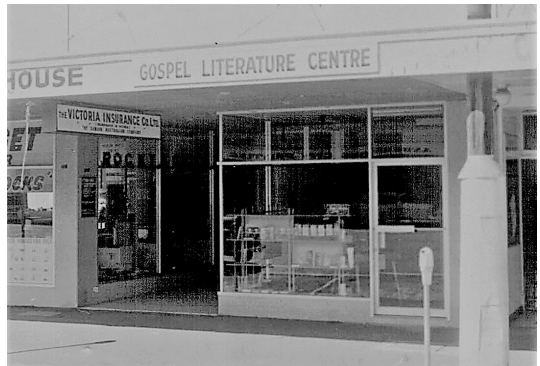
They moved to Central Queensland where John worked on the construction of the Fitzroy River Barrage. He was then offered the position of Pastor of a small church in the area, earning the princely sum of \$10 weekly, so naturally, they had to trust God to provide any extra finance they needed. John set up a Christian bookstore in town. It was used as a drop in place for Christian discussion over a cup of coffee. The store is still there today, in a different location, operating with volunteers. During this time, John had the pleasure of leading the manager of Woolworths to the Lord. Del was busy with home duties and offering support to John in the work.

Del and John moved back to Brisbane and John worked in the building industry in Colmslie, Helidon, Stanthorpe, and then Strathpine and Brisbane.

Still searching for a position in Christian work, John felt drawn to working with Campaigners for Christ



John and Del Barwick's wedding



John's Christian Bookstore

(CfC) as a Welfare Officer. This was during the Vietnam conflict and public anger was rampant against the Government of the day for allowing Australia to be drawn into a war which did not have anything to do with our country but was a civil war in which America had become embroiled. Many young men were conscripted and the need for counsellors and welfare helpers was very high. So, John went to Ingleburn to train as an Army Welfare Officer in February 1970. Del and the boys were left at Redcliffe for the six weeks that John was away. God looked after them and they were able to manage.

After training John was posted to 1st Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka, near Wagga Wagga, New South Wales. The family moved down, travelling in an Army ute which was provided for John's use. John worked with the recruits, often bringing one or two home for a meal if they seemed particularly lonely or traumatised. He used to run Bible Studies in the Everyman's Welfare Society Hut which was set up as a recreation place for the Diggers. He would take hot and cold drinks out to the recruits in training.

One evening when John was living in the officer's quarters a young officer who was a friend of his and had a habit of dropping in, came through his sitting room and opened his bedroom door while John was on my knees praying. He was very embarrassed but tried to make a joke of it. A few days later he remarked "you must really believe in God". From then on, he went with John to some Christian gatherings and asked John to help him to understand about God's love for sinful man. That night, on his knees, John led him to Christ. He went on to become a colonel, now retired.

One night John was talking to some battle-hardened combat instructors in a group who were trying to take the mickey out of him. After about an hour most had left, but one non-commissioned officer, who was an unarmed combat specialist, was showing



John Barwick.



Del with David and Chris, 1970

some interest and asking the type of questions you hope for. He left but next evening he wanted to talk seriously about salvation. On his knees, he committed his life to Christ with tears streaming down his face as he asked for God to forgive him. He later asked John to baptize him. So, a few weeks later he baptized him as he requested, and he gave a brilliant testimony concerning his salvation.

Another young digger was often in John's office when he was off duty just for a chat. He then asked why John believed in a loving God. He explained this, showing him the relevant scriptures. After a few weeks he told John he wanted to "believe like you do". He counselled him for salvation and he readily accepted the sacrifice Jesus made for his many sins. He was at John's office as often as he could be, begging to learn more until his time came to move to another battalion.

Some months later while John was 1500 km away out on an exercise, he had another guy filling in for him. This fill-in guy told John when he came back that this same young digger called in on his way somewhere else with some diggers from his new battalion whom he had led to Christ. What a joy!

In early 1971 John was posted to the Jungle Training Centre at Canungra. Here Del and John were involved in helping one of the Methodist Army Chaplains, Rod Lippiat, in his work of running a Sunday School (on Monday, after school) for the Army children. They also helped in the position of Camp Parents for a children's camp on a property with an old house on it where the children were housed. They took the children on excursions to Tamborine and Binna Burra. During this time, they attended a Presbyterian Church on Tamborine. After two years John was re-posted to Singleton Army Camp. As there was no housing available, Del and the boys stayed at Canungra, moving to a smaller house. After about a year, a house finally became available and the family moved to Singleton where they lived for 18 months. Here they were involved in the life of the Singleton Baptist Church where Del taught Sunday School.

During their last six months there, John was posted to the Apprentices' School at Balcombe, Victoria. While John was there, he suffered badly from hay fever so he moved back to Singleton.

John believes, from experience, that anyone who seeks to win souls for Christ will face stiff opposition, whether in this country or overseas. This is the nature of the conflict in which we involved. Sometimes it can leave a Christian very confused or sometimes having to hang on to the Saviour and His promises with a type of determination not taught in Bible colleges. But through it all, God is faithful to His Word and His promises and we find that as we face the enemy's opposition and stand on God's Word we grow stronger in Him.

In late 1976, John resigned from CfC and the family moved to Buderim where John's parents had land. As there was no Baptist Church in the immediate area, Del and John joined the local Methodist (later Uniting) Church. Here Del taught Sunday School and

John started a Youth Church for the teenagers as the church service was very traditional and not so attractive to them. He also ran a youth group on Friday nights with his business partner, Alan Butcher. Del helped by providing pikelets, scones, or damper for morning tea for the Sunday group and transporting the teenagers on outings on Saturdays and Friday nights by entertaining them in their home. Sometimes John took them out sailing with the club of which he and the boys were members.

As well as these activities, Del and John often invited single teachers from the boys' school and the school where Del worked as a Teacher aide, home to dinner. They always shared the Gospel with their guests.

Del and John are now members of the Maroochydore Presbyterian Church, where John helps with Bible study in the men's group and does the data presentation in the early morning service. Del is involved in the ladies' craft group where Biblical matters are often discussed.

It had been a long journey and sometimes very hard and painful, but God was always there providing strength and guidance and Del and John praised Him for His grace and love and the knowledge that He had always been there going before. Sometimes in the Christian work money was very scarce but God always provided. Once they needed \$100 to pay a bill but did not have the ready finance. Surprisingly, a letter with a \$100 cheque enclosed, arrived from a chap who had been in College with them. They had never heard from him before or since. Praise God!

When they talk of their lives, Del and John often say, as Samuel did, "Ebenezer, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." 1 Sam 7:12.

Valmae Oksanen (née Halling)

Valmae Lorice Halling, who is also known as Val, was born in 1944, the daughter of Albert and Doreen Halling, the youngest of five siblings, and grew up in Gympie before moving to Brisbane with her sister, Del. The family attended the Baptist Church in Apollonian Vale, Gympie, about three miles from their home. They often walked to church both morning and evening, but sometimes Valmae's Uncle Arthur would come by and give them a lift to church or home, or other worshippers would give them a lift home. During a Sunday School class there, she went forward at the invitation of one of her teachers to accept Jesus as her Lord and Saviour. She does not remember how old she was, but quite young. She remembers going home, sitting on her father's knee, and telling him she had accepted Jesus. Later the church moved to a closer location to their home.



Apollonian Vale Baptist Church
(Photo: QB Archives)

When she was 16 years old, she was offered a job with the Queensland Government as a typist in the Education Department in Brisbane. This meant a move to the city, and as she was only 16 her mother insisted that Delwyn go with her. At the time Del was working as a Governess on a cattle station in Western Queensland. She came and found a job which she loved, in the Queensland Book Store. Their workplaces were close to each other and they took the tram or bus to work together.

Somehow, probably through the Gympie Pastor, their mother was put in touch with Rev Fred Smith at the Tabernacle, and he was able to recommend that they board with Mrs Parker who was also a member of the Tabernacle.

Rev Smith preached wonderful sermons and Valmae remembers him preaching very evangelical messages. She was baptised by him when she was 17 years old. That night she went home feeling as though she had wings on her feet. Valmae and Del became members at the Tabernacle in 1961. Like her sister, she was active in the Youth Group and Christian Endeavour, became a member of the choir and a teacher in the Kindergarten School of the Bible School.

Usually, they went to church twice on Sundays. Valmae went on Youth Group outings, hiking in the woods etc. She remembers coming home on one occasion covered in leeches from the bush and having to get cleaned up in time to go back to church to sing in the choir. She was also involved in open air preaching on Sunday nights in the neighbourhood of the Tabernacle.

She felt very happy and later responded to a call (Del says it was a visiting evangelist) but she cannot remember his name. She remembers that the church was packed. She sat with Del on the right side of the church close to the front and when the call came for people to come forward to commit their lives to service for the Lord, Valmae went forward. God started to call her into nursing, and she was given (at a mission event) in the church a tract that depicted a nurse helping lepers in Ethiopia. She knew that was the way, so she applied to the Royal Brisbane Hospital to enter their nursing program and was accepted.

Del went forward too and went to Tahlee Bible College (TBC) in Karuah, New South Wales. Del and Valmae went to a Business Girls' Bible Study in Brisbane and it was there that they learnt about the college.

Valmae started nursing, but after 18 months found it too hard and left. She lost her way in life and went back to her job at the Education Department for a while, then obtained a transfer to Gympie in the office at the high school and then to New Zealand on a contract to work in Ross and Glendening Woollen Mills for one year and then back to Gympie and then nursing again. She became engaged and moved back to Brisbane and the Albion Baptist Church. Valmae later commented: "I was in New Zealand for my 21st birthday so that was 1965. I found God was in New Zealand too—Amazing—Wonderful—and He got me back on track. We cannot run away from God".⁵⁵⁴

She then realized that she had to submit to the Lord again and quickly went forward at an appeal there. She knew God wanted her to serve Him and was miserable without obedience in her life. Her engagement broken, she went off to TBC and when that was over, went back to Gympie, to complete her nursing training and then went to Perth to complete a course in midwifery.

When she applied to the King Edward Memorial Hospital, Perth, she received a letter back saying that the spots were full and that she was not accepted at that time. Valmae went to her Bible and read in Revelation 3:8 "Behold I have set before you an open door and no man can shut it." I was confident. Her mother asked: "Are you sure this is where the Lord wants you to be?" and she said: "I am sure". In one week, she had another



Sister Valmae Halling
(Third-year nurse in Gympie)

⁵⁵⁴V Oksanen, Personal communication, 2020

letter saying there had been a cancellation and she was accepted and had one week to arrive. Packing quickly, she took a bus to Adelaide and then flew from Adelaide to Perth. She quickly became involved in the Nurses Christian Fellowship, a Mission Prayer Group for Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) and a church. At a Mission Meeting for SIM she was given the same tract with the nurse helping a leper patient in Ethiopia.

This being 10 years later after the previous introduction to the needs in Sudan, she really felt now that God was calling her to Sudan. She applied and was accepted and started the deputation process. After six months of preparation to raise her support and get at least six months nursing experience which the Mission required, Valmae received a request from SIM that an organization called ACROSS (Africa Committee for Rehabilitation of Southern Sudan) wanted to place nurses in a team to go into that country. (A Peace Treaty had now been signed in Addis Ababa and Sudan was open now to help from foreign agencies.) They gathered together nurses, teachers, a couple of doctors, agriculturalists, and other administrative staff. They had to leave in six weeks. SIM said she could only go if ACROSS guaranteed her support. They said OK. So, she made her way to Nairobi and met with Dr Gruber of Christoffel Blinden Mission, Bensheim, Germany. She had to give a verbal testimony and then write it out. Within 48 hours she had her full support for the next nine years that she was in Southern Sudan.

Valmae arrived in Sudan one week after her 30th birthday—only to be greeted at the airport in Juba by a white gentleman who had nothing to do with the Mission with these words: “I don’t know where you are going but you have come to the ends of the Earth here”. But God is there too—at the ends of the Earth—isn’t He.

She flew to Sudan in the first week of March 1974 in a small twin-engined, 10-seater plane, that was later shot up by rebels during an attempt to topple the Government. It was too badly damaged to be used again. Valmae was reading from *My Daily Light* for that day and read about Abraham going forth, God showing him the way, “then he pitched his tent and built an altar to the Lord.” Genesis 12: 7 and 8. She did not think too much about it except to think to herself how God directs and goes before us when we pray to Him.

The plane came every two weeks bringing food, medical supplies, mail and occasionally visitors. When Valmae got out of the plane at Mvolo where she was to be stationed, she was greeted by Muriel Pickworth (an Australian) and Christa Opitz (a German). They said “Oh, we thought you were going to be a man so you will be living in the tent we have put up for you. The house was not completed—no doors and no windows but they were both living in it.

Needless to say, she was terrified at night. They were on the edge of a National Game Park (with no fences) but of course she had God’s total protection. She had a can of hair spray which she used at night to spray spiders which could be heard and seen using her flashlight. She had a big stick which she thought could be used to whack the lions should

they come. She opened her Bible and started to read from Psalms 104: 20,21, which talks about the night when beasts go forth and lions roar and seek their food from God. She slammed her Bible shut thinking God had a sense of humour, but it was years later that she realized that God was saying “they get their meat from Him”. He was going to protect her, and He did.

When the house was ready, she moved into it with the other two. They had a great time for four years and loved it. Valmae then developed a disease called Onchocerciasis which is caused by the Simulium Fly. The fly lives on the rocks of fast flowing rivers. When the rains come the eggs hatch, the Fly bites humans, lays its larvae under the skin and they eventually travel to the retina of the eye and can eventually cause blindness. Valmae was successfully treated by a Doctor in Nairobi but advised to move to another town away from the river. She moved to work with the Dinka people further North in Thiet, who were very different from the Jur people she had worked with at Mvolo. They are cattle people, always on the move. The Jur are farmers.

As a nurse and a midwife, Valmae ran the tuberculosis clinic for about 30 patients a day and supervised an Antenatal Clinic two days a week. At this regular clinic they saw only children aged one to five years, anything from 200 to 450 children a day with their mothers, grandmothers, and dogs to see what was going on. There were three expatriate nurses with two Sudanese interpreters. During the dry season it was hot and dusty, and the rainy season was very wet.

In 1984 she came home. Her mother was ill and passed away. The family decided to sell their father's house in Gympie and move him to Buderim where he would be only a couple of miles away from her sister Del and Del's husband John. Having done that, Valmae then began again to struggle with the question of whether she should stay home to care for him, as he was now in his 80s, or return to Africa. She decided that God was leading her back to Africa. War had broken out again in Sudan and she was unable to get a Visa to return. The Mission suggested to her that she might go to Kenya. She was disappointed but decided it was the right thing to do. She was assigned to go to a certain village and told all her supporters in Australia that she was going there, but when she arrived in Kenya the mission said they needed a nurse at Gatab (right on the edge of Lake Turkana) up on the Northern border of Kenya.



Valmae with Dinka children,
Thiet South Sudan

It is also on a high mountain (Mount Kulal). It was cold and windy and

usually in the clouds until about 10 am. The mountain was steep and with a steep drop off to the side. Their fellow missionary said he usually liked to take new missionaries up at night, so they couldn't see it! At Gatab she worked with a Canadian nurse and an American. Shortly after Dan Oksanen from Minneapolis came along and was working with Water Projects and helping with construction and helping to keep vehicles on the road.

They worked together for two years and then in 1987 they decided that they both wanted to get married. They were married twelve weeks later in Nairobi Baptist Church. They then went to Australia where Valmae was required to apply for a Visa to enter the USA. It had to be applied for from one's own Country or it will be denied or take a very long time. Valmae and Dan had to go to Sydney to complete the interview process at the Immigration Department for the USA. Valmae writes "we arrived there, walked in and saw this one gentleman there. He started to talk to us, and we found out he was from Minneapolis – as was Dan – and even had a house in the same street as Dan. So, they chatted away about Minnesota and without much ado he stamped my Visa application, and I was approved. But it had taken us five months to get together all the required documents. Amazing that we should have gotten that Interviewer.

After the visa was approved, they went back to Minneapolis where Dan had a house (which was rented out) and they could have the top floor and share the kitchen. They stayed home in the United States for a year as was required by the AIM (now that she was a member with them) and then returned to Kenya. They were sent to open a new station at Loruk. They lived again in a tent for a year while a house was being built. Valmae helped with the medical program and Dan built a workshop where he was teaching mechanics to Kenyans to keep the pastors' vehicles on the road. After they were married and living at Loruk in Kenya, they had to build the whole Mission Station from scratch. Valmae and Dan lived in a tent with a grass roof covering (which the Christians from the local church had put up for them) in an effort to cut the heat. That was their bedroom for sleeping and they had a hut, with a grass roof for a kitchen and a tin hut for a storeroom with a kerosene refrigerator inside, and to store their clothes and food. Each month they met with the other missionaries from surrounding mission stations with Africa Inland Mission for a Day of Prayer. On one occasion, Valmae was really sick—it turned out that she had Malaria (high fever, malaise, weakness). Dan went to the Prayer Meeting and hoped to get someone present to take her to Kijabe where they had a big mission hospital. After he had left, she was just lying there thinking she'd love a drink of orange juice. A cool sweet drink of orange juice would be more than good. After a while she heard a Jeep or Land Rover coming up the dirt driveway. She got up off the bed and went out. The driver said he was working for National Geographic and would she mind if he took pictures of the Lake. They lived just on the edge of Lake Baringo but very high up. There were lots of Hippos in the Lake. Valmae said that would be OK, he took his pictures and left. A few minutes later she heard him coming back.

Valmae Oksanen

He said: “I have a bag of oranges; would you like them?”. God is so good - “before they call, I will answer”, Isaiah 65: 24. Valmae got to the Hospital with a missionary going there and recovered.

After recounting this story, Valmae wrote: “it is making me weepy writing this but truly God is good. Shout it from the rooftops.”⁵⁵⁵

After three years they decided the Lord was leading them back to the States. They returned in 1991 to Minneapolis where they lived for a year then sold that house and moved to Virginia where Dan had two sisters.

Valmae retained her Australian citizenship throughout her time in Sudan and since moving to the United States. She says that she still considers herself an Aussie, and although a legal permanent resident of the United States, has to reapply for her Permit every ten years.

Valmae and Dan attend First Church of the Nazarene in Woodbridge where they have been members since 1993. Valmae was involved in Nursery Care on Sundays for 19 years, Dan taught Sunday School to young teenagers, and Valmae taught the Adult Bible Class for two years. Dan did a lot of work with the homeless, helping with outings and preparing food etc. They are both still greeters once a month. Valmae did a lot of the decorations at church for three years and especially the Christmas decorations, although she is too old for that now. Dan mows the lawn at church often and keeps the lawnmowers going. They are both feeling the aches and pains of their years, but both can testify that God is so good—their true happiness, peace and joy depends on carrying out His will in their lives. All praises to His name.



Rae and Allen Halling, Del and John Barwick, and Valmae and Daniel Oksanen



Valmae with her dad,
Albert Halling

⁵⁵⁵V Oksanen, Personal communication, 2020

Lorraine Walker (née Hughes)

Lorraine Hughes was born in 1944 and lived in Greenslopes until her early teens, later moving to Brookfield with her parents. Her family irregularly attended an Anglican Church. Lorraine accepted Jesus as her Saviour through Greenslopes Baptist Church when she was about 12 years old. She had a very clear call from God to begin nursing studies.

For a couple of years, when she was about 15 or 16, Lorraine attended the Brethren Assembly mainly because she lived in Brookfield, which was still very much country, with no bus services. A lovely Brethren farming family took her to church with them and she was baptised in the Assembly a year or so before she started worshipping at the Tabernacle. She cannot remember the date, except that it was in July in cold water!

Lorraine came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1963 following visitation under the ministry of the Rev Fred Smith when she was living in the Nurses' Quarters at the then Brisbane General Hospital. She was treasurer of the YPCES in 1962–65 and an active member of the Australian Nurses' Christian Movement in 1962–66.

After graduating as a registered nurse, she worked in Melbourne for a few months at the Repatriation General Hospital in Heidelberg, where she attended the Ivanhoe Baptist Church. She then completed her midwifery studies at the Queen Victoria Hospital in Launceston where she and other Christian nurses joined in fellowship and some of the lectures at the WEC Missionary Training College at St Leonards. It was here she first felt the Lord's leading to full-time Christian service. Lorraine then studied at the MBI, commencing in 1968.

Lorraine was an accomplished musician. When she was 11 years old was placed second in the Australia-wide radio talent show *Dick Fair's Amateur Hour*. She developed a keen interest in music and did some program directing for the Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC), a Christian radio station that broadcasts from The Philippines and the Seychelle Islands into South-East Asia and the Middle East. In 1971, she submitted an application to FEBC and returned to Brisbane to await their reply. Lorraine transferred her membership to Wavell Heights Baptist Church in 1971 because it was closer to the hospital for shift workers. She became an active Boys' Brigade officer in a company that met at a Presbyterian Church in the Valley.

While working in the Emergency Department at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital she met a radiographer, Edward Walker, commonly known as John. They were married in 1971 and moved to Perth, working as radiographer and nurse, and were very involved in founding the prison ministry, Gospel Ambassadors, with particular focus on

Lorraine Walker

the Banydup Women's Prison and the Woorlooloo prison farm on the outskirts of Perth. They settled in Perth and had two children.

When a very clear call from God brought them back to Brisbane in 1977, this had them perplexed for some time as to why He wanted them back in Queensland. During this period of waiting on God's leading, they lived at Brookfield with Lorraine's mother and attended Kenmore Baptist Church. In 1979, God called them into full-time pastoral ministry and John began studies at MTC, while Lorraine continued to work at the Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital.

John was appointed the Associate Pastor at the Ipswich Baptist Church from 1981–83 while Lorraine was president of the Women's Ministry, a Sunday School teacher, and Girl's Brigade officer. Upon John's graduation from MTC they were active and successful church planters with Mission to Queensland at Airlie Beach in the Whitsundays (1984–89) and Keperra (1990–98). John was President of the Queensland Baptist Union in 1994–95.

Although Lorraine did not enter full-time service, in her own right, after completing her studies, like many pastor's wives in that era, her supporting role in her husband's ministry is considered to be the equivalent of full-time service, hence her inclusion in this part of the book.

They have not been involved in formal (full-time) pastoral ministry for a few years, but Lorraine has continued to serve their local church as a Deacon and Secretary and was actively involved with the Queensland Baptist Women's Ministry and was elected President of The Baptist Women of the South West Pacific, Vice President of the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Asia Pacific Baptist Fellowship. She was nominated for the position of World President of the BWA Women's Department in 2010 but was not elected.

Lorraine was a member of the governing Board of the BUQ for over 15 years and was elected President of the Baptist Union for 2006–07, the



Lorraine Walker



Baptist World Alliance,
Women's Department Executive

only woman to have held the position. She developed a training course for pastors' spouses called *Equipping Partners for Ministry* which became required study for the spouses of people applying for ordination with the Queensland Baptist Union. She was an accredited Christian Women's Convention International speaker and an experienced Women's Conference speaker, both locally and internationally.

John was appointed Director of Correctional Centres Chaplaincy in 2006, (later known as Inside Out Prison Chaplaincy), a program undertaken by Carinity, an outreach of Queensland Baptists. While John was working with Carinity, Lorraine completed her Masters' Degree in Critical Care Nursing,

Lorraine and John both retired in 2011 but are still actively involved in their local church, North East Baptist Church at Nundah.



Lorraine and John Walker

Janice Hagan (née Whitby)

“What religion are you?” “I’m a Christian.” After several years of this same exchange, Janice’s teacher friend became exasperated and said: “No! What church do you go to?” “I go to the City Tabernacle Baptist Church.” “Oh! If I’d known you were a Baptist, I probably would not have become friends with you. My mother said Baptists are crazy!” That was the view of her Polish Catholic family. Little did she know Janice, in her own words, had been crazy since early childhood.

Janice May Whitby, or Jan as she is generally known, is the daughter of Leonard and Dorothy Whitby. When her parents moved to Kenmore, it was too far to go back to Nundah Baptist Church, (where Janice committed herself to Jesus as her Saviour), so the family went to the Tabernacle to join Dorothy’s sister, Winnie (Win) Swann in April 1954. For the next 11 years, Jan worshipped under the pastoral care of Rev Fred Smith, and was involved in Sunday School as a pupil, then as a teacher, in Christian Endeavour as a leader, and in youth group as a committee member/treasurer. In her mid-teens, in April 1959 she was baptised by Rev Smith, and came into church membership in July. The church’s youth group grew until they only just fitted in the Parlour for their meetings on a Sunday afternoon. This is the time of life when many young people are asked “What are you going to be when you grow up?” To this Jan would answer with a degree of youthful confidence: “I’m going to be a teacher!”. However, her mother introduced a word of caution with: “You hope to be a teacher.” Never-the-less Jan had an unshakable faith that teaching was what the Lord had gifted her to do.

After teaching in Brisbane for two years, in 1963 and 1964, she was due for country service, and Jan decided to be pro-active in her transfer to ‘the bush’ and applied to the Education Department for a transfer to three far-flung places, one of which was Mt Isa. She knew that a new Baptist fellowship had been started there and thought a teacher for their Sunday School might be welcome. She was met off the train by the secretary of the fellowship and warmly welcomed into the home of Ed and Kath Kingston, to stay for a couple of nights until a Housing Commission house became available. Because Mt Isa was to be her base for the next two years, she decided to transfer her church membership to the new Mt Isa Church in May 1965.

After eight months Robert John Hagan, or Rob as he is generally known, also moved to Mt Isa, to work for Thiess Brothers. It was a memorable time of heat, dust, flies, and sunburn, as well as friendship,



Mt Isa Sunday School scholars, 1966

fellowship, and church growth. Rob and Jan used to do a pick-up run around town on Sunday mornings, to collect up to eight children from her school class and take them to Sunday School, in the back of his panel van. At the end of her two years of country service, Rob and Jan announced their engagement. Ed and Kath gave them an engagement party before they returned to Brisbane for their wedding the following year.

They were married at the Tabernacle in April 1967 by Rev Smith and went to New Zealand for a two-year working holiday. Once there, they established themselves in Auckland and started attending a local Baptist Church. Rob found a job in the building industry, but Jan decided to try something other than teaching. With no office skills she went to typing classes but didn't have any experience. After a short foray into sorting codes for Hallmark cards, she took over a new-entrants' class for several months for a young woman from the church who was recovering from surgery. During this time, Jan and Rob were challenged about Bible college. Jan was rather reluctant – "Not more school!". However, "the still, small voice" whispered in her ear: "But you were willing to take typing lessons, so why not go to learn about Me?" so, within the first year of their marriage they enrolled for two years at the Bible Training Institute of New Zealand whose campus was on the outskirts of Auckland, and once more transferred their church membership. During those two years (1968-69), the recurring question was always about where they might serve after College. When growing up in the Tabernacle, Jan had often heard about India and Papua New Guinea, but she had no clear leading to either place. Throwing a dart at a world map isn't exactly a scriptural procedure, nor was her reply: "Maybe the Lord will need to send me a letter."

For the two years of Bible college, they lived on campus in the married students' section, in a 12 × 12-foot room with shared bathrooms and ate in the communal dining room with 180 other students. Part of their course requirements was involvement in a local church with Sunday school and youth group, church services and prayer meetings. They followed their usual practice and transferred their church membership to the Mt Eden Baptist Church. At a prayer meeting which they attended, one of the deacons, who was an Australasian leader for the Middle East General Mission, presented a letter from their Eritrean field. They were looking to recruit a builder and a teacher! To reinforce the impact of 'the letter', a man (whom they didn't know) stood up behind Rob and placed his hands on the pew, either side of Rob's shoulders and prayed earnestly: "Where is the man with the hammer?" It didn't take a dart in a map to know they were meant to be God's builder and teacher in Eritrea. The Lord had honoured Jan's need for an unmistakeable call; the assurance that they were meant to be in that place when they finally got there with their four-month-old baby daughter in the midst of a civil war.

The interval between Bible College and the mission field was spent in Queensland. Their first daughter was born in June 1970, in the middle of their preparation to live and serve in Eritrea, a northern province of Ethiopia, under the final few years of rule by Emperor Haile Selassie. They took Lisa in a carry-basket on deputation by train to

Cairns, Mt Isa and Roma and many places in between. Their parents had only three months with their first grandchild before Rob and Jan departed for Eritrea in September, after flying to New Zealand to re-connect with many friends and supporters there. On the onward journey they hopped half-way across the globe – Auckland, Sydney, Darwin, Bombay, Karachi, Beirut, and on to Asmara. Lisa was a good little traveller, able to be soothed by mother's milk on all those take-offs and landings, in and out of homes and

hotels, oblivious of the perils of wild taxi rides, circling tanks at airports or gun-toting guards at immigration and customs check-points. In Asmara they lived at the mission Head Quarters in one room while undertaking six months of studying the predominant language of the highlands – Tigrinya, a language written with 245 characters, and reasonably phonetic except for some sounds that were almost impossible to hear and utter with western ears and voice. They managed to learn enough to speak politely in greetings and to give basic instructions about a few everyday situations.

While in Asmara, they had their first encounter with the local cuisine – taita and zigini, a large sour, fermented sorghum pancake topped with a red-hot chilli, tomato and onion-based sauce containing vegetables and some chicken or goat. A second dish, alecha, using curry-like spices, was gentler on the digestion, and easier to tolerate.

After studying Tigrinya for six months, they were sent down to the Haicota compound which consisted of four mud-brick houses, a dozen stick and thatch tuccals and a mud brick teaching hospital. This is where they spent their time in Eritrea. The mission compound and the village were in the western lowlands, 300 km west of Asmara and about 100 km east of the Sudanese border. It was hot, dry, and dusty with little vegetation apart from thorn trees and tri-con thorns. They had three neem trees in the house yard, watered by waste from the sink, shower and hand basin. Rob was 'Mr Fix-it', tasked with keeping the Land Rovers, generator and wind-mills running, and water available for the hospital and homes. The water taps were gravity fed from a 44-gallon drum on the roofs. The water



Rob, Jan & Lisa, 1970



Hospital Compound, Haicota

trailer hauled water from the local river where it was pumped up from wells in the riverbed. The water was stored near each house in concrete holding-tanks, then hand-pumped as needed, into the roof-top drums. Rob painted their drum black and 'Hey presto!' they had a solar hot-water system. Their shower time was between 6 and 7pm—before 6 it was too hot and after 7 it was too cool. The generator provided lights for the hospital between 7 and 9pm so the patients could be tended and settled for the night and Jan and Rob were the fortunate recipients of power for lights too, instead of a hurricane lamp. They cooked on a gas stove and the fridge ran on kerosene. Their fruit and vegetable order came from Asmara by bus, fortnightly, and the grocery order came every six weeks. Rob and his national workmen took care of the meat supply.

Apart from her home duties, Jan was involved in teaching the vocabulary for English and Maths that related to the medical studies for National young people doing the nurse-dresser course. Rob took his turn leading the early morning chapel time for National workers and Jan gathered a group of the young women for a study of Bible teaching on the role of Christian women. She didn't get much chance to practise her Tigrinya in social interactions because the young women wanted to practise their English on her.

They served in Eritrea for three years before coming home in December 1973, for some medical treatment. While they were home the war escalated and most foreigners were evacuated, and the Eritrean field

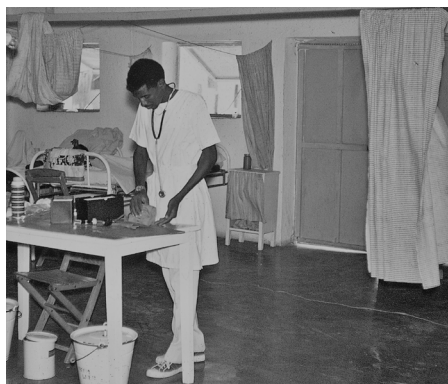
closed. Having gone out with one baby, they came home with two wee girls. Their younger daughter, Sara was born in January 1973, in Eritrea at the American Reformed Presbyterian Mission hospital in Ghinda. In the early days back in Australia, Rob got a job with a building firm and Jan was a stay-home mum. After a period of renting, in 1975, they bought an old, affordable house in Riverview, that needing quite a lot of renovating. Eventually they also built a granny-flat under the house for Rob's mother, Betty, when she came to live with them.



Hospital workers outside chapel
after morning prayers

During their years at Riverview, Rob worked for several building firms and then for Scripture Union (SU) as their bookshop manager. During the SU days, (from September 1978 until September 1986), Rob worked normal trading hours, and on weekends they took mobile bookshops to training days, and conventions as well as frequent deputation visits to churches. Jan was also involved with SU, presenting seminars at training days, and decorating one of the street-front windows on George Street with displays and books associated with particular days in the Christian calendar.

When Rob lost his job with one of the building firms, Jan decided to go back to teaching because the girls were at school and Mum Betty held the fort when study or professional development demanded Jan's time. When Jan went back to teaching, Rob worked on the house and after SU, started to work for himself. They attended Dinmore Baptist Church and later, Ipswich Central Baptist Church, and were involved in various ministries—youth groups, church camps, adult Bible studies at church and at their home. For the years between 1974 and 1983, they worked in the kitchen at the Easter Convention in Warwick, run by the Gospel Fisherman's Mission. Then they were asked to take over from the long-serving Colin and Edna Denner, within days of SU asking Rob to work for them. But they had already accepted the SU offer. One way or the other, mission was never far from their minds.



Ethiopian staff worker

Just as health concerns prompted a change from Eritrea to Australia, health concerns for Jan's parents prompted them to move closer to her parents in the Centenary suburbs, building themselves a home. By then the girls were in high school and they transferred their church involvement to the Kenmore Baptist Church, where Jan's parents were founding members many years back, and the youth group was active and engaging for the girls. However, the modern type of service, with enthusiastic, loud music gave Rob days of ringing ears. He had been doing repairs and renovations in many of the nursing homes run by the Baptist Union for some time and was working with several members of the Tabernacle whom Jan had known in her teen years. It seemed natural to return to worship there with its more conservative services and more soothing organ music. Once again there was a transfer of membership to the Tabernacle, in February 2001, and Jan had come full-circle.

For several years Rob and Jan and their daughter Sara had been involved with TEAR, and through that involvement, in 2001, they were put in touch with an Eritrean family living in East Brisbane, who needed some help. Grandmother Kulunta and three adult children migrated to Australia in the mid-1990s, leaving one daughter, her husband and six grandchildren in Sudan. The family had been seriously dislocated by the same civil war Rob and Jan had encountered years before. Kulunta's husband had disappeared, so she and her children had fled to Sudan. In 2001 the family decided to send one son, Fesahaye, back to Sudan to collect the six grandchildren, who ranged in age from 18 months to 12 years. Rob and Jan first met the family when they provided extra beds, bedding and clothing to help out with the sudden increase in numbers.

Jan's first task, when the five older children started school, was to provide their preferred Eritrean names for enrolment rather than the Arabic names they'd been given in Sudan. Then she visited twice a week—every Tuesday to help speed up their English learning and supervise their homework, and every Friday to take them to Kids Kingdom or youth group (according to age). In mid-2002 the children's parents arrived, then later Fesahaye's beautiful young wife, Lula, arrived to join the ever-expanding family group. Their marriage had been arranged by his sister and brother-in-law when he visited Sudan to take the children back to Australia. Jan's visits to the house in East Brisbane now included mentoring Lula. Jan 'adopted' her and became her Australian mum. Jan felt she needed someone who was not part of the large group of blood relatives as she faced a foreign culture and language, as well as becoming a new mum. Fesahaye, Lula and their new baby boy moved out of the East Brisbane house into their own rental flat and later into a semi-detached house in Inala. The focus of Jan's weekly visits changed from the six children who had become independent teens at high school to Lula. She spoke quite good English and had a firm faith in Jesus as her Saviour. Jan and Lula enjoyed wide ranging conversations, about cooking, bringing up babies, Bible topics, current affairs, and the finer points of English vocabulary. Fesahaye and Lula now have four children, and for a couple of years between children, Jan helped Lula get a job at the local school as an interpreter for school/parent letters in Tigrinya and Arabic, and as a reading aide for second language learners.

Over the 20 years of their involvement with their extended Eritrean family, their brief time in Eritrea has been the key to opening the door to being a servant and a witness to them. "She can write our language!", they would exclaim. The fact that Jan's vocabulary is seriously limited did not seem to dull the amazement. It has given them a sort of validity to their involvement in birthdays, Easter and Christmas celebrations, an engagement, a wedding, many births, a citizenship ceremony, obtaining rental leases, and helping with legal and financial issues.

That original letter started a long and interesting journey to Eritrea, which neither Rob nor Jan could have ever imagined, and it remains to be seen what is still around the corner, in spite of us both having nearly completed our seventh decade. God is an exciting 'tour guide'.

Margaret Hartzler (née King)

Margaret King grew up in Cairns, and attended the Cairns Baptist Church, where her mother played the organ. She moved from Cairns to Brisbane in 1964 and began attending the Tabernacle, becoming a member in 1966 following her baptism by Rev Fred Smith in May. She was involved with the Youth Group and assisted Glenys Ivett with CE.

In January 1969, Margaret went to Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea with the SIL as a one-year short-term assistant. She was planning on paying her own way out of savings, but Rev Alfred Rudd, then the associate pastor, asked if the church could help, which was much appreciated. She worked in the printshop, typing up the various translations prior to printing, and (a surprise assignment) teaching French and typing in the SIL high school. After that year, Margaret was asked to return to Ukarumpa for a second year to do office work (typing, finance, etc.) for a SIL linguist who had a grant from the United States government to study New Guinea languages. This was Margaret's first encounter with linguistics. She wrote that, as far as she could gather from the mass of data that she typed weekly on the subject, she found it a fascinating field of study and from the enthusiasm expressed for it by those around her participating in the workshops at Ukarumpa. They were in the middle of the study of universals in discourse structure, and so far, Dr Robert Longacre seemed quite pleased with the findings.

At the end of that year, Dr Longacre asked Margaret to accompany him and his family to Mexico, his home base, to complete the project. During that year, he left for the summer (June to August) to teach linguistics at the University of New York in Buffalo, New York, so she went with some others to the University of Oklahoma to take the SIL linguistic courses then held there.

Dwight Hartzler was there also, and after the project in Mexico was finished in late November, Margaret flew out to Tennessee where she and Dwight were married in Johnson City, in December 1971. Dwight came from a Mennonite Church background in Goshen, Indiana, but had been attending the Moody Bible Institute aviation course in nearby Elizabethton, Tennessee. After the summer in Oklahoma, however, he had decided to switch his missionary interest to Bible translation. Dwight and Margaret made plans to do this together and were assigned to Irian Jaya (now West Papua), Indonesia, eventually arriving there in May 1975. Margaret was pregnant with their first child, but they decided that was no reason to delay. As a result, Anthony was born in Jayapura in 1975, delivered by a Sumatran doctor who had to leave his end of Ramadan feasting for the happy occasion.

Their first assignment upon arrival was Indonesian language learning. The second was locating a tribal group interested in a translation of the Bible into their language. With over 300 language groups in the province, it was a daunting task. But the Lord stepped in and sent a committee of Sentani speaking people to them! "All the other missionaries

have gone up to the highlands,” they explained, “and we too want to hear what God is saying in our language.” Dwight and Margaret went with them to see their big, beautiful lake, about 50 km from Jayapura, and were convinced. “We’ll come,” they said.

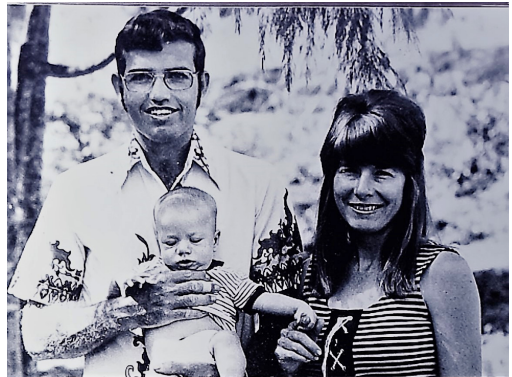
The name Sentani is used very broadly. It can refer to the native people of the area around the Sentani Lake, the town of Sentani, or the predominant language in the area. Dwight and Margaret lived in Ifar Besar, a central dialect village, not far from the town and the main airport.



Dwight and Margaret's Home on the lake

In late 1976, Dwight and the village men built a house for the family to live in, and the village chief had a large dugout canoe built for their use, complete with his village insignia carved on the side. He also appointed a man to work with them on the translation. To further protect them from harm and thievery, he told everyone that they had a special mirror which told them who had stolen anything from them! They did not discover this until a man from the other side of the lake came by at 6 o'clock one morning, asking Dwight to tell him who had stolen his fishing nets the night before. Mystified, Dwight talked to the village chief, who laughingly explained all.

When all the logistics had been worked out, it was down to the real work. Dwight and Margaret divided the job: Dwight would do the main translation work, and Margaret would do the language analysis. This involved devising a suitable alphabet for the language, analysing the grammar, and discovering how their stories were typically told so that the New Testament could be put into as natural Sentani as possible.



The young Hartzler Family

Their first year in Irian Jaya had been one of change and learning. They were eventually able to move into a Sentani village in October, to really concentrate on language learning. One of the most important aspects of village living, apart from the language, was finding out how the villagers think and relate to their environment. In many ways they found that culturally they were poles apart from the villagers, but with the Lord's

help and the church's prayers, they hoped to be able to bridge these differences and relate to the villagers on a familiar basis.⁵⁵⁶

Upon returning to Irian, the Lord interrupted their plans to move back to the village with their second newborn by giving them both administrative posts in town. The SIL Director needed Dwight to act as the group's government liaison officer and needed Margaret to run the group's guest house. It was a busy time of being on call constantly to meet the needs of other members, whether it was a visa that needed renewal, or too many mosquitoes in their room in the middle of the night. But it was a good time, with the children so small, and they were thankful to help. Nevertheless, they were also thankful that someone else was eventually found for these tasks, so that they could be relieved to go on furlough in 1979 and return to their language work. Typically, the Hartzlers visited Brisbane approximately every two years, to visit family and the Tabernacle, but the majority of their official furlough times were spent in the United States.

In January 1981, Dwight, Margaret, and the children returned to Sentani and the translation project. A booklet describing the life of Christ, containing 350 verses from Matthew and Luke's gospels, was the first publication. Dwight and Usiel, their Sentani co-translator, now began translating the full book of Luke, and moved from there to Acts. A copy of *Karangan Lukas (The Gospel of Luke)* in Bahasa Sentani was presented to the Tabernacle, inscribed by Dwight and Margaret with the words: "Given in appreciation to the City Tabernacle Baptist Church for your prayers and financial help which made the production of this book possible."

Tony started school at the Christian and Missionary Alliance elementary school, and between typing for Dwight, cooking meals and running Tony to and from school on her motorbike, Margaret continued with language analysis and translating the Sentani translations back into English, so that they could be adequately checked by a third party before printing.

They had been very encouraged by the response of the Sentani people to the *Life of Christ* book already published, and to the Sentani hymns which they distributed in April. As one young



Dwight, Margaret, Tony and their first translation co-worker, Usiel

⁵⁵⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1976–1977*, p. 1, 8.

man from one of the eastern villages told Dwight, “When I read the Bible to the people in Bahasa, they all go to sleep, but when I read to them from *Yesus naei wali* (*Life of Christ*) in Sentani they ask me to go on and on”.⁵⁵⁷

The Tabernacle’s Missionary Projects for 1982, 1984 and 1985 included \$1500 for printing the book of Luke, \$3000 for the purchase of an aluminium boat, and \$500 for Sentani Hymn Books.⁵⁵⁸

In 1986, Dwight and Margaret took their second furlough. Their children were now in fourth and sixth grade, and Margaret decided to attend the local University to finish the Bachelor of Arts degree she had started five years previously. She wrote: “It’s finally finished!” Having packed three years of University work into two, she had graduated (*summa cum laude*) and was back to being a “normal” wife and mother again. Their next goal as a family was to return to Irian Jaya, to live and minister again for another four years.⁵⁵⁹



Dwight and a Sentani Worker

Back in Sentani, the work continued on three fronts: translation, literacy promotion, and community development. Dwight was able to get Titus, I and II Thessalonians, II Peter, and Colossians through all the consultant checks that year, and to get some of the men interested in raising cattle to support their families. By 1989 just over half the New Testament was fully checked, and around a quarter more was in first draft and anticipated to be checked by the end of the year. The cattle project was also beginning to take off, with five men investing in cows and many more asking if they could get involved. Margaret took up



The Hartzler Family

⁵⁵⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1982–1983*, pp. 22–23.

⁵⁵⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1984–1985*, pp. 17–18.

⁵⁵⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, pp. 23–24.

the part-time position of Associate Director for Language Programs for SIL in Irian Jaya, and Tony and Jacquelyn were now both in the SIL sponsored intermission high school, Hillcrest International, in Sentani.

The Missionary Projects for 1991, 1993, 1995 and 1996 included \$500 for the printing of a Sentani-Bahasa-English dictionary for the national helpers, \$500 for ongoing translation work, \$1000 for SIL translation expenses, and \$700, the cost of a checker from Java, for the Sentani New Testament.

When Tony graduated from high school, it was a time of transition for Dwight and Margaret. Not only were they needed in the United States to support their son's re-entry into western culture and university life, but contract negotiations with the Indonesian government were in limbo, with the subsequent loss of visas for many SIL personnel. Dwight, however, was able to return from time to time to get the face-to-face checks he needed on I, II, and III John, Ephesians, James, and the first part of the Gospel of John. At this time, Jacquelyn was also approaching high school graduation, so it was important to get her settled back in the American context.

Permanent visas finally were granted in 1995, and with Tony in Atlanta (at Georgia Tech) and Jacquelyn in Chicago (Wheaton College) they prepared to leave. However, in the month of their departure, Margaret's mother died in Brisbane. Margaret flew home for the funeral, a sad but good time with extended family, and immediately back to see Jacquelyn off to school. Then it was back on the plane again for Irian Jaya. These trips became an annual event, as Dwight and Margaret felt it was important for their children to have their parents at home during the United States' summer months when they were not in school, and because Margaret's immigration status required her to be gone from the United States for no more than a year.

In late 1996, Margaret wrote to the Tabernacle that the Sentani New Testament was finally completed! For the past year, Dwight had spent most of his time checking and rechecking the text and handing out copies to prominent Sentani leaders to obtain their feedback.

Dwight and Margaret expected printing of the Sentani New Testament to be completed by September 1998, when a dedication service was to be held. Representation by the Tabernacle at the dedication service was being considered, and eventually it was decided that Maurie Caswell, a long-time member of the church, should attend.⁵⁶⁰ Unfortunately, as things go, the books did not arrive in time and the dedication had to be delayed. Nevertheless, the Hartzlers had a good time showing Maurie around Lake Sentani and introducing him to their life and friends there.

⁵⁶⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1997–1998*, p. 30.

When the books finally arrived in 1999, the chief of the village where the Hartzlers lived and worked took charge. He decided the dedication would take place on 5 February, the day when all of Irian Jaya traditionally celebrates the Coming of the Gospel to their island. This was the date, in the mid-1800s, when two German missionaries (with the Dutch Mission Society) set foot on Papuan soil, changing many lives before losing their own to disease. He organized the church, the preacher, the dancers, the program, and paid for it all because the Sentani people considered it their book and their program. The Hartzlers attended, did as requested by the chief and the villagers, and watched, rejoicing, in awe and amazement. It was a wonderful day. When Dwight and Margaret visited Brisbane, they presented to the church a copy of the Sentani New Testament during a morning service.⁵⁶¹

From the United States, they wrote that 1999 would go down as a landmark year in their lives: they had finally had the wonderful dedication of the Sentani New Testament; Jacquelyn and Tony had graduated from University; and Tony married Jenny Evans in June. Jacquelyn was planning to start medical school at Emory in Atlanta and they were glad that she was going to have Tony and Jenny nearby, at least for a while.⁵⁶²

The dedication did not end the Hartzlers' work in Irian Jaya. After getting Jacquelyn settled in Atlanta, they returned. Margaret had agreed to take over the position of Director of Hillcrest International School, and this was to last for another seven years, with summer breaks to see the children and occasional Christmases in Brisbane. In addition, Dwight was still working with the Sentani people on literature production and was experimenting with various methods for getting books (New



The Sentani New Testament is brought to the people



Dedication of the Sentani NT

⁵⁶¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1998–1999*, p. 31.

⁵⁶² *ibid.*, pp. 37–38.

Testament, song books, story books, alphabet book, *Life of Christ*, etc.) out to the people. Some of the expatriate women in the community had begun a small lending library for the local children and were asking for more Sentani books to add to their collections. It was very encouraging to know the Sentani story books were constantly borrowed and read, as reading this simple material in a known context was leading directly to greater use of the Sentani New Testament. Dwight was also involved in providing consultant help for other teams working on translation, thus enabling the process for everyone to proceed smoothly.

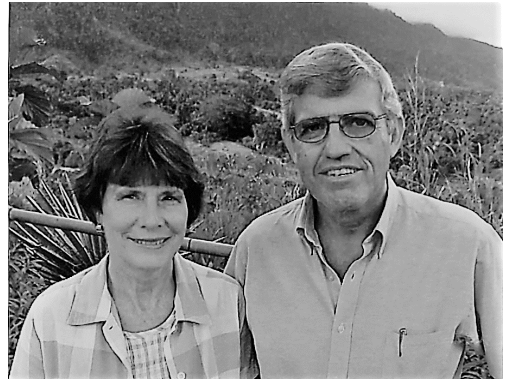
One of the most challenging things for Margaret in her job was to relate to the 30 Indonesian school employees. These employees came from all over Indonesia: Java, Maluku, Sulawesi, coastal Irian, and highland Irian. They were an interesting mix of cultures, all approaching life differently, as we do also. She was learning how to read between the lines, from what is not said, from facial expressions, from what was not done as well as what was. She was glad of all her experiences with the Sentani people to help her through. The school itself was a source of interest and joy, as well as amazement when one eleventh grade student attained almost perfect results in the two main university entrance exams—the Scholastic Achievement Test and American College Test! Needless to say her parents were also very happy! Margaret was able to successfully lead the school, on two occasions, into another six years of accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in California and learn much about care and mentoring of students and teachers in the process.

This was a good time for them. Dwight continued with his audio recordings of the Sentani New Testament, which were very well received. On one occasion as they were leaving, he took recorded copies of the New Testament with him, and Sentani people working there came out of the woodwork to ask for a copy. Another day he gave one to a group of Sentani workmen, and they put it on their stereo system. The system was loud enough to provide a clear coverage for the whole village, and when the people started hearing their own language coming over the loudspeakers, they all came out of their houses to listen. He had no trouble finding people to read all the different parts for the audio recordings and, of course, they enjoyed hearing themselves on the finished product. They were especially thrilled to discover that many Sentani Church congregations had begun to have their entire services in Sentani, using the translated New Testament and the songbook printed for them.

By 2006, however, it seemed like a good time to go home to the States. After ten years (seven as Director) with the school in Papua, it was time to move on. So, on 9 June she said a hopefully-not-absolutely-final goodbye to all the Indonesian school staff, who came in for a morning coffee break together before taking Dwight and Margaret out to lunch. After 10 years working with some of them, through the ups and downs and the crises of life, both at the school and personally, it was a good but sad time. All of them had developed significantly from the time she first walked in as the new and rather green

elementary principal and then took over the school as Director. She had learnt a lot, not just about running schools but also about the Indonesian people and their ways. The staff were primarily from Northern Sulawesi and the Papuan Highlands (Dani) and the interactions between them, and between them and the expatriates, had provided her with many an entertaining and thought-provoking moment. She was going to miss them.⁵⁶³

But it was not just the school that they would miss. They went out on the lake with some friends one night, taking a boat over to a well-known and popular restaurant on the lake shore. The afternoon sun was beautiful on the hills as they went, and the moon shone down brightly on them all the way home. While they were there, a large group of men from one of the political parties was having a dinner meeting. One of them was a Sentani man, who greeted Dwight effusively in Sentani and talked at length with him in his own language, enjoying the curious looks of all his non-Sentani friends. They were also going to miss the constant greetings and waves from the Sentani people, many of whom they did not know but who certainly knew them, recognising them as they went by. All the Bibles, songbooks and audio recordings had been distributed around the villages, and they saw many well used copies.⁵⁶⁴



Dwight and Margaret Hartzler

In 2007, Dwight and Margaret returned for a short time so that Dwight could provide consultancy for other translation teams. Dwight was still the translation coordinator for the Papuan and various teams all over the eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago, and this kept him busy. It was exciting for them to see how much translation into the local languages was being done in Indonesia, and to be actively involved. Margaret also was kept busy, working with several teams to make sure their phonological analyses, which lead directly to correct (or incorrect) alphabets, were indeed accurate.

In 2008, however, Margaret and Dwight returned to make a permanent home in Florida near Jacquelyn, so that they could help her and settle into their retirement years. Dwight, for many years, continued to make two or three trips each year back to Irian/Papua, but

⁵⁶³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2005–2006*, pp. 48–49.

⁵⁶⁴ *ibid.*

Margaret Hartzler

by himself. Now, with increased technology, he was able to check via Skype, and others had taken over the roles he and Margaret once held.

The Hartzlers praise God for all the Tabernacle did for them over the years, not just financially but relationally as well. The many friends Margaret made while she attended the church are still close friends, with many good memories over many years. The Lord is good.

Miss Susan Seavers

Susan Clare Seavers was born in late 1941 in East Yorkshire, England. Her parents, James Seavers, from West Yorkshire, and Kathleen Reynolds, were married in early 1941 in Coventry, Warwickshire. Her father was a medical practitioner who served in the Medical Corp in World War II and died in Wales in 1990. Susan began her nursing career at the Royal Free Hospital, in St Pancras, London in 1959 and was registered as a nurse in late 1963. She was living at the hospital in 1964.

In 1964 she migrated to Australia, taking up a position at the Royal Hobart Hospital and later joining the Blue Nursing Service in Brisbane. Susan came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1968 following visitation. It is not known where or when she was baptised. She requested that her name be removed from the roll at the Tabernacle in 1971, when she was living at New Farm, continuing there until at least 1972.

In 1971, she volunteered for nursing service in Papua New Guinea with the United Church in Papua New Guinea (UCPNG) and went to Goodenough Island, Milne Bay. She stayed there for three years, before re-joining the Blue Nursing Service in Brisbane. Goodenough Island is oval in shape, measuring 39 by 26 km with an area of 687 square km and a shoreline of 116 km. From a coastal belt varying in width from 2 to 10 km, the island rises sharply to the summit of Mount Vineuo, 2,536 m above sea level, making it one of the most precipitous islands in the world. Susan sent approximately 300 letters to her mother, Kit



Milne Bay Military Hospital, 1943
(Photo: US National Library of
Medicine)

Jenkins (King) following her migration to Australia. The earliest letters dealt comprehensively with the problems facing migrants to Australia in the 1960s. Generally, the letters covered the working and personal life of a nurse who worked all over Australia and in Papua New Guinea. Approximately 112 letters from Papua New Guinea covered the period from 17 January 1971 to 4 October 1973, about one every two weeks.

Almost all the expatriate personnel working with UCPNG departed soon after Papua New Guinea gained independence in 1975. The UCPNG had been formed in 1968 from the merger of the London Missionary Society, the Presbyterian Church, and the Methodist Church.

Susan's later letters referred to her further positions as Nurse Educator at the Mater Hospital, Townsville, Supervising Sister at the Townsville General Hospital and Deputy Nursing Superintendent at Bundaberg Base Hospital. The letters are held by the

Margaret Hartzler

National Library of Australia in Canberra.⁵⁶⁵ They refer to the period 1960 till 1990, presumably the year of her mother's death.

Susan was living in North Tambourine in 1977, and Townsville in 1980.

Susan was working in Camoola, 77 km north of Longreach, up until 2014. In 2016, Camoola had a population of only 29.

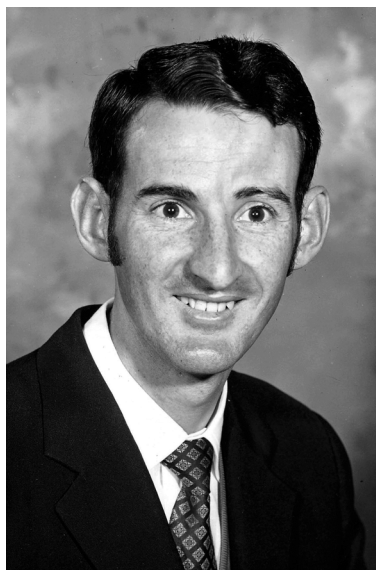
⁵⁶⁵ National Library of Australia, MS 8992

Ronald Smith

Ronald David Smith, or Ron as he is commonly known, is the son of Noel and Elizabeth (Bess) Smith, who joined the Tabernacle in 1959. Noel, who was a deacon at the Tabernacle (1967-79), died in 1984 and Elizabeth died in 1992.

Ron grew up in Kelvin Grove and came to know the Lord as his Saviour when he was 14 years of age, at a regular evening service at the Tabernacle in April 1961 led by the Rev Fred Smith. Rev Smith's message was titled: *Stepping aside and watching ourselves go by*. Ron recounts that the decision he made as he knelt beside the sofa in the minister's vestry and gave his life to the Lord, was the best decision he ever made.

Ron's baptism followed in May 1961, along with ten other candidates, and he came into membership in August that year. Ron's sister Dawn joined the church in 1964.



Rev Ron Smith

Ron wanted to get to know the Lord better and regularly decided to walk back to the church from his home in Kelvin Grove each Sunday afternoon to pray alone, for a few hours in the upper room above the choir vestry. He did not have a key, but the janitor, Mr Anderson, organised for him to have access to the building. They were very special times for Ron and he believes to this day that no-one other than he and the janitor knew he would go there to pray.⁵⁶⁶

Ron was involved with teaching Sunday School and attended Christian Endeavour in the Union room above the Parlour in the mornings as well as BYF each Sunday afternoon. He was the superintendent of the Intermediate Department of the Sunday School in 1967-68.

Ron worked for the National Bank of Australia all over Queensland for two years, often doing relieving work. He was working at Rosewood when decimal currency was introduced in 1966. It was excellent experience for later years. In 1969, he felt the Lord calling him to Bible college.

⁵⁶⁶ Personal communication, R. Smith 2020

Under the banner *How God Calls*, Ron shared his experience of God's call with the readers of *Vision* magazine. He wrote:

I often used to sit down and wonder how God called people. Perhaps you have read your Bible and seen the various ways God spoke to people. To one He said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" to another, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" In other places we simply read, "And God spoke to Moses saying ..." the more I heard others testify to their call, the more perplexed I became, because no two seemed alike".

The time came when I learned not to place any conditions on God. I could truthfully say, "I am His, and He is mine." But still, the big question remained—where does God want me to go? No one can assume God wants them to stay at home. We ought to let God have the first say, and if He wants us at home, then He will show us. After much thought, I prayed a prayer something like this—"Lord, I don't know how you're going to tell me where you want me to go. Lord, that is your business. I'm in your hands. All I ask, Lord, is that when you've told me, I won't be in any doubt about it. Lord, I want to be absolutely sure."

Well, that day came. I was shovelling soil under a large tree on Anzac Day, 1968, when the Lord clearly spoke to me. I did not hear an audible voice, but what God said to me that day could not have been any clearer if He did use a human voice. The Lord simply told me He wanted me in West Irian. The Scriptures say that the sheep know the voice of the Shepherd. When God speaks to you, there is no doubt about it; you know it is the Lord. That day. Is over four years ago and that call is only intensified through those years.

The experiences since then have been a real test in many ways, yet the certainty of that call remains with me. The Lord's reasoning is hard to follow sometimes. Why He should want a bank clerk in West Irian is hard to know; but still God isn't obliged to give any reasons for what He does. We can safely leave it all with Him.⁵⁶⁷

Ron met Beth at the BTCQ at West End. They were married in 1970 and were sent to pastor the Baptist work in Roma for the next two years. Beth was a deaconess and served as Pastor at Woodridge Baptist Church for two years before they were married. It was a church plant from Mt Gravatt Baptist, now called Hertford St Church. Ron's membership was transferred to Roma in 1971.

In their report to the church, written five months after arriving in Roma, they said that they felt that they had only begun, yet that time represented almost a quarter of their time there, in preparation for West Irian. The more they thought about it, the more convinced they became that they should make every day count for the Kingdom of God. It had been wonderful to see the work steadily growing,



Beth Smith

⁵⁶⁷ RD Smith, 1972. *How God Calls*, *Baptist Missionary Record – Vision*, June 1972, p. 14.

but when they looked at so many in Roma and throughout the whole West, they realised, “There yet remains very much land to be possessed”. When people are without Christ, it never ceased to amaze them the extent to which some lives ended up in a mess. It did not matter whether it was a home in the town that was wrecked with alcohol, or a homestead out in the bush where folk were living comfortably, they all needed Christ. They were praying for revival and asked the church to join them. They were not looking for an easy way out but believed that such a movement of God’s Spirit was imperative because there was such a desperate need.⁵⁶⁸

The following year was one of blessing in the work at Roma. They had the joy of seeing several come to know Christ as Saviour, and at their Drillham outstation, there had been several new families attending. Financially they had seen a great encouragement in the work and trusted that this would become a continuing aspect of blessing in future days. They requested continued prayer for more leaders and additional musical talent. The great need was for permanent residents of Roma and district to come to know the Lord, follow Him in baptism, and join the church. After prolonged years of drought and hard times, souls became very hardened spiritually. Yet they believed that the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit could melt these hearts to respond to the Saviour’s love. They had seen several whose lives had been transformed by Christ but prayed for many others like them! They expected that the coming twelve months would see their outgoing to the field of West Irian with the ABMS. They requested prayer as they made all the necessary preparations and particularly that their visa applications would be granted.⁵⁶⁹ While in Roma, Ron completed his thesis as part of the requirements for his ordination.⁵⁷⁰

Ron and Beth transferred their membership from Roma back to the Tabernacle in 1972. During the following year, the ICE Society donated \$25 towards the purchase of an electronic calculator to assist Ron in his work as Field Treasurer.

Ananias, described in Acts 9, was obedient to the directions of the Lord of the Church and so the missionary to the gentiles, Paul, was secured for Christ. Rev OM Gregory drew the parallel for Rev RD Smith at the latter’s ordination at Geebung Baptist Church in April. For Ron, his ordination was the turning point between preparation and participation. At the service Ron spoke of his clear call to work with the ABMS and his preparation of heart and mind under the good hand of God. The Tabernacle, college and many friends had been used of the Lord in this preparation. He publicly dedicated

⁵⁶⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1970–1971*, p. 23.

⁵⁶⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1971–1972*, p. 23.

⁵⁷⁰ RD Smith, 1972. *The Evangelical Outreach of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, Wickham Terrace Brisbane, with particular reference to its function as a mother church.*

himself with wife and family for a participation in the Lord's work at Irian Jaya.⁵⁷¹ The next day Ron and Beth with their baby, left for Irian Jaya (formerly West Irian).

Under the banner *Already enjoying the Warmth of true Christian one-ness with God's people here*, Ron wrote from Irian Jaya saying that he was sure that the church would understand the thrill in their hearts as they stepped off the plane. In all their travelling the Lord had blessed them with peace and safety.⁵⁷²

Ron spent two years at the University of Queensland learning Indonesian, the language most widely used at the educational centre of Tiom, albeit Dani was the predominant language used in the area. On arriving in Tiom, he was asked to respond to the welcome from the Head of the Government at Tiom, on behalf of the three missionary couples who had just arrived. However, when you learn a foreign language it is easy to get confused with words that sound very similar. "Kepala" means head and "kelapa" means coconut. Ron thanked the coconut of the Government for his welcome and had to apologize to him later.

The responses when he preached in Indonesian were significant and in the Baliem Valley, baptismal services of up to 100 candidates at a service were common. As part of a team, he conducted Bible classes midweek for pastors and Sunday School teachers at Tiom. About 130 attended weekly and some travelled over mountains 3000–3600m high for two days each way each week to attend the classes. They were very hungry for the Word of God.

Later they wrote saying that the past year had seen a change of domicile from Roma, to Tiom. They were thrilled to be there. There was a great peace in their hearts that they were in the place where the Lord wanted them to be. Learning Indonesian was taking almost all of their time. Completion of studies in the national language would enable them to commence Dani, which was a far more difficult, tribal language. They saw the mastery of these two languages as necessary bridges to be crossed in order to exercise what was obviously going to be a very large ministry. Fifteen years before, Christ had never been named in those Valleys. Now there were 99 churches and over twelve thousand members.⁵⁷³

They attended a church service where 78 Dani brethren, from several churches, followed their Lord through the Waters of Baptism. Rev Dr Geoffrey Blackburn, President-General of the Baptist Union of Australia, was with them and preached to a very large congregation by the side of the baptismal pool, which was made within a small diversion of the Tiom River. The Holy Spirit was working mightily within Dani hearts. Ron and

⁵⁷¹ *Friends of the College*, Vol.7 No.2 May 1973.

⁵⁷² *ibid.*

⁵⁷³ *City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1972–1973*, pp. 25–26.

Beth thanked God for answered prayer. As they were preparing for their first year Dani Examination, they spent almost two weeks at Kwiyawagi, their outstation from Tiom, at 2800 m above sea level on the High Plateau. The people were thrilled to see them, and they spent much valuable time in the villages. Great numbers of children loved to follow them on the trail. Ron's main ministry was one of overall pastoral care of 34 churches in the Tiom area. This meant much of his time was spent in visitation. He also taught a class of 50 Sunday School teachers each Tuesday afternoon. Those men were most responsive to God's Word. He was also teaching Indonesian four mornings each week to a literacy class. This had been a great help to him in learning to link the two foreign languages. His work as Field Treasurer also occupied an average of two days a week. It was a thrill to be where the Lord wanted them to be, doing what God wanted them to do. They regularly listened to tapes of the Tabernacle services and loved to feel part of the family. They counted it a great privilege to represent them at Tiom, where the Lord was doing so much in the lives of so many.⁵⁷⁴

During 1975, having realised things about himself that meant he became concerned that he might not meet the Baptist Church's criteria for mission work, Ron and Beth made the decision to return to Queensland. Although it was hard to leave their Dani brethren, it was a joy to be reunited with friends at home. It had been a high privilege to serve the Lord among the Dani Church, and although they had to return after a comparatively short time, they felt their time there had been most worthwhile. The weekly class for Sunday School teachers brought a great deal of joy. Before leaving, it was good to learn of the possibility of a replacement Field Treasurer before long. They were confident of the Lord's hand upon them and were looking forward to serving with the members at the Tabernacle during the coming years.⁵⁷⁵

Ron and Beth returned to settle in Brisbane in 1975. They had chatted briefly at the Sentani airport with Dwight and Margaret Hartzler who were just arriving as Ron and Beth departed. Ron and Beth were welcomed home at an after-church supper in June.

Ron started work at Utah Development Company which later became BHP. He studied accounting part time at Queensland University of Technology and worked at BHP for 26 years before retiring in 2001. He also computerised the books of several churches including those of the Tabernacle. He worked as an accountant and later auditor for the Tabernacle and the Baptist Union.

⁵⁷⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1973–1974*, p. 22–23.

⁵⁷⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, p. 22.

Ron Smith

In 1977–80, they were living in Everton Park and transferred their church membership in 1979 to Stafford North, but renewed their membership at the Tabernacle in 1995, before transferring to Ashgrove in 1998–99.

In 1996, Beth was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and until very recently Ron cared for her in their marital home. In 2019, she moved into a nursing home in the next street and Ron continues to provide support and care for her as they remain in their committed mixed-orientation marriage. Ron and Beth have two children, a son born in Roma and a daughter, born in West Irian.



Ron and Beth Smith

Barbara Willcocks (née Dean)

Barbara Desley Dean was born in 1944 at Red Hill, Brisbane the younger of the two daughters of Douglas and Doris Dean who, although not formally in membership, attended the Tabernacle for many years, having been married there in 1941. Doris was a member of the Tabernacle Choir. Doug and Doris moved to St John's Wood (Ashgrove) in early 1945, where Barbara lived until 1968. She was dedicated at the Tabernacle in 1945 by Rev Albert Butler and was listed on the Cradle Roll. Her sister, Elva, became a member of the Tabernacle in 1957 and married Maxwell Shaw at the Tabernacle.

Barbara regularly attended the church, being part of its BYF and then as a regular church attendee until 1982 when she married. She also attended JCE led by Miss Louisa Boggis. Barbara has attended two BYF Reunions in recent years.

Barbara's first employment was as a Clerk Typist with the National Bank of Australasia from 1960 until 1966. She then spent a year in Melbourne working at Radio 3KZ before returning to Brisbane to work in several office positions as a receptionist/cashier and then a scrip clerk, keeping records of transactions of stocks and shares.

She left for Papua New Guinea in September 1971 to volunteer as a Language Typist for the SIL in Ukarumpa in the Eastern Highlands. She was encouraged to make that move by two WBT translator's, Skip and Jacky Firchow. She made available her typing skills to produce materials written by SIL translators in a variety of dialects.



Barbara's Farewell at Brisbane Airport
Left-to-right: Les Larmar, Barbara Dean, Lily Larmar, Doug Dean Gloria Leach, Doris Dean, Rev Sam and Mrs Lane, Mrs Abrahams, Sue Kissick (née Window), small person, Rev Neville Abrahams and Peter Marsden.



Barbara and some friends in Papua New Guinea in 1971

Barbara Willcocks

Barbara shared a house in Ukarumpa with another volunteer, Linda Ritch, who was from the United States of America, and working as the Dental Hygienist. They had some great times together as Linda worked in the clinic and Barbara typed the translations on a now old-fashioned IBM “golf ball” typewriter in the print shop. No room for mistakes there! Linda and Barbara were fortunate to be able to visit some of the translators out in the villages, particularly on New Britain. It was lovely to meet so many of the local people who were very curious about them. Linda is now married and back in the United States. They have kept in touch over the years and Barbara visited her in 2007.



Barbara and Linda's House, Ukarumpa

During her stay in Papua New Guinea, Barbara was able to connect several times with Marilyn Larmar, a friend she had known since childhood. They had both attended the Tabernacle. Marilyn was nursing at the Nazarene Hospital in Kudjip in the Western Highlands of New Guinea and they were able to talk to each other regularly on the radio skeds and meet up either in Kudjip, Ukarumpa or Lae during the seven months Barbara was there. Marilyn's story is recounted further in this book.



Barbara's Farewell from Ukarumpa

The Tabernacle did not support Barbara financially while she was in New Guinea. However on her return, at a presentation she gave to the church about her time as a volunteer, in 1972, they presented a cheque to cover the cost of her return flights to New Guinea.⁵⁷⁶ The lack of financial support while Barbara was in Papua New Guinea was probably due to her not having come into membership at the Tabernacle.

⁵⁷⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1971–1972*, p. 9.

Back in Brisbane, Barbara worked as a Secretary from May 1972 until November 1982. During that period, she purchased her own home in Taringa.

Barbara and Ronald Willcocks were married in 1982 in the All Saints' Anglican Church at Tamrookum, by a Uniting Church minister, and moved to Kooralbyn to live. In 1986 Barbara and Ron, as he was commonly known, moved to London for two years. Ron was transferred from London to open an office in Sydney, so they returned to Australia in December 1988 and lived in Wollstonecraft until 1992 when Ron retired and they moved to Ballina, then back to Brisbane.

In June 1998 they moved to their present home in Mapleton and Barbara retired from permanent employment in December 2000. Ron passed away in 2003, aged 71, following some months of illness.

Barbara attended the Yandina Baptist Church and the Mapleton Baptist Church before becoming a member of the congregation of the Montville Uniting Church where she periodically, acts as a steward.

In 2008 she undertook a watercolour painting. She is a member of the Blackall Range Visual Artists and they have helped her develop her art style using watercolour, acrylic and oil. Barbara's paintings were hung in the Montville Uniting Church's Reflection Gallery for three months in 2019. The aim of the Gallery is expressed in the motto, "reflecting faith's experience". The displayed works of art reflect the Christian faith of the artists, at the same time inviting contemplation and reflection on the works displayed.

Since Ron's death, she has travelled quite a lot. In 2007 visiting the United Kingdom and the United States, where she visited and stayed with old friends, including Heather Llewellyn and Allan English. Heather had also attended the Tabernacle in her youth.

Merilyn Bradbury (née Larmar)

Merilyn Joyce Bradbury was born to R Leslie (Les) and Lillian (Lily) Larmar, in her grandparents' home in Camp Hill, Brisbane, 11 days after Victory in Europe (VE Day) was declared on 8 May 1945.

Les was born in Durham, England but came to Australia aged three, shortly after the World War I Armistice. Lillian was born in Queensland. They were married in the Tabernacle in 1942 by Rev Albert Butler, while Les was in the Australian Army. His war service is recognised on the Tabernacle Roll of Honour.



Merilyn (far left), Barbara Willcocks (third from left) and friends at a Baptist Youth Camp, Binna Burra, 1960

When Merilyn was six the family moved from Tarragindi to Surry Hills, Victoria for two years until Merilyn developed double pneumonia twice and the doctors warned they would be burying her down there if she had to endure another Melbourne winter.

Merilyn's parents came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1954, on transfer from Canterbury (Victoria), when they were living in Wellers Hill. Les was the Superintendent of the YPSCE from November 1954 and sang solos on special occasions such as the ordination of four men at the Tabernacle in 1957 and in a quartet with Cedric Johnson (father of Graeme Johnson), Cec Leggett (brother of Ruth and Joseph) and Harold Carruthers. Merilyn's brother Earl and Yvonne Johnstone (aka Yvonne O'Leary) were married by Rev Neville Kellam, at the Tabernacle in 2001. Merilyn had two sisters, Narelle, and Jenny (later married Mr S Robinson). Les and Lillian were involved with the Free Tract Band, which conducted open-air evangelistic services throughout South-East Queensland in the 1930s.

After moving back to Queensland, the family lived at Wellers Hill until Lily realised she was pregnant with Jenny (Jeni), so Les purchased a large Queenslander on Bonney Avenue, Clayfield for their growing family, and Merilyn attended Clayfield College.

Merilyn was baptised by Rev Fred Smith in 1963 and came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1964.

She had a beautiful voice and was a member of the Brisbane Junior Eisteddfod Choir as a teenager, travelling to New Zealand for concerts in several cities back in the early 1960s – the first Australian children's choir to travel overseas. She sang regularly on

the platforms of all the churches she attended and was also involved in amateur musical theatre over the years.

Merilyn left home to study nursing at Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) in the early 60s when training was still done inhouse rather than through university. She was a highly accomplished and dedicated nurse, gaining 99% for her third-year exams, and her Dad teased her that she could have done better. She soon showed him by topping the State for her final year exams with a perfect 100%!

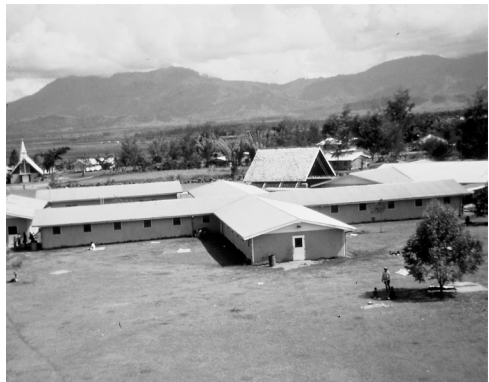
Mrs Larmar transferred to the Church of the Nazarene, Coorparoo in 1963. Merilyn remained at the Tabernacle for some time after 1963, where she was a Girls' Brigade Officer. She also transferred to the Nazarene Church in 1970. Her father died in 1974 while she was on the mission field, her mother remaining a widow until her death in 2005.

She was a beautiful child, teenager and young woman with guys falling for her left, right and centre, including Bruce Woodley from *The Seekers* for several months when she moved to Melbourne in the mid-60s to study midwifery at St Vincent's Maternity Hospital.

Once she had gained her Midwifery certificate, she moved to Quirindi, NSW, for two years where she nursed at the local hospital, before returning to Brisbane after being offered the position of Tutor Sister at PAH. The student nurses adored Merilyn for her patience, fairness and constant positive attitude and her continued encouragement for their efforts.

Her next big adventure, in 1971 was to pack her bags and work at a mission hospital at Kudjip in the western highlands district of Papua New Guinea (PNG) for a couple of years. under the auspices of the Nazarene World Missionary Society (now Nazarene Missions International). Kudjip Nazarene Hospital has been serving the people of Papua New Guinea since 1967.⁵⁷⁷

During her time in PNG, Merilyn was able to connect several times with Barbara Dean, who had been a friend since their childhood at the Tabernacle. They were able to talk to each other regularly on the



Nazarene Hospital, Kudjip

⁵⁷⁷ <http://nazpng.org/hospital/>

Merilyn Bradbury

radio skeds (schedule) and met up in Kudjip, Ukarumpa or Lae during the seven months Barbara was there.

During this time, Merilyn met a red-headed Aussie bush pilot who announced at their first meeting, "I'm going to marry you one day!" A year or so later, he did, and it wasn't long before they had moved to Lae and then Kavieng on the island of New Ireland where John was equivalent to the head magistrate.

John had gone to PNG to work as a patrol officer, and eventually became an administration officer. He was working in Kavieng when they met. They married at Kudjip in January 1973 and then had a further celebration in Windsor, Brisbane for the benefit of those who were unable to travel to PNG, a week later.

While honeymooning in Europe on a five-month-long campervan adventure, Merilyn fell pregnant with their firstborn, Kirsten. They invited Les and Lily to join them one month in, and they had a fabulous time with Les being able to visit his place of birth in Hetton-Le-Hole, Durham, England for the first time since sailing to Australia when he was three. On their return, Merilyn often retold how she fertilised the rose beds at the Versailles Palace due to morning sickness during the France leg!

Merilyn moved to New Ireland where she worked in the hospital for a while before being asked to take charge of the local pharmacy. Their daughter, Kirsten, was born in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea in 1974. Knowing that her father didn't have long to live, Merilyn travelled to Brisbane shortly before his death to show him her young daughter but didn't return for his funeral. John and Merilyn then left for a five-month trip to Europe on John's long service leave.

Their son, Matthew, arrived two-and-a-half years later. Within ten months, the family returned to Australia to settle in Nowra on the south coast of NSW in late 1974, where they were actively involved in the Baptist Church.

John and Merilyn were involved in the fledgling Nowra Christian



Merilyn conducting a clinic



Merilyn and John's wedding

Community School. John was chairman of the school board and Marilyn was a voluntary office worker.

Once Kirsten and Matt had grown up and were in relationships of their own, Marilyn and John decided to move to Maroochydore so she could be closer to her mother and siblings. While based there, Marilyn spent three months working as director-of-nursing at the hospital on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait. They then retired to Yandina, where they were involved in the Baptist Church, and Marilyn renewed her friendship with Barbara Dean (now Barbara Willcocks) in Yandina.

For the last twenty or so years of her life, Marilyn battled severe diabetes, even being emergency helicoptered to Sydney from Nowra after falling into a diabetic coma for several weeks in 1998, which had all the family convinced she wouldn't survive. But with her strong will and determination, she soon rallied and, despite a plethora of major hiccups over the next several years while having to inject herself daily with insulin, she was able to enjoy life to the full, with both her family and friends.

In late 2018, John developed a fast-growing cancer. Concerned for Marilyn's ongoing health and welfare, he thought it best if she took up residence in a local nursing home. As usual, Marilyn's easily adaptable and happy nature meant she soon settled in and enjoyed being in a 'nursing' environment again, making friends with the other residents and offering helpful and cheerful advice to the staff.

Sadly, John passed away approximately seven months later in mid-2019, but with her usual positive attitude, Marilyn assured Jeni several times during her visits that she was convinced God was in total control by having her move there early rather than staying at home with John. That way, she could get used to living full-time without her mate and this would help to ensure his passing wasn't as emotionally devastating as if they were still together full-time.

Miss Elaine Bennett

Elaine Clare Bennett was born in 1929, the daughter of Oscar and Ann Bennett. She had a brother John and sister Marie. She worked as a trained nurse Brisbane in 1958, in Oakey in 1963 and in Lennox Head, New South Wales in 1968. She was in membership at several churches before moving to New South Wales to study at Tahlee Bible College. She transferred her church membership from Marrickville (New South Wales) to the Tabernacle in 1971, two months before commencing missionary service. Although her parents had been in membership at the Tabernacle since 1960, and her sister had joined in 1969–70, it is not known what association, if any, Elaine had with the Tabernacle before commencing her studies in Sydney.

Elaine served in Kenya at Kijabe, from January 1972 then Kapsowar (until October 1975) and Kakotol (until 1978), with the Africa Inland Mission (AIM). Prior to her departure, she was farewelled at an evening service and afterwards the congregation gathered with her for supper.⁵⁷⁸



Kapsowar Hospital

In her annual reports to the church, she wrote that the three months following the Swahili Language Course in May 1972 were regarded by the AIM as a period of orientation to the culture, customs, and diseases prevalent in Kenya. Her time was spent at two of the AIM Hospitals—Kijobe and Kapsowar. Kijobe is 58 km from Nairobi and at the time, had a busy 70-bed medical centre, as well as primary and secondary boarding schools for 330 children of missionaries in Africa, two high schools for students of African heritage, a Bible school, and a press and radio outreach. She was the nurse in charge of the 24-bed maternity wing, and a few private patients. Because the matron and Elaine were the only midwives, they were “on call” for the hospital on alternate nights. They enjoyed many opportunities for witnessing. A service was held daily at 10 am in the hospital and was well attended. Two African evangelists, who visited daily, read the scriptures, and prayed with many of the patients. She loved the African people and quickly adjusted to sights and smells that seemed initially unusual to her. She had to learn to accept the things which she could not change, for example the easy-going attitude and slowness of some nurses. Hebrews 4:16 contained the secret that she needed to fully appreciate daily

⁵⁷⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1971–1972*, p. 9.

life in a different context from the one she was used to. She invited her fellow labourers to, as she wrote, “Join her at the mercy seat. His grace, His patience and love abound in times of need. Praise the Lord!”⁵⁷⁹

The Tabernacle Ladies’ Day Guild sent two large parcels of baby clothes to Elaine for distribution to mothers to dress their babies when taking them home from hospital. Members of the Ladies’ Evening Fellowship also knitted and sewed for the babies in Kenya.⁵⁸⁰

It was little wonder that one of the “Kapsowar crew” wrote and asked Elaine, “When are you coming home?” Eighteen weeks had passed since she had left “home” and gone to relieve the nurse at Kalokol and worked among the Turkana people. She was then asked by radio if she would go to Kijabe and help them while their matron was away for ten weeks. After a restful holiday at St Julian’s Guest House near Nairobi, she returned to Kapsowar. Personal evangelism, mostly by African patients and staff, was one of the highlights in her memory of Kijabe. The Gospel was gossiped from bed to bed, and Christian literature was read and treasured by patients. As she did her rounds of the very sick patients each morning at 9 am, quite often one or two women would begin to sing a well-known Gospel tune. Within minutes, other women and men had joined in, singing in Kikuyu (and Elaine in English). Many “fish” were caught for the Lord from a patient’s stay in the Hospital. “You’re a Missionary, you should know, Elaine! Where is God?” “How can we know Him?” Elaine had reflected, “What a God-given opportunity to answer them from God’s Word and from a vital, personal experience of Christ. The answers left them stunned, and still seeking the Lord”. There were other questions that Sue and Joanna, young English university graduates and friends who were working in Kenya for two years, could not answer. Joanna worked at St Julian’s Guest House, and Sue was the wife of a doctor. Together they ran a Government Hospital on the north-east Kenya–Somali border. Sue became stranded in Nairobi when there was no room for her on the small Flying Doctor’s plane. Elaine noticed that Sue had added a Bible to her shopping list! Elaine wrote later, “It is God’s Word, and His work to save. What an honour to be His witnesses.”⁵⁸¹

“This is a wonderful life!” So said Elaine’s fellow missionary as she watched a group of men and boys listening intently to a Gospel message on tape in their own language, and another group buying tracts and gospels. She continued, “If Christian people in our homelands only knew how wonderful it is, and with what ease we witness to hungry souls, more people would come to Kenya, that is, of course, if the Lord sends them.” Elaine agreed. As well as the supervision of three women’s wards, and the care of the

⁵⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁸⁰ City Tabernacle. *Yearbook 1972–1973*, p. 12.

⁵⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 22.

operating theatre occasionally, Elaine sold Christian literature to patients and staff. She was offered a new tape recorder as a gift! And it was so easy to tape gospel messages from their pastors. Very few women were literate, so she was rejoicing at the prospect of their hearing the words of life more often. Elaine loved to visit groups of believers in the district who meet in mud school rooms or under a tree. Ruth Buckingham, another missionary, now had a car, so they set off in different directions some Sundays with eager young Christian volunteers. As often as invitations came, she spoke at the Nurses' Christian Fellowship, and at any of the four Christian unions in the district. A weekly Sunday School preparation class with some of their secondary school girls who taught each Sunday was another of her heart's delights. She was so glad that the Lord Jesus said to her, "Arise and go, nothing doubting!" Obedience had brought her great joy.⁵⁸²

One hundred and forty-five patients in 108 beds! And yet they seemed contented and happy to be in their care (no one ever slept on the floor). That is how crowded and busy they had been at the Kapsowar Hospital. They were so glad that they were able to use the new ward which had been opened by Rev Alan Checkley of Sydney. The new generator and alternator had been installed and were in use. Elaine invited the church to praise the Lord with them that the large sum of money was available in good time for their purchase. There



Elaine Bennett

were seven pastors and four ladies who worked in the churches in the district. Those missionaries who could, went out as often as possible to teach God's Word and to encourage the believers. God gave the increase as their faithfulness did the planting and the watering of His Word.⁵⁸³

Elaine was welcomed to the Missionary Convention at the Tabernacle and to various departments of the church while she was on furlough in 1975. October 10 was her last Sunday at the Tabernacle and Elaine believed that she had made the right decision to leave home on the 13th, arriving in Nairobi on the 20th or 21st. She needed courage to make this step and asked that the church pray for her that the Lord would give her courage, peace, and joy.

⁵⁸² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1973–1974*, p 20.

⁵⁸³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, p. 17.

Never had the months passed by as quickly as they had done since she returned home for leave. It had been her privilege to share in the care of her dear parents, and to fit into her program whatever invitations she was given to show her slides and tell of the Lord's work in Kapsowar and district. The Tabernacle showed a keen personal interest in her, and in the work of the hospital and church. She visited various departments of the Tabernacle presenting the needs and the challenges of work in Kenya, whose doors remained wide open. She had especially enjoyed her visits to the young people. They should not easily forget the "eye-openers" they received from the skit: *A day in the life of a Missionary at Kapsowar*. The young people who participated and those in the audience, who listened attentively, made the skit a success and she thanked them. Group 76, a fellowship of the Tabernacle's older young people, had undertaken to raise money for a new water pump at Kapsowar, and almost all of the money was in hand so they would have no more water problems.⁵⁸⁴

"Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" is the challenge for the devil in a place that has been his territory for centuries. On her return to Kenya, she was thrilled to see changes for the better at Kalokol since her brief stay there among the Turkana four years previously. Many of them were still dressed in their tribal dress and they were there each Sunday to worship the Lord with faces glowing and hearts overflowing. Always at the close of the service, the pastor asked for two or three to pray. It was more likely to be five who prayed, and often two would begin together.⁵⁸⁵

In April 1977, Elaine was transferred from the Marakwet tribe to work among an even more primitive and needy people—the Turkana, in the far north-west of Kenya. The Sunday morning services were very different to anything she had known before! The singing (and shouting) was enthusiastic and accompanied by the clanging of self-made instruments made of bottle tops threaded on a circular piece of wire. What a din! But to see the faces of those dear people whose lives had been changed by the power of Christ and to hear many people pray and no pauses at all during those prayer sessions were some of her lasting impressions.

In December 1977, Elaine returned home from Kenya to care for her mother who passed into the presence of her Lord and Saviour, in June 1978. It was a privilege to care for her and she was so glad that she'd come home. Often, she was relieved of her duties to enable her to worship at the Tabernacle on Sundays.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1975–1976*, p. 17.

⁵⁸⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1976–1977*, pp. 16–17.

⁵⁸⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1977–1978*, pp. 16–17.

Elaine Bennet

Elaine returned to Kenya in September, but she was only there for about two weeks before she resigned from the mission and returned to Australia. Subsequently, her father died in June 1980.

Elaine was living in her parent's home in Cleveland in 1980, so she transferred her church membership from the Tabernacle to Cleveland Baptist in July 1980. She is now living in Rothwell.

The 2016 missions' month was condensed into two weeks of joyful missions' celebrations in thanksgiving for the many missionaries sent out from the church. It was a joy to have reunion of many former missionaries including Elaine Bennett, who returned for this very special time.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2015–2016*, pp. 14–15.

Judith Tonson (née Stephenson)

Judith and John Tonson were supported by the Tabernacle during their service in Papua New Guinea with the SIL (WBT) from 1974 until 1981.

Judith Stephenson was born in New Zealand. At the age of 13, she went to a Presbyterian Bible Class Camp with the church she was attending. It was there that she asked Jesus into her life to be her Lord and Saviour. (Many years later, she found out that of the nine young people who became Christians at that camp, six went to the mission field.) Throughout her secondary school years, she taught Sunday School and found Crusaders and Crusader camps a wonderful encouragement in her walk with the Lord.

After school she did her general and maternity nursing training at Waikato Hospital in New Zealand. For a period, although Jesus was and would always be her Saviour, He was not her Lord as she had lost His vitality in her life.

After completing her nursing training, Judith and a flatmate decided to go on a big “overseas experience”. They first went to Fiji for a period, and then on to Sydney where they were with a group trying to sell encyclopaedias. She was not a salesperson and didn’t manage to sell any, but her friend sold one set. As a result, they started cleaning rooms at a large hotel. Judith remained in Australia until she was 22.

All during that time, God still had His hand on Judith and her friend in His fantastic way and was still drawing the two young women to Himself. Finally, they both surrendered to Him and He became Lord of their lives again. Her friend felt led to return to New Zealand and Judith went to the Central Baptist Church in George Street, Sydney, where very soon she was baptized.

The baptism has a funny story of its own. Judith was baptized during a morning service. Entry to the church was through the main entrance off George Street. So off they went out through the side door which locked behind them and they found themselves in the church car park. The lady with Judith had forgotten that the car park had high gates which were locked for security reasons during the services. Hence, they had to stay in the car park for the rest of the service. This lady was quite upset about it, but Judith was so delighting in the presence of her Lord she didn’t mind in the least.

From there Judith felt God’s leading to train in midwifery. She went to Brisbane to do the training and decided to attend the Tabernacle, which she loved. She came into membership in 1969 following visitation and joined the YPSCE. After her course was completed, Judith had seven months until her scheduled return to New Zealand, creating opportunity to go to the Bible Training Institute (now known as the Bible College of New Zealand). She spoke to the pastor, Rev Neville L Abrahams about going to Papua New Guinea. This idea had been on her heart since she was about nine years old, when she had done a small project on it at school. He arranged for her to go there as a nurse with the ABMS. This was a precious time, she loved the village life, the people, and the

nursing experience, which was a stretching time. It pushed her deeper into trusting and relying on Him.

Judith returned to New Zealand for Bible College, in 1971–72. During her time at the Bible College, Judith got to know John Tonson who was born in 1947 into a Baptist family in Wellington, New Zealand. John grew up in Palmerston North where his father Bob was a lay preacher and passionate about global interdenominational missions. As a young man, John met many senior missionaries who stayed in their home during deputation when his father travelled all over the Manawatu to missionary meetings that he arranged. Bob made known to his sons his prayer that they might take up foreign mission work in a way that Bob wished he had done.

John attained a Bachelor of Arts degree through study in Palmerston North and Wellington in 1965–68 and then attended Bible College. At the end of their Bible College studies, Judith and John were married. Their first year in Papua New Guinea proved to them on many occasions the love, wisdom, and faithfulness of their God. They lived in the SIL community at Ukarumpa at the eastern end of the New Guinea highlands where homes owned by other mission personnel were available to them for short periods. Through the Field Training Course, they became more prepared for tribal living and during several periods of sickness learnt to trust the Lord more and to cheerfully accept circumstances not of their choosing. The second year Linguistic School was also a time of experiencing the strength of Christ in concentrated study. Their first son Andrew was born in Papua New Guinea in 1975.

The Lord had steadily and most definitely guided them over a nine-month period to a tribal people. The helicopter survey of the Waibuk area was most profitable in gaining a good knowledge of the area and of the people's language. Then in June, a survey of possible airstrip sites resulted in a suitable one being found. There was a site close to a village where the recommended length of 450m could be obtained. The people had already started to cut down the trees, showing their keenness to help. Judith and John praised the Lord for His provision so far and looked forward in faith for His providing of the large amount of money needed for construction of the airstrip.⁵⁸⁸

With the company of an experienced translator, they did a survey in the Yupna language area in the south-east corner of the Madang Province. They felt that this was the Lord's leading and so located to Tepmangi village to undertake language learning and Bible translation work.

⁵⁸⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, p. 22.

The village was in high country just a 30-minute SIL flight from Ukarumpa but on the north side of the deep Markham River valley. However, after the plane flight in, it was necessary to walk a few hours to reach the village.

Several weeks were spent preparing for house building which had been delayed several times since they'd hoped to start in March. In June-July there were two carpenters working with them on the house for about three weeks.

Their language learning progressed slowly. It was good to have a national language helper with them at Ukarumpa for three weeks work and it was also a big experience for him to see a European establishment. At the end of July 1976, they moved into their new village house, which was essentially completed, although a good deal of finishing work both outside and in remained to be done. Much of this was completed as they worked on it in the next two periods at Tepmangi, for two-and-a-half months between September and November and then two months from the end of January to March.⁵⁸⁹



John and Judith Tonson

They attended the two-week Beginning Anthropology Workshop in April, and the four-week grammar Workshop in June. Their main project had been to analyse the grammar of the Yupna language, to write a paper, and to write the Grammar Essentials paper for that language. Earlier in the year, they finished their paper on the sound system of the language. All through the year they again experienced God's care and provision in many ways and thanked Him for Guruke, a loyal and hard-working language helper, who had taught them a lot. Guruke also spent much time translating the Gospel of Mark and the Book of Acts, using as a basis both the Pidgin and Kote New Testaments. John and Judith thanked God for the village people and their friendliness and moral support for their work. Fellowship at Ukarumpa Base had also been a source of great strength and encouragement as had the Tabernacle's help in prayer and financial support.⁵⁹⁰

God's faithfulness to them and His encouragement in their work was again evident in 1977. From July until early October, they had 12 weeks in the village when they completed the Grammar Essentials paper and a description of the patterns and structure of the language up to the clause level. John and his translation co-worker, Sayaba,

⁵⁸⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1975–1976*, pp. 20–21.

⁵⁹⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1976–1977*, p. 19.

translated the Gospel of Mark, the first translation in the Yupna language. From early November through until late January, time was spent in New Zealand where their son Stephen was born near the end of 1977. Back in Papua New Guinea, in February the Gospel of Mark was checked with a translation consultant and a leader from Tepmangi Village and in March, John typed it on the Speed Computer Program.

Five copies of the Gospel of Mark were taken out to the village and used for a further check of the translation, with sessions attended by three or four men. Some of the copies were being read and passed around from person to person. The translation of the Book of Acts was started in April and the first public reading of Yupna Scripture (Acts 4:31–35) took place in the Tepmangi Church Service. Further passages of Acts were read at the Services in June and July. The other major activity in the village was the taping and transcribing of text material for the Higher-level Grammar Workshop to be held September to mid-November 1978. the typing was Judith's task.⁵⁹¹

The following year was one of good progress in the work, even though there was much time spent in waiting for the printing of the Gospel of Mark. This was finally completed, and a special service held in the village on 1 July 1979. Acts had also been translated, but not yet checked with a consultant, and as such it was not yet ready for printing. A phrase book in Pidgin, Yupna, and English had also been printed. The people themselves asked for this and used it to help them practice reading Mark's Gospel. They valued the Tabernacle's part in this work, especially in providing them with the radio which proved vital for making contacts when Andrew needed to be rapidly evacuated out to hospital. They were also thankful for the church's financing of the printing of the Gospel of Mark.⁵⁹²

After the Gospel of Mark had been made available to the Yupna people in June, the Yupna dictionary file was upgraded and a good deal of work done to finish the production of two audio visuals before John and Judith returned to Ukarumpa to get ready for furlough. Their month in Australia was very worthwhile, both to share the vision of Bible translation and to meet their supporters and friends. In New Zealand during the last three months of 1979, many opportunities were taken to speak of their work. Up until February 1980, they were much on the move staying in several places but were comfortably settled in Palmerston North for the rest of the year.

Their last child Kyla was born in Palmerston North in April 1980 and progressed well. Small group involvement had been a real blessing to both John and Judith—John in a cell group at University and Judith with a ladies' morning Bible study group. Little

⁵⁹¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1977–1978*, p. 19.

⁵⁹² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1978–1979*, p. 19.

deputation had been done in the first half of the year, but this became a major activity from the third term onwards.⁵⁹³

John was busy in his Master of Arts in Anthropology course at Massey University, hoping to benefit both the Yupna program and the SIL region generally with greater understanding of cultural principles. The four papers were: Theories in Anthropology; Research Method; Kinship and Marriage; and Visual Anthropology (nonverbal communication). A Thesis, as the second half of the Masters' Degree, was to be undertaken in Papua New Guinea, but with changing circumstances, Judith and John did not return to their work in Tepmangi. Unfortunately, this meant that John was unable to complete his thesis and the degree.

They established a family home in Palmerston North with baby Kyla and the boys, Andrew and Stephen, aged five and two and a half. Since John and Judith had settled in Palmerston, Judith's name was removed from the Tabernacle roll in late 1988.

John died from an inoperable cancer in 2009 at the age of 62. Judith continued her active life in Palmerston North, including travels beyond New Zealand to Vietnam, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Indonesia with a mission interest.

An American couple, Wes and LeeAnn Reed, carried on translating the New Testament. This was finally completed by 2010. Judith, Andrew, Stephen, and Kyla had the great privilege of being able to return to the village for a very moving dedication and celebration of the New Testament in August 2010. Judith reported: "It was wonderful to see the people again and to stay



The Yopno Bible dedication
(Photo: Joy Reiter)



LeeAnn and Wes Reed

⁵⁹³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1979–1980*, pp. 20–21.

Judith Tonson

in the house of our helper, Guruke. It was very impressive to see the eagerness of the people to obtain and start reading their own New Testament in their mother tongue.”

In the interval between John and Judith’s departure and the dedication of the New Testament, the spelling of Yupna changed to Yopno as the phonetics was more finely tuned in one of the many checks with the people.



Yopno Singsing
(Photo: Joy Reiter)

Elizabeth Bruce (née Johnson)

Elizabeth Ann Johnson was born in Brisbane in 1951 into a loving, Christian family, fifth in line, with two older brothers and sisters and a younger brother to come. Her parents, Victor and Phyllis, worked incredibly hard to provide for the family on a 9-hectare small crops farm at Becketts Road, Aspley, now upmarket suburbia! Though a very demanding life for them, Sunday was always set aside for worship at the local Methodist Church. There were occasional social events and plays, as well as Sunday School examinations to memorize for. Her father did not enjoy good health, and when she was 10, the family moved to Spring Hill. Her mother did not drive, so on the first Sunday there, with Dad in hospital, Mum said, “We will walk to the closest church”. It was the Tabernacle. The church opened its arms to these country bumpkins and with her parents’ choice of baptism and membership, a great example was displayed. Her parents both came into membership in 1964. Elizabeth’s brothers, William and Victor did not come into membership.



Elizabeth and Alan Johnson

Her formative Christian years were founded on a solid base of learning and teaching from ministers, leaders, and fellow believers. Elizabeth came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1966 following her baptism. In 1971–72 she was a lieutenant in The Girls’ Brigade and in charge of the cadet’s section.

With a strong awareness of the blessings flowing from her upbringing, at 21 years of age, Elizabeth began to realize younger members would greatly benefit from the experience gained in positions she held. God was at work. She started by offering to help in North Queensland churches. Attending mission meetings, she responded to a call at Windsor Road Baptist for work with aboriginal peoples. On checking out SIL, she did a night course to improve her typing and shorthand speeds. During this time of search, mature, experienced church members came alongside to pray for and support her. She especially recalls an evening sermon on Isaiah 6:8: “Whom shall I send as a messenger to my people? Who will go?” And I said: “Lord, I’ll go! Send me.” She then discovered that Asia Pacific Christian Mission (now Pioneers International), required someone with her skills. With the blessing and support of her family and church, she applied and was accepted. It was her first time to leave home and her first travel overseas. As she flew around the hills of Port Moresby, Psalm 121:1,2 came to her: “I lift up my eyes to the hills; where does my help come from? My help comes from the

Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”

In her annual reports to the church, she wrote, “How good is the God we adore!” As she looked back over the year of church life just past, she wanted to share something of what the Lord had accomplished in her. A year previously, she was very happily occupied with life in Brisbane. She enjoyed her work as a secretary in the insurance field, was content with her family life, owned a car, and took an active part in church work. Then God spoke to her and with each succeeding service she attended, His message became clearer.

After many weeks of searching with the Lord, she applied to the Queensland Council of APCM. In December, she resigned from her secretarial position trusting that she would be accepted by the Mission.

Elizabeth flew to Melbourne in January 1973 to attend a Candidates’ Course in preparation for service in Papua New Guinea. Following acceptance by the Mission, by early February, she was settling into life at Dauli Teachers’ College in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea, where she worked for three months in the College Office. That was a happy three months! A time of adjusting and learning, but one of great satisfaction and blessing. She then moved into her place of appointment at headquarters and was gaining experience in translation typing. The pattern of her life over this period continued to amaze her, all brought about in her words, “Because God chose to take up an unclean vessel and mould it for His use. Words could not express her appreciation of many who had become part of the mission family with her in their continued prayer and financial support. Her thoughts were with them, rejoicing in God’s goodness and faithfulness over so many years and His promise to go before in the years that lay ahead.”⁵⁹⁴



Elizabeth at work at Evangelical Printers

She had been thinking of the word “encouragement” and guessed that what had started her thoughts in that direction was their conference at Tari. They were reminded of the need to encourage each other in their work. She was truly thankful for great encouragement, firstly from the Lord, secondly from the Tabernacle, and thirdly from those with whom she worked on the field. Another source of encouragement to her, and

⁵⁹⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1973–1974*, pp. 21–22.

she trusted for the church also, was the way folk there had expressed, with thanks to the Lord, gratefulness for her home church. As she shared with them the work of the Tabernacle and its constant support of and prayer backing for her, they had praised the Lord with her for them.⁵⁹⁵

Elizabeth was not looking for romance. However, God had other plans and James (Jim) Robert Bruce had come from New Zealand to the mission. His electrical skills were of great use throughout the mission stations. They were engaged on Christmas Eve 1974. Jim then relocated to Port Moresby to become the Mission Representative, at a time when there were more than 120 missionaries serving with APCM and needing support. Their marriage was celebrated by Rev Neville L Abrahams at the Tabernacle in 1976. Elizabeth went to New Zealand to meet her new



Elizabeth with trainee Sunday School teachers

family following which they returned to Port Moresby for 1976. Jim was born in Wellington, New Zealand in 1936. He was 15 years older than Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's work in the printshop was taken over by a typist from Melbourne.

Jim quickly picked up the strings of his work in Port Moresby after three months away. He enjoyed his work and the added blessing of coming home to his wife. In the Lord's provision, Elizabeth now had a neat program for herself and also enjoyed life there.

The most encouraging event of their involvement in church work was to see three young men come forward for Sunday School teaching. Numbers at Sunday School were up to 80 some Sundays and at least six teachers were needed. Elizabeth was thrilled with their growing interest in making and using visual aids to assist in teaching. Elizabeth and Jim coveted the church's prayers, as they remembered the work of the Tabernacle and its members before the Lord.⁵⁹⁶

Two years at the Bible College of Auckland followed, with their sights set on a return to Port Moresby.

⁵⁹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, pp. 19–20.

⁵⁹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1975–76*, pp. 17–18.

In conjunction with the Tabernacle's Missionary Convention in March 1979, a seminar on missionary service was held on the Monday evening. Elizabeth and Jim who were on their way to Port Moresby, were able to participate in the program.⁵⁹⁷

The date 10th was a very special one for Elizabeth and Jim. It was their wedding anniversary, departure date to Bible College, arrival date back in Port Moresby, and their son Richard's birthday.⁵⁹⁸

The year had been a year of firsts for them:

- First year back from Bible College: They had come to an even greater appreciation of their time of study.
- First child: what a new dimension of living that brought them. More than they expected, they had the privilege of discovering how wonderfully a little child responds to the special care and attention of his parents.
- First visit of Elizabeth's mother, described as lovely.
- First holiday in Papua New Guinea: they enjoyed the refreshing Highlands climate.
- First Sunday School teachers' workshop/seminar: an encouraging and learning time for both of them.

The list could be continued. The new, as well as the everyday experiences, were known to their Father. So, they recorded, with great joy, His sufficiency for them day by day by day.⁵⁹⁹

Before long, it was confirmed that Richard had Down syndrome. Their desire was to provide the very best they could for him, and there was much on offer, with many professionals giving free time to direct them in Richard's progress. God provided abundantly.

Elizabeth and Jim noted with appreciation the various groups who helped them in their service to missionaries. With Jim's almost daily visits to both Labour and Migration Departments, he had made good contacts, and found those people most helpful and polite. APCM's work



Parenting during Women's Ministry

⁵⁹⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1978–1979*, p. 8.

⁵⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁹⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1979–1980*, p. 18.

positions had been approved, so they could now all apply for work permits and several new workers could proceed to the field. Jim enjoyed a good working relationship with the airline, customs, and cargo staff. Seeing each other so regularly, they got to know one another, and particularly at night flights when things were more relaxed, there was often time for a chat and opportunity for witness.

Mapang Missionary Guest House was of tremendous service. They were thankful for this organisation. The pharmacy which filled all the missionaries' orders, gave prompt, efficient service. On one occasion, the manager willingly returned to the shop to supply drugs required by the mission doctor in the west, on the next morning's plane. Steamships Company, which supplied freezer goods for the Mission, also gave excellent service. Staff at the hospital, blood bank and base medical supplies, all helped, and very especially in times of emergency. The missionaries could not have managed without the MAF flying service, and they had good friends in the Fellowship, among them the Port Moresby pilot, and his wife and family. Pasuwe, their trade arm, was the provider of most groceries and household goods at little more than wholesale rates. Many of their national brethren received training and work experience at Pasuwe.

Above all, they thanked the Lord for health, protection, particularly on the roads, house security, and provision, financially and prayerfully, enabling them to continue in joyful service for the Lord.⁶⁰⁰

‘‘For I’m building people of power
And I’m making a people of praise
That will move through this land by my Spirit
And will glorify my precious name.
Build your church, Lord
Make us strong, Lord.⁶⁰¹

As APCM completed the handing-over process to the church born of it, the Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea, and the integration program progressed, they praised God that the “building” is His work and they were but instruments. In their backup role in Port Moresby, they were in the unique position of meeting every worker, and so could feel a part of each work program, be it church planting, translation, literacy, printing, education, medical, airstrip making or maintenance.

The year in Port Moresby had been the “year of the long, wet season”. It was lovely to see the hills remain green for much longer than usual. They had also seen the appearance of the actual work permit. All involved were relieved that the introductory work was complete. The church in Moresby had five congregations meeting each Sunday. Gerehu

⁶⁰⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1980–1981*, pp. 18–19.

⁶⁰¹ D Richards, *For I’m Building a people of Power* Scripture in Song: Songs of the Kingdom, 1981.

had almost bulged the seams of the home where it met and so the project undertaken was a church building there. A two hectare lot had been allocated, the site cleared and levelled, and building commenced. “Build your church, Lord”⁶⁰²

Thinking back over the previous four years, the word “family” came to mind. It was a good time to reflect, as they wrote from Brisbane at the beginning of their furlough. They considered themselves the family of God, loved and chosen. Their ministry in Port Moresby was to the family of God. Firstly to ‘a special breed’, family made up of missionaries, with all the needs they had, plus others, to be met. Secondly to their Papua New Guinea brothers and sisters, needing to be loved and respected, with help available when asked for. The Tabernacle had a very real share in this ministry to be the Family of God through their caring practical and financial support. In their last term of service, they had become a family unit. They claimed the Tabernacle’s prayers as they prayed for them, that they would all be found diligent in carrying out the God-given responsibility of family care in its every facet.⁶⁰³

Andrew joined the family in 1983, just weeks before furlough was due, and another Port Moresby hospital birth. Jim and Elizabeth began their furlough in May, calling in at the Tabernacle on their way to New Zealand. They were to return to Brisbane in September, staying for two months.⁶⁰⁴ While in Brisbane, Andrew was dedicated. Elizabeth spoke at the Ladies’ Evening Fellowship, and Jim and Elizabeth also spoke at a Men’s Society meeting in October.

Their furlough was a very rich blessing, sharing with everyone in person. In practical terms, constant travel, living out of suitcases with a new baby, and an active four-year old was very wearing. It was necessary to see their supporters again, and in fact, scriptural to ‘report back’. Of tremendous reassurance were the promises of God’s people to support them in every way in the place of His appointment. The Fast Tape Copier provided by the church was constantly in use, and the means of repeating messages from the Word, in homes and hostels, hospital and university in Port Moresby and throughout Papua New Guinea. They found real joy in service and were glad that the church was a part of it.⁶⁰⁵

The Missionary Project for 1985 included \$500 which was sent to Jim and Elizabeth for refurbishing the transit flat. They were given a further \$750 the following year, towards refurnishing the Sunday Literacy Building.

⁶⁰² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1981–1982*, p. 23.

⁶⁰³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1982–1983*, p. 21.

⁶⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁰⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1983–1984*, p. 21.

The following year seemed to pass more quickly than others. Elizabeth and Jim continued to experience God's blessing in their "open home" ministry. Jim clocked up many kilometres in the bus, catering for the needs of God's workers leaving, arriving in and returning to Papua New Guinea. The Lord had undertaken in His own special way: a lost passport found here, a spare bed available there, last minute cancellations making seats available on that fully booked flight. There were daily opportunities to present a Christian viewpoint in the secular business world. Their family had known a happy and healthy year. As Richard entered his sixth year, they had to consider more fully his educational needs. The Lord had enabled them to return and they felt sure that He had this need in mind. Knowing that they could depend on the church's caring, giving and praying friendship, made them feel more a part of the fellowship.⁶⁰⁶

Reviewing the year, they could not begin with other than, "Thank you Lord for your faithfulness, your protection and your provision." Their guest book continued to fill, line by line, but it is the people, not the signatures, that mean the most, and also how they were best able to serve them, before they arrived, as they passed through Port Moresby, and sometimes long after they have gone. Fellowship with the National Church was precious too.⁶⁰⁷ Jim and Elizabeth had two months furlough in Brisbane in 1983–84. Elizabeth renewed fellowship with the Tabernacle again in 1986–87.⁶⁰⁸



Jim and Elizabeth Bruce and family

"Faithful is He who has called you." From Elizabeth's initial venture into missionary service in 1974, the Tabernacle had faithfully supported and encouraged her. Training received in Sunday School, CE, Sunday School teaching, Youth Fellowship and Girls' Brigade had been of tremendous value. She praised God for the privilege of sharing in such groups and encouraged others to be involved too. The church had warmly welcomed her husband and two sons as they joined her and included them in their concern and prayer. The years with APCM had been totally happy and fulfilling ones, and they believed fruitful in the Kingdom. Their step back into "home life" seemed at times huge and daunting, but they were confident that the One who had proved His faithfulness, would continue to do so. In each task set for them in Papua New Guinea

⁶⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁶⁰⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, p. 22.

⁶⁰⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1986–1987*, p. 18.

they had attempted to represent the church well in the name of Christ. They recorded their deep gratefulness to the Tabernacle for its devotion to Christ and His great commission. They had been truly blessed to be covered by the church's love and care.⁶⁰⁹

Coming to the end of their term of service in 1987, God again spoke through various situations and needs, and they faced the grief of leaving a country and people they had come to love and respect. Jim and Elizabeth settled in New Zealand where Jim was able to secure work as an electrician.⁶¹⁰

Elizabeth anticipated the huge step back into home life was not going to be without difficulty. Yes, but the One who had proved His faithfulness before truly continued wonderfully. They had returned to Jim's home suburb and church, Island Bay, even to the same street. They were house minding at 310 The Parade. Jim's family home was at 107. The Presbyterian church was at number 88. Jim also returned to the Wellington Electricity Department to work where he was briefly employed some 20 years previously. The boys were happy in their schools and had made some nice friends but also kept each other good company. Elizabeth was the only true Aussie in the family yet found herself thoroughly welcomed and could only respond warmly. Papua New Guinea continued in their thinking and prayers but they now had the rich opportunity of being on the sending end of Mission, personally and as area representatives for APCM in Wellington. The Tabernacle was not forgotten either and Elizabeth's prayers continued to be guided by the prayer diary.⁶¹¹ They resigned their membership at the Tabernacle in 1994.

Provision from God was again abundant, with Jim securing a position firstly monitoring substations and moving up to the control room to manage electricity for Wellington and surrounds. They were able, with help, to buy the home they had been minding. Jim's home church, Island Bay Presbyterian, welcomed them with open arms. With the arrival of computers, Elizabeth was rusty in secretarial circles. She was alerted to a new position, aiding District Nursing. It suited perfectly, with hours during school time, allowing her to attend to the boys' needs as well.

Seeking some different educational aspects compared to the local state school, they were able to send the boys to a small local Christian School using the Accelerated Christian Education system. This provided another family group to which they could belong. The boys continue to be proud of their Papua New Guinea connections.

The family slotted well into church ministries and enjoyed welcoming Papua New Guinea families to stay, whether missionary or local. Family from Australia visited, or

⁶⁰⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

⁶¹⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, p. 5.

⁶¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

they went to them when they could. Jim's Mum had moved to a rest home and they were able to keep her company most Saturdays.

In 2001, Jim and Elizabeth both trained as facilitators for the Toolbox Parenting Course written by Ian and Mary Grant, with whom Jim had ministered in their Youth for Christ days, way back! They enjoyed and were challenged by bringing parents together in small groups of up to 12, to work through a manual and share experiences and managing children within family life.

Both of their boys are now involved in church life and ministry and have settled work positions and hobbies they enjoy.

In 1979, during routine X-rays, it was discovered that one of Jim's kidneys had calcified and the other one was enlarged to cover the work of both. This possibly happened due to tuberculosis in his school days. It was not a bother to him until after retirement, into his 70s. A modified diet assisted. In July 2016, when he developed Bell's palsy. This is not usually life threatening but was the beginning of Jim's failing health. He was farewelled from this life in 2016, his grave plaque stating: "Gifted from God, returned with thanks".

Elizabeth had wanted very much to worship again at the Tabernacle but chose to worship with family members in the brief stays they had in Brisbane. She continues to follow the Tabernacle online and retains contact with its worshippers.

In 2021, Elizabeth wrote: "It is a real joy to me to link in each week to The Tabernacle's Sunday worship. It's 1.30pm here so well after lunch time! Faithful teaching and worship continue."⁶¹²

⁶¹² E Bruce, Personal communication, 2021

Dr Martin and Elisabeth Combs (née Murray)

Martin R Combs was born in 1947 in Hove, East Sussex, the son of Roland and Dorothy Combs and in 1969 was living with his parents in Wallington, Surrey. He married Elisabeth A Murray in Surrey in 1971 and having moved to Brisbane, they came into membership at the Tabernacle, following visitation, in 1973. Their daughters Rebekah, Rachel and Meredith were dedicated at the Tabernacle in 1972, 1974 and 1977 and entered on the Cradle Roll.

They served in Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea with Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT). In 1974, they were given assistance by the Youth Fellowship by way of a gift of tools and other equipment as they prepared for Jungle Training Camp and the JCE forwarded \$30 to them for the commencement of their missionary work.⁶¹³ The opportunity to have fellowship with the Combs before they left was appreciated by the church.



Map of Papua New Guinea (Source: Brad Greco)

Martin and Elisabeth arrived in Papua New Guinea in July 1974. Their first three months were taken up with the Field Training Course for the Pacific Area. For prospective Bible translators, the course was broken into four parts. The first two weeks were spent in Goroka for a period of orientation to Papua New Guinea, with a political and social emphasis, plus a general fitness program. Next was a camp near their base for six weeks, where they learned how to do gracefully without mod cons. Useful skills were taught such as first aid, basic carpentry and so forth. Then they left the cooler climate at 1500 m for the hotter Markham Valley. Even more grace was necessary for this stage of six weeks during which jungle survival, primitive conditions, and bushcraft were taught. Lectures were given on aspects of the type of missionary life facing them in the villages. Usually, the last test for translation or literacy personnel is six weeks of village living, during which an assessment is made for suitability. By this time, they had accepted an assignment in New Britain. Their six weeks became eight weeks, their bush house having been built during the first four weeks. Then they were engaged in linguistic analysis in the Mangseng language. They worked in the village of Bereme which was not easily

⁶¹³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1973–1974*, p. 15.

accessible. It was too far for the SIL helicopter and about 65 km from Hoskins airstrip. When in the village, they did not receive any mail, often getting two-months' worth at once. That made correspondence difficult, but they were encouraged by a few people from the Tabernacle who wrote to them. They were thankful to the church for taking a share in their support. They realised how dependant they were on the folk at home, regarding both prayer and finance, and thanked God that He promises to provide every need, and He did.⁶¹⁴

They looked back over the following year with a mix of feelings. Good and bad experiences intertwined, as the Spirit sought to teach them to praise God in all circumstances. They remembered a big inter-village skirmish at the dead of night, rats, the leaky roof in their house, the death of the man who wanted to help with translation, and their own sicknesses. They had experienced discomforts and a few disappointments, but on the other hand, they suddenly found themselves on the "inside" as the folk started to call them by tribal names and a new relationship was born. An influential man made it clear to everyone that all he wanted was to follow God's way. The Combs made progress with their linguistic and cultural studies, and perhaps best of all they also had three daughters to enjoy and care for. They praised the Lord for He is very good. One way and another it had been a productive year, backed by prayer and finance all offered in love by those back home. They thanked the Tabernacle for its part.⁶¹⁵



Ukarumpa (Photo: Brad Greco)

They were very happy to see their village leader begin to put his trust in the Lord in response to God's Word. He told them later that when they brought him to Ukarampa to help them, he committed the village and relations to God's care. His thirst for knowing more about the Lord was amazing. Martin had been involved with the production of some books of the New Testament in New Melanesian Pidgin, as an aid to national Christians who translate or help with translating God's Word into their own languages. The technique of translating so that the meaning is clear and accurate is quite a challenge. They hoped their new translations of New Testament books would

⁶¹⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1974–1975*, pp. 17–18.

⁶¹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1975–1976*, p. 18.

supplement the use of the existing Pidgin New Testament for interested translation helpers. They thanked God that they had had quite a productive year.⁶¹⁶

In 1977, SIL published Martin's working paper, *Cultural considerations in language change and communication*, on sociolinguistics.⁶¹⁷

During 1977–78, they travelled over halfway around the world. The highlights that stood out were in October when Martin went to New Britain and had the joy of seeing the village leader make a public confession of faith, displaying an evangelical zeal. November saw them blessed with sweet fellowship and encouragement in Brisbane - it was good to be made to feel part of the Tabernacle. In December they returned, after six years, to the United Kingdom where friends and relatives were glad to see the children for the first time. Later in December, when they made preparations to leave for the United States, the grandparents were still relative strangers to their grandchildren. Their study in the United States was very profitable, though the pressure of work was sometimes very great. They thanked God for the opportunity for further training for a more effective ministry.⁶¹⁸

For Martin, during 1978, the saying from Ecclesiastes 12:12 “of making many books there is no end and much study is a weariness of the flesh”, had at times been very true! However, he graduated with a bachelor's degree from a Southern Baptist College in December. Once again it was hard to say goodbye to the friends with whom the Lord had blessed them in Texas and move on in His leading. Since January they had been in Hawaii and Martin had been studying at the University there, as the faculty had considerable expertise in Pacific Area linguistics. This was probably one of the best Universities in the world for studies related to Papua New Guinea which was where they were working and expecting to return, and already Martin felt the benefit. Elisabeth had also been taking an active part by joining in with local Christian Women's groups. With Buddhists and Mormons probably the principal religious groups there, one can regard it as a mission field in and of itself.⁶¹⁹

The period, 1979–80, was a busy one for Martin and Elisabeth. They gave thanks to the Lord for His unfailing goodness and steadfast love that endures forever. There had been lean times, but somehow the Lord kept their heads above water. On the academic front, Martin was very grateful to God for enabling him to pass the Master of Arts exams in the autumn (Australian spring) of 1979. Fortunately, he believed this training would

⁶¹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1976–1977*, p. 1.7

⁶¹⁷ Published in R Loving and GF Simons, (eds), 1977. *Language variation and survey techniques*, SIL, Ukarumpa.

⁶¹⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1977–1978*, p. 17.

⁶¹⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1978–1979*, pp. 17–18.

increase his effectiveness with WBT. Sometimes, he wished that he had had such training before going to the field. In the potpourri environment of Polynesian, Asian and Western cultures, and religions in Hawaii, they were glad to be able to help a small struggling local church. They felt it was good to be a vehicle of encouragement through the Word of God. Also, Martin was responsible, as far as time allowed, for congregational oversight. They again thanked the church for its prayers and financial support and particularly for Ernest Brooks and Kath Marsden's faithfulness in keeping in touch with them.⁶²⁰

While one day seemed very much like another, with work without end, they gave thanks to God for His grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. On the academic side, they thanked Him for His sustaining power which gave Martin the perseverance he needed. One hurdle he had recently put behind him was his second language examination, a requirement of the graduate division and the linguistic department. The previous semester he had been able to earn a little income, about \$200 a month, as a part-time teaching assistant for a general linguistics course. Three major hurdles lay before him. He had to publish a linguistic article, take his comprehensive examinations (both of which he hoped to complete within a few months), and write a dissertation. If God were to be pleased, he would have liked to finish sometime the following year. The Combs were both kept active in their local church. Elisabeth had responsibility as coordinator of Christian education. They requested the Tabernacle for prayer as they continued to seek and do God's will for them for each new day.⁶²¹

The major goal during 1980–81 was the completion of all the requirements for entry to the Doctor of Philosophy program except the dissertation or thesis. The American system required extensive course work for both the MA and PhD plus foreign language requirements for each and publishing requirements for the latter. In January 1980, Martin took the PhD comprehensive exams and oral defence of them. There was light at the end of the tunnel as he concentrated on the thesis work. Perseverance was the key. They were all well although Elisabeth had had a few problems with her diabetes mainly to do with changes of insulin dosage related to a coming, but unexpected babe in November! The children were fine, and Rachel continued to benefit from special schooling for a learning disability. They had all done well.⁶²²

The following year they reported that they believed that God intended the hours, days and months spent with Him, getting to know Him a little better, to be an investment in the wisdom, love, and compassion with which they touched the world for His sake. On the study front, Martin had been frustrated with computer problems of both a hardware

⁶²⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1979–1980*, p. 18.

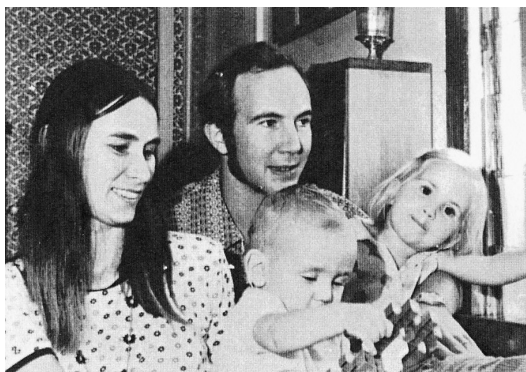
⁶²¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1980–1981*, p. 19.

⁶²² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1981–1982*, pp. 23–24.

and software nature. For the linguistics department there, the acoustic phonetics emphasis of his thesis was breaking new ground but, in the process uncovering problems they did not realise existed. Things were looking better than they had for many months. Perseverance was paying off.

The East West Centre had given him the opportunity to listen to many Asian and Pacific people and he thanked the Lord for many valuable hours spent there enhancing his understanding of ways that they could better communicate. Before Christmas, he was asked by a local Catholic priest to start midweek Bible Studies in his church. He agreed and about 40 people were starting the Gospel of John. Their son Robert was born in November. They prayed that the Lord Himself would bless them all as they had been a channel of His love and blessing to them.⁶²³

From Martin's perspective, in many respects each year seemed like the last, that is to say, one period of study is much like another. However, as he wrote his report to the church, he thought the end of his doctoral study was perhaps only weeks away. A few weeks spent at the University of California at Los Angeles just after Christmas made all the difference. They were in need of prayer support as important decisions regarding their future were made. It was not clear what their next assignment should be



Martin and Elisabeth and family

or where; also furlough and home division membership were matters that had to be sorted out. They could not afford to stay where they were, nor afford to leave! They thanked the Lord that they were in His secure hands, that He cared and that He had provided for them over the long and sometimes difficult years, with loving support in all ways from the Tabernacle.⁶²⁴

Martin's dissertation, for his PhD was titled: *Glides: The problem of definition and analysis, including a discussion of the treatment of semivowel glides in Micronesia and an acoustic phonetic analysis of glides in selected Trukic dialects*. It was published in 1984 by the University of Hawaii.

⁶²³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1982–1983*, pp. 21–22.

⁶²⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1983–1984*, p. 22.

They were still in the United Kingdom in mid-1985, with not a lot of hope of returning to Australia. Somehow life had left them in the position where they were stuck in a land in which they all felt strange and out of place. Further work with WBT was still a possibility. The Pacific Area Director and others wanted them to stay in WBT. Unfortunately, given the size of their family, it had been very difficult to survive financially, and totally impossible to plan financially for their children's futures. They were looking therefore more widely than WBT for possible avenues of service in the secular or sacred spheres and remained sure that the Lord had a place for them. They cherished deeply being part of the Tabernacle, separated not by choice but by barriers that at that time they had no means of breaking. They again requested prayer as they rejoiced in God, that they had necessities and a roof over their heads but knew that the training over the last years was part of God's plan for their future. They asked for prayer that the road would become clear.⁶²⁵

1985 was a year of uncertainty. For months, they waited for an appropriate assignment from WBT and eventually around August an assignment was suggested in Texas. Meanwhile, support dropped because people sensed uncertainty, which led to more uncertainty because it looked as if they would not have enough support. Visas seemed to take an



The Combs family

inordinate amount of time to come. Actually, when they were applied for (by WBT in the United States) the visas came reasonably quickly but not before their local church had had enough of the uncertainty and felt the stress of all this on the Combs family. They believed now that the Lord was closing the WBT chapter of their lives and at 39 years of age, and a family of four children, they again felt the need to take a step of faith and see what the Lord may have for them. More than ever at this time they coveted the church's prayers. They were thankful for all the Tabernacle had done and meant to them.⁶²⁶

Their names were removed from the Tabernacle membership roll in November 1988. The reason for this is unknown.

⁶²⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1984–1985*, p. 23.

⁶²⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, p. 23.

Martin and Elisabeth Combs

Their marriage failed and they both remarried: Martin to Janice Burns in 1998; and Elisabeth to Peter Hallam in 2000. Both marriages took place in Yorkshire. From 2003 until 2010, Martin and Janice were living in Southampton, England. It is not known if he has retired.

Martin and Elizabeth had four children: Rebekah (later Mrs Rebecca Holt); Rachel (later Mrs Rachel Green); Meredith; and Robert.

Rev Dr Stephen and Margaret Shaw (née Kissick)

Rev Neville Abrahams married Stephen William Shaw and Margaret Ann Kissick at the Tabernacle in 1973. They had met at a Saturday morning BYF Tabernacle prayer breakfast in 1971, after Steve, as he is generally known, had the previous Sunday evening responded to an altar call at the Tabernacle and subsequently been baptised under the ministry of Rev Abrahams in December 1971. Steve was born in Cloncurry and came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1972. Marg, as she is known, had been a member at the Tabernacle since 1968, following visitation.



Stephen and Margaret's wedding
with Ruth Kissick, Sue Window and Elizabeth
Johnson

Both Steve and Marg vividly remember the simultaneous call to full time ministry at the Toowoomba Baptist Camp site with Rev Abrahams one cold June evening in 1972. Marg had always lived with the personal knowledge of Jesus from a young age but especially under the ministry of Rev Fred Smith. She had previously served in the Tabernacle ICE as secretary in 1966–67 and helped in the Youth Group (BYF) as well as Sunday School outreach at Montrose Children's Home.

Marg's commitment to the church choir from teenage years extended to song writing and singing in a gospel group with Elizabeth Bruce (née Johnson, later a missionary in Papua New Guinea) and Dean Llewellyn (now in Gospel ministry in Ireland). They have wonderful memories of the prayer breakfast times shared at Dr Edward and Mrs Winifred Gibson's home on Saturday mornings. Those times were also foundational in faith and trust in the God they love and serve.

Marg's parents, Robert (Bob) and Barbara and her sister, Ruth, all became members at the Tabernacle in 1963 with Bob serving as



BYF Gospel Singing Group, (Ruth and
Margaret Kissick and Dean Llewellyn)

the superintendent of the JCE from 1962–63. Robert and Barbara were superintendents of the Junior and Primary sections of the Sunday School in 1963–64. They remained in membership at the Tabernacle until their deaths in 1980 and 2003.

Marg's younger brother Richard became a member in 1963 following his baptism. He later married Suzanne (Sue) Window at the Tabernacle. Her sister Ruth married Ronald Vimpani at the Tabernacle in 1965.

Marg's memories of the faithful Sunday School teaching of deaconess Anthea Youngberry, as well as the formative experiences gained in BYF and street ministry, served as a platform for future ministry. Her Christian training and family experiences and the Kissick family's nurturing were also foundational to Steve's development in the Christian faith. Steve has blessed memories of the support of Roy and Eunice Window, Sue Kissick (née Window), Miriam Abrahams who was always welcoming at the front of the church, Max Lockhart's personal enquiries about his welfare, and the encouraging letters written by Ron Pfeffer to Steve while he was teaching in Western Queensland in 1972–74.

As the North-West Queensland relieving teacher, Steve was conscious of the prayer fellowship of his church family at the Tabernacle as he "discovered" isolated Christians in regional areas and sought to fulfil the vision of connecting students and their families to a loving Father God. Steve fellowshiped at the Longreach Gospel Brethren Hall and he began preaching wherever he was relief teaching in small Methodist and Presbyterian Churches throughout country Queensland. Cec and Betty Lockhart, their long-term friends, and faithful members of the Tabernacle, continually lent their encouragement to their journey. In the early 1980s, they connected with Steve and Marg to minister the Gospel with Prison Fellowship in two-day seminars in what was Boggo Road Jail, Palen Creek Prison Farm and Wacol and Woodford Prisons, prayerfully supported by family and friends at the Tabernacle. The tears and expressions of joy on prisoners' faces as 1 Corinthians 13: 4–8 was read and preached in love, and accepted as truth, showed the saving power of the Word of God in these lives desperate to be forgiven.

Leaving his teaching profession and Marg's career, they commenced study at the Baptist Theological College of Queensland in 1975 with their family addition, eldest son Simon (who had been entered on the Tabernacle's cradle roll in February) and served as student workers firstly at Acacia Ridge and then Gailes Baptist Churches, before answering the call to commence ministry in 1977 at Windsor Road Baptist Church, Red Hill. Their church memberships were transferred to Acacia Ridge in 1976.

Steve, in his role as BTCQ Student President, was the guest preacher at the Tabernacle for College Day, 1979, and again in August 1993 when he took as his subject *The Jesus Mirror*. He went on to serve the denomination as Department of Theological Studies Secretary for eight years, and subsequently, Chairman of the Department for ten years, as well as being a member of the BUQ Executive. Rev Abrahams was present at Steve's

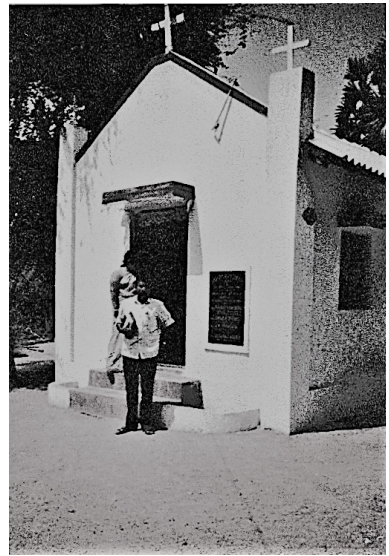
ordination in 1979; his ordination dissertation on *House Church Ministry* was to be central to the coming years of his ministry.

While they were serving at Windsor Road, Sylvia Banks, John Carpenter, Miss D Peters, and Donna Stringer all transferred their membership from the Tabernacle to Windsor Road. Their association with the Tabernacle continued as Ormond and Grace Porter joined Steve and Marg on the ministry team for pastoral care at Windsor Road in early 1986. Although Ormond was commissioned for this ministry by the Tabernacle, his story has not been included here because he served in Brisbane and not elsewhere.

Steve and Marg served at Windsor Road until 1991, establishing an outreach bus ministry to the University of Queensland campus and a young adults and family cell group ministry that was effective in church planting at Helensvale, establishing the church with its first pastor, Russell Hinds. The Baptist Church in Tully was established with Pastor Brian Robinson and other members from the Windsor Road Baptist Church. Mission work in India also led to the building of the Sarvepalli Baptist Church in South East India.

While at the Windsor Road Church, the family expanded with the addition of David, Nathan, and Tamara. Subsequent ministry followed at Wynnum (a family-based ministry) and Toowoomba Community Baptist Churches, facilitating their building relocation and outreach ministry.

Steve and Marg left Baptist ministry in 1998 to establish Capstone Ministries, with the focus on facilitating non-denominational house church ministries. This included church planting in Buenos Aires and Mar Del Planta in Argentina in 1998–99. Their ministry was extended to Myanmar with house church teaching and evangelism ministry over a number of years in the regional centres of Yangon, Taunggy, Meiktila, and Keng Tung, while supporting local churches with orphanage ministries.



Sarvepalli Baptist Church,
South-East India, 1991

Healing and help in house church ministry in Queensland have seen the restoration of broken lives in a caring and accepting environment, equipping God's people to regain vision and purpose and to live productive lives. Steve and Marg are also committed to local sports chaplaincy which facilitates the spread of the Gospel to men and families who otherwise would not connect with a local church but coming to the knowledge that

Steve and Marg Shaw

there is a loving Father God experienced through non-judgemental love and intercessory prayer.

Having gained his Master of Arts (Studies in Religion) at the University of Queensland, Steve returned to teaching, albeit in virtual classroom high school English online after completing the Master of Education at the University of Southern Queensland, and a Doctorate of Education degree on the topic of *ICTs in the English Curriculum* at Griffith University. Facilitating ways for adolescents to find the love of learning in a computer age and the love of a caring God in a changing world fulfils a vision given earlier in life and bore fruit in changed lives, a testimony to Isaiah 55:11 (NAS), “So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth, It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”

Steve and Marg recognise God’s unique timing in bringing them together, ordering the rich tapestry of events and patterns of their lives in preparing them for a life of service of the Gospel, with a significant foundation being laid through association with, and ministry of, the Tabernacle and its faithful members.

The Tabernacle remains in their hearts, minds, and spirits as their “home”. They love visiting when they can, and greatly respect the work of our Lord and Saviour still evident to this day t their beloved Tabernacle.



Toowoomba Community Baptist Church
(Photo: John Huth)



Steve and Marg Shaw

Dr Frances Guard

Frances Eleanor Guard was born in Warwick, Queensland in 1945 and raised in a Christian home.

From a very young age she wanted to become a doctor, having been inspired by reading the *Jungle Doctor* books by Dr Paul White. Encouraged by her parents, she undertook medical studies at the University of Queensland and graduated with her MB, BS in 1969. After three years of hospital work in New Zealand, she spent one year working with the United Church of Papua New Guinea and British Solomon Island Protectorate, in two small and remote clinics in New Georgia and Amazon Bay.

Frances returned to Brisbane after that experience, hungry to be involved in Christian activity that was relevant in the post-Vietnam era and her growing understanding of peace and justice. It was then that she met Rev Dr Athol Gill and became involved in the House of Freedom Christian Community. Athol was a great Biblical scholar who led a radical movement of young Christians committed to taking the call of Jesus to discipleship seriously and living their lives simply and in community. Through the House of Freedom, she met Hilda and then her husband Dr Neil Parker, through their connections with the sister community in Melbourne, The House of the Gentle Bunyip.

She was living in West End in 1980, working as a medical practitioner, having moved from Inala in 1979.

In 1980, she had the opportunity to work with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the refugee camps of Cambodia, scattered along the Thai border. That three-month experience reconfirmed her desire to work again, in a third world country.

However, she needed more training and was able to undertake a Diploma of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in Liverpool, United Kingdom. As she was completing that course, she was looking for guidance as to where she could best serve God. She wrote to Dr Parker, who she knew was then working at Joyramkura Hospital in Bangladesh. It so happened that her letter crossed with one from him, saying that he and his family were completing a four-year term in Bangladesh and were due to take furlough the following year. He asked if she knew anyone who could replace him for that year. For her, that was a confirmation of God's call to do that work with the Church in Bangladesh.

Neil warned her that Joyramkura was remote and that she should be prepared to perform emergency surgery when necessary, at least to be able to do a caesarean section. She explained this situation to the Sisters of Mercy at the Mater Hospital, South Brisbane, where she was currently working. They were always supportive of missionary work, no matter which denomination, and so gave her every support they could to assist and prepare her for that potential need. In readiness for her service in Bangladesh, she gained her Diploma in Obstetrics. Again, she felt the hand of God guiding her.

The hospital was run as part of the work of the ABMS. Following a meeting with ABMS representatives in Brisbane, regarding her undertaking the locum tenens for Neil, her name was put forward for that position.

At the Tabernacle's morning service on 27 June 1982, Frances was commissioned for missionary service with the ABMS (1982–83).⁶²⁷

The year she spent in Bangladesh was the most stretching and challenging year of her medical career. It took her on many occasions well beyond her comfort zone!

However, that whole year she felt the continuous support, encouragement and prayers of family, friends, the House of Freedom Christian Community, and the Baptist Church. It may have been challenging, but it was also one of the most rewarding years of her life.

Frances spent the next 10 years working in General Practice in Highgate Hill in Brisbane, running a Women's Clinic for the Aboriginal and Islander Health Service in Woolloongabba. They were fulfilling years.

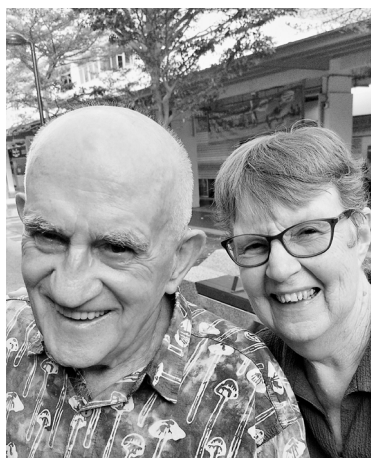
In 2001, Frances married Rev Bob Philpott, a Uniting Church minister, whose life has been spent serving the people of outback Australia as a patrol padre and in rural parishes in Queensland. In retirement, he shares her passion for caring for the environment.

For many years Frances continued in general practice, including six months working in remote aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory, with Bob as her support person.

Frances gives thanks to God for the rich life she has been given.



Frances on Groote Island, 2004



Bob Philpott and Frances

⁶²⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1981–1982*, p. 10.

Miss Lois Brooks

Lois Ruth Brooks' parents, George and Lucy Brooks, while still living in Toowong, transferred their church membership from Toowong to the Tabernacle in 1967–68. Lois had been dedicated at the Tabernacle in 1955. George was a very loyal supporter of missions and several members of her extended family were missionaries. Lois believes that her desire for mission work came from attending Tamborine Conventions and having conversations with other Tabernacle missionaries. In particular, Bruce and Lee Haste were a very real support and encouragement.

Lois became a member in 1972, following her baptism by Rev Neville Abrahams a few months earlier. She was a member of CE and later became the treasurer of the ICE Society in 1970–72 and a Warrant Officer in The Girls' Brigade in 1972–73 and became the leader of the Cadet section of the Brigade, with the rank of lieutenant in 1973–74. Following her baptism, her sister, Julia, became a member in 1976. She always appreciated being part of the CE and the leadership it provided. In his day, her father had been a very loyal supporter of the CE movement.

Lois's father died in 1979 and Lois was working as a shop assistant in 1980, living with her sisters Julia and Eunice, and their mother, Lucy, in Toowong. Through conversations in 1983 with John Tanner who was a member of the South Sea Evangelical Mission, God opened doors for Lois missionary service to the Solomon Islands. She served in Honiara, Solomon Islands with South Sea Evangelical Mission from 1983 until 1987.



South Sea Evangelical Church and Honlit Bookshop (Photo: L Brooks)

In her report to the church in 1984, Lois wrote that each day passed quickly and brought with it so many challenges and opportunities. She reflected that it was a wonderful experience to be part of God's family and share together regardless of race or culture. The work with Christian literature there was growing rapidly. People were hungry to be taught and grow in their Christian lives, books on discipleship were always in demand. Lois had made contact with many pastors who recommended suitable books to be placed in local churches. Lois found that her work at her bookshop had been interrupted by her involvement in varied duties connected with Mission Transit while Val Partley was on furlough. In her work in Honlit Bookshop, there was much to be done towards building good working relationships with customers. She needed to be able to spend a lot more time in the shop sharing with people and recommending suitable books. God was working towards His plan in the area of Christian literature. So many

times, when she had not known the way to make contacts, He had brought people into the shop and opened avenues to reach out to many. The Solomon Islands covered a very wide area, travel was slow and costly, and many islands had no missionary. Often one pastor had to care for several hundred people in a very wide area. Lois requested prayer that God would give strength and encouragement so that His work would continue to grow.⁶²⁸



The Honlit Bookshop

It was a challenging and enriching experience working there. Support and encouragement, both financially and prayerfully, from the Tabernacle membership was much appreciated. She did not know exactly how long she would be in the Solomon Islands, but her permit had been extended until mid-1986. There was a lot to be done with trust in God to provide a suitable manager. After overcoming all the newness of coming to a new place, she was beginning to feel at home with the work. The year was bringing with it many opportunities for outreach. God was working among all denominations and bringing people to them for the supply of books. The biggest need was for her to travel to many places and make people more aware of what literature was available. She was praying that people would be challenged to see the real ministry that was available through books. She was anticipating a year of many new things—new missionaries, new leaders and much more. She again asked the church to take time to pray with them in the Solomon Islands, that each one of them would clearly know how to make the year count for God.⁶²⁹

Ministering to peoples' needs both physically and spiritually had been particularly emphasized. The effects of cyclone *Namu* would be felt for a long time. Many of the country's export industries had been damaged, so they would need aid for a long time. Lois requested prayer that they would know how best the missionaries could help people. The year had brought many changes and at times it had been difficult to determine which direction to take. She was hoping to stay for at least another year and was aiming to contact every SSEC Association either by mail or a visit. It seemed possible that they would have available again many publications. There still was no prospect of a manager, but it was encouraging to see the church looking for ways which might prove fruitful in the future. She needed real wisdom in buying books and it was

⁶²⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1983–1984*, p. 21.

⁶²⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

proving a difficult task. The team had seen so much of late that reminded them that God was working to His plan and to keep trusting Him.⁶³⁰

Lois renewed fellowship with the Tabernacle in 1986–87 and was a guest speaker at the YPCE. In 1987–88 she undertook part-time studies. Three thousand dollars from the Tabernacle 1987 Missionary Project was given to Lois as a deposit on the printing of hymn books.⁶³¹

Over the four years she was in the Solomon Islands, Lois had prayed many times, “Lord we need your man for this position, one who sees it as a real ministry and is willing to learn.” God answered their prayers and provided Reverley Ramo. God had challenged him in a real way with the need for the work. It was exciting for her to see the vision and desire he had to make the literature ministry work productively for the people. Being debt free, they were now able to make a fresh start in many ways, in the shop. They valued prayer for Reverley, that he would be able to grasp the many new things he had to learn, and for herself that she would know best how to teach these things. She planned, depending on Reverley’s progress, to finish up at the end of the year. She trusted God to guide her into the future. Ephesians 3:20 had been much on her mind. “God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask”. “Thank Him for what He has done and continue to expect Him to do greater things in the future”.⁶³²



Lois Brooks

Lois’ final year in the Solomon Islands was an exciting one, seeing God work to bring His plans to fulfilment in many ways. It was the climax to what had been four challenging years. Going back to Honiara at the beginning of 1987, she had a firm assurance that God wanted her there despite the situation, and that she could leave the opening and closing of doors to Him. She shared how God opened those doors and answered their prayers. For her, it was having to learn to listen more closely to His voice when there were so many other voices. God proved that prayer changes situations, and people and God’s work depends on it.

⁶³⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, p. 22.

⁶³¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1986–1987*, p. 18.

⁶³² *ibid.*, p. 22.

Financial needs were His concern and He met them as they trusted Him. Most exciting of all was being able to share a real fellowship with Reverley and hear how God touched his life deep down and gave him a vision for God's work in the Honlit Bookshop and beyond. It had been a real encouragement and blessing to have so many people praying for the work. It was wonderful to rest in the assurance that God was in control of her future.⁶³³

In 1988–89, following her return to Brisbane, Lois undertook part-time study and maintained her interest in missionary work by joining the missionary committee at the Tabernacle and becoming Superintendent of the Buds CE Society.



Reverley and John

The eight months from late 1990 until mid-1991 serving with the Christian Literature Crusade in Sydney, brought many different people and new experiences. It had been exciting to hear the latest news from CLC United Kingdom workers visiting Australia. National workers from Papua New Guinea shared a meal with her and they discovered mutual Solomon Islander friends. Working in the bookshop she faced the reality of ministering to many needy people. In the midst of change and uncertainty, the challenge had come afresh, to be available to God in the place of His choosing and leave the future to Him. She was grateful to so many at the Tabernacle who assured her of their prayer support. She felt very sure that God wanted her to stay with and be a part of the future plans of CLC.⁶³⁴

Her time as a new member came to an end in April. As she considered her future with CLC she really felt that in the present circumstances, she could not make any long-term commitment. She planned to stay until the end of the year. At the time, her future was not clear, but she was trusting the Lord for a new sense of direction. The support and prayers of the church during her time in Sydney was much appreciated.⁶³⁵

Lois completed her service with CLC in Sydney at the end of 1992 and returned home to Brisbane, resuming her involvement at the Tabernacle as Superintendent of the Buds CES (1998–2001).

⁶³³ *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁶³⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1990–1991*, p. 12.

⁶³⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1991–1992*, pp. 26–27.

In 1993 Lois was appointed as secretary and research assistant to John Tanner, the Executive Director of the Australian Missions Committee—a department of the Australian Evangelical Alliance—handling letters, news bulletins and phone calls. She communicated with mission leaders, despatched mission resources and undertook research for strategic papers and articles written by John. Her ministry in the office made it possible for John to be freed from administrative details to concentrate on ministry to missions and churches.⁶³⁶

Lois was one of the leaders of the Summer City Kids' Club in January 2002—a ministry to kids in the Spring Hill area and Tabernacle kids which featured games, craft, food, singing and Bible stories. They had some valuable advice from Kevin Forsythe from Children for Christ ministries. Despite some early fears and trepidation, it was a very successful four-day mission. The number of kids averaged about 20 over the first three days and then the final day brought a great thrill with 29 children in attendance. The Gospel message was presented very clearly each day and on the last day three children gave their hearts to the Lord, which was very rewarding.⁶³⁷ Lois also assisted in Kids' Church in 2002–03.

Lois transferred her membership to Kenmore in March 2005. Despite this, she continued her involvement at the Tabernacle, including assisting with English Connection in 2011–12. In 2013–14, she was one of the leaders in the nursery program.

In June 2016, missions' month at the Tabernacle was condensed into two weeks of joyful missions' celebrations in thanksgiving for the many missionaries sent out from the church. It was a joy to have reunion with many former missionaries including Lois, who returned for this very special time.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁶ Australian Evangelical Alliance Inc flyer, 1993.

⁶³⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2001–2002*, p. 26.

⁶³⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2015–2016*, pp. 14–15.

Neil and Joelle Chenoweth (née Videau)

Neil Thomas Chenoweth was born in 1959 in Manoram, Thailand, the son of Dr Norm and Joan Chenoweth, who were serving there as missionaries. He became a member at the Tabernacle in 1978 following his baptism by Rev Neville Abrahams. Whilst working as a journalist in 1980, he lived with his parents in Ascot.

Joelle Videau was born in 1961 in Bergerac, France, the daughter of Seree and Marie-Claude Videau. She was a resident at Willara House and came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1981 following her baptism in May by Rev Paul Harrison, who was assisted by Rev Murray Sinfield. Neil was the Junior Youth Fellowship Leader in 1980–83 and Joelle was a Junior BYF leader 1984–85. They were married at the Tabernacle by Rev Harrison in 1983. Joelle's sister, Magali, came into membership in 1990.

In 1985, a commissioning service was held for Neil and Joelle who were going forward to serve with the Middle East Christian Outreach with their headquarters in Cyprus.⁶³⁹ In April that year, a surprise party was arranged for them before their departure for the Middle East. It was an opportunity for the church to show their support and that support continued via Australia Post from that time on.⁶⁴⁰



Neil and Joelle Chenoweth

They left for a six-month orientation and language course in Amman, Jordan, commencing in April 1985, before proceeding to Cyprus, to serve in Larnaca until 1988.

In their first annual report to the Tabernacle, they thanked the church for praying for them as they settled into 10 weeks of Arabic language study in Amman. They were living in a small flat in what had been a Palestine Liberation Organization resistance area 15 years previously and there was a big Palestinian refugee camp nearby. It was a tremendous change for them not the least of which was being woken at 4:15 each morning by the Muslim call to prayer! But they had so much to thank God for. In mid-July they moved to Cyprus which was to be their permanent base. They could see how

⁶³⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1984–1985*, p. 6.

⁶⁴⁰ *ibid*, p. 11.

valuable it had been, being in Amman, and they were no longer completely raw to the cross-cultural differences.⁶⁴¹

For the next year they lived in Larnaca, working at MECO headquarters. They were often painfully reminded that for many, the Middle East was not peaceful, and they met many people coming through Cyprus whose courage and faith they admired. They met men and women who had chosen to stay in difficult and dangerous places because they believed God wanted them there. Neil and Joelle's task was to produce material to make Christians at home see Arabs as people to respect and care for, and to become aware of what God was doing in the Middle East.⁶⁴²

In 1986–87, Neil's parents and his aunt, Margery Brooks, visited them in Cyprus.

Neil and Joelle report that life changed for them in 1986–87 in more ways than, "You can shake a stick at". In February they stopped propping up the decaying walls of their rundown mansion and moved to a modern sixth-floor flat. They were also given far more freedom to develop new projects around the world. In October they began an experiment to boost the number of prayer groups praying for the Middle East. They started with a dozen and at last count the material they produced was going out to more than a hundred groups in a dozen countries—this was very encouraging. The low point for the year had been a virus, similar to glandular fever, that Joelle contracted in early February. This kept her housebound for four months. Despite a bad bout of Beirut Belly, which they both had, she was getting better, but only very slowly. The high point for the year was a trip to Lebanon in June to gather material. Neil has two lasting memories, one of a head-master who quoted Moses to young men who had grown up trapped in the circle of endless fear, hatred and fighting: "I put before you the choice of blessing or curse. But I say to you, for God's sake choose Life". The other was of a church leader who said, "At the start of the fighting we met together and decided we were going to stay, and we were going to fight this war on our knees." For Neil, this was a heartache, that God's people in Lebanon fought their quiet little struggles while around the world there should have been an enormous wave of prayer and concern with their Christian brothers resolved to fight their battles with them.⁶⁴³

On the Saturday night of the Missionary Weekend in March 1988, the meal served and the hall decorations focused on the way of life on the Island of Cyprus.

Their final year began disastrously as Joelle, despite a promising early recovery from her mystery virus, suffered a major relapse. Life was grim, and earnest for quite some time, with Joelle confined to bed, and battling major depression. By the end of 1987, it

⁶⁴¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1984–1985*, p. 23.

⁶⁴² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, p. 23.

⁶⁴³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1986–1987*, p. 23.

was clear to them that they needed to come home several months before their term expired. With this in view, and to enable him to continue some of the work he had been doing, from home in Australia, Neil spent some time setting up a computer communications link between Cyprus, Britain, and Australia. They arrived back in Australia in early 1988 but settling back at home was a long and sometimes painful process, as Neil started work at Channel 7, and Joelle plodded a slow path back to health. They appreciated very much, peoples' concern for them, their patience with them, and particularly, they appreciated the prayer and support they had received during their three years of service. It made a great deal of difference to them.⁶⁴⁴

After their return from Cyprus, Neil continued to edit the News-Sheet for MECO.⁶⁴⁵ He now works as an investigative journalist for the *Australian Financial Review*.

Joelle joined the Willara House Committee in 1990–91. They transferred to Sydney around 1992. However, they were not removed from the Tabernacle membership roll until 2002.

⁶⁴⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, p. 23.

⁶⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 5.

Miss Lenore Hadley

In 1977–80, Lenore Mary Hadley was living with her parents Leslie (Len) and Mary Hadley and brother Anthony in Deagon. She was employed as a cadet laboratory technician by the Queensland Department of Health.

She was brought up in a non-Christian home but, as it was the cultural thing to do in that era, she and her brother were sent to Sunday School. She attended a very small church, the Deagon Mission, where there was Sunday School with up to 40 scholars and a Sunday morning service with no more than 20 worshippers. Through Sunday School she came to know the Lord and made a commitment. She was baptised in 1974 by her pastor, Maurice Kuss.

During her time there, the Mission had visiting missionary speakers such as Keith and Betty Black from the SUM and many lay preachers including Cec Leggett from the Tabernacle. Lenore developed an interest in missions and began attending the Keswick Conventions at Mt Tamborine, stayed at SUM, and began supporting missionaries she met there. She was hungry to know more about God's word and did a six-year Certificate in Theology by correspondence with Moore College for which Cec Leggett supervised her external exams.

She taught Sunday School at the mission, but needed fellowship, so she started attending the young people's group at the Tabernacle on Sunday afternoons and attending the evening service. In time, she felt a call to move to the Tabernacle full time and following visitation was received into membership by Rev Murray Sinfield in 1979.

At the Tabernacle, she became involved in teaching Sunday School, attending the adult bible study, home groups, missions and whatever was going on. She was treasurer of the Youth Fellowship in 1978-79.

Lenore felt a strong calling by God to be available for the mission field and made an appointment to see Rev Paul Harrison. She had not discussed it with him beforehand and was blown away as, when he asked her what she wanted to discuss, and she told him, he said, "That's what I thought it was about" and gave her books and literature he had gathered in readiness about what to consider when becoming a missionary.

She felt called to serve with SUM, but on enquiry, was told that there were no available positions. This was perplexing at the time, but SUM were still encouraging so she became a member of the Queensland board. It was almost as if God called her twice, and she was



Lenore Hadley

moved later to apply again to the mission. God had been kind in reinforcing His call, so that she would be strong in the face of opposition.

She had been working for the Health Department for 11 years and when it was suggested she do some live in Bible College training she went to resign from work, but in God's providence the Human Resources person said, "Why not take Bible College leave?" She didn't know such a thing existed. She did a one-year diploma level certificate in 1984 as a resident at the QBI. She recalls that it was great getting deeper into God's word, doing some religious education teaching, and going on mission to Inala Brethren Hall. With the exception of her year in residence at QBI, Lenore continued to live in Deagon.

A position became available to serve in Nigeria, but by the time she had finished the course, SUM had changed its policy on support, and she had to raise most of her support before she was allowed to go to the field. She returned to work and did deputation on weekends and at night. She was not accustomed to public speaking and when she had to speak at the Mt Tamborine convention, she did not know how she would do it but believed that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Lenore assisted Dr Ifor Thomas of SUM when he spoke of the work in Nigeria at a missionary "Esky" lunch, sponsored by the Tabernacle's missionary committee following her commissioning service. She also spoke at the Ladies' Day Fellowship about her call to the mission field and was presented with a gift.⁶⁴⁶

Through the Tabernacle and many others' support, she had the required percentage, but was told it may be a while before she would get her visa. In fact, she rang her director Keith Black from a pay phone to tell him it had arrived, and he was surprised (as the embassy had said no more visas would be issued). She left work in June 1985 and had a commissioning service, for which she still has the service sheet, at the Tabernacle later that month. She was sad that none of her family came. The church presented Lenore with a farewell gift of a dustproof watch that had a backing to resist sweat and not turn her arm green.

A send-off from SUM, held at QBI in July, preceded her flight with KLM from Brisbane on 17 June 1985.

She was to be in Nigeria for three years (1985–88). In those days, communication was poor at best and an aerogramme took six weeks each way.. She was living in Maiduguri the capital of Borno State on a compound of expatriates and Nigerians working for the Church of Christ in Nigeria. In summer, the temperatures were over 50°C and winter had strong dust storms dropping the temp to 25°C. Her medical director in Nigeria gave her the Nigerian name Alheri, meaning Grace.

⁶⁴⁶ *City Tabernacle, Yearbook 1984–1985*, p. 15.

Her role was mixed and varied but fell into three main parts. Her first role was religious education teaching at the local girls boarding school (Government Girls College Nigeria). Whilst at that time there was freedom of religion under the constitution, as she was in the Islamic north, there were never sufficient teachers or resources provided. Apart from the RE teaching there was Friday morning prayers (after the imam) and taking Sunday service for the girls. No pastors were allowed in, so whatever teaching the girls received was from Lenore and occasionally other teachers. She had not been expecting to lead Sunday services, so she was thankful for the homiletics at Bible College! Lenore was there at a time where there was a lot of tension: the former religious education teacher was forced to leave; many churches were being burnt down; and at one time there was a threat against her life, but it was amazing to see the church come to prayer against the threats and pray how to respond to them. It was hard advising girls what to do if there was an attack against them in a locked down school. She also had the opportunity to visit several teachers in their homes. As she did not have full teaching training, she wondered how she would get on with this role but turning up was a bonus for the girls! She also managed through Gideons to get a small New Testament for each of the girls, which most did not previously own or have access to one.

Secondly, Lenore was responsible to operate a pharmacy for the rural health program. Although she was a scientist/chemist, she was not a pharmacist. The job entailed accessing drugs in bulk from overseas, repackaging them for the smaller outposts, making basic products such as oral rehydration and cough syrups. One of the Tabernacle's projects provided a good scale for weighing products. She was also required to go to the government to get vaccines (this was when the waiting time provided opportunity to write and post a lot of letters!) Going to the outposts in the middle of the Sahara was mind blowing, there being no maps, but they always arrived safely. Lenore and her team looked after 50 000 patients annually. The doctors ran baby clinics and she became proficient at taking blood pressure and asking if the ladies were pregnant.

Thirdly, Lenore provided hospitality for visiting missos, families and dignitaries, which was not always easy on a finite budget, but God always provided, sometimes in surprising ways. Also, being single, she was a hub for the kids to come and visit.

Lenore was the only Australian in the north, so she was responsible for establishing Australia events—quizzes, morning teas—but it would take a week to make the lamingtons - break, cut, shred and dry



Lenore, Janet Tainton, Lorraine and Graham Pfeffer unpacking the scales.

coconut; sieve any rocks out of the flour and then freeze the flour to get rid of weevils, etc.

Lenore was also involved with the Fellowship of Christian Students.

Her annual reports for the Tabernacle Yearbooks indicated that by the end of her first year, she had finished her Hausa course and had settled into a new way of life: adapting to a different culture, learning a new language, enduring times of illness, coping with two jobs, facing a new climate, experiencing new driving situations, and hearing of coups and attempted coups. But it was clear that it was right for her to be there. It had been a learning time and a time of trusting God more. The church in Nigeria had decided that she should work in the medical program full-time, requiring further development of her Hausa.⁶⁴⁷

Her second year in Nigeria was one of uncertainty and change, one of unrest in country and school, but one full of opportunity. Primarily her work was as a pharmacy officer and Bible Knowledge teacher, but it also included other jobs like FCS leader, counsellor, vaccinator, relief agency, advisor, buyer, baby-sitter, entertainer, driver, lecturer, and visitor. She gave praise that she had strength in the heat and workload, that her language was progressing, and her visa had been renewed for another year. She asked the church to pray with her too that whatever her job in the year ahead would be, that there would be stability in the church and in the country.⁶⁴⁸

When she left home for Nigeria, God's promise was, "He who calls you is faithful, and He will do it!" She acknowledged that God had been faithful. While at home for furlough, she looked forward to seeing her family and friends in Brisbane but also to seeing again the many people with whom she had connected in Nigeria. She asked for prayer regarding the future. Her Mother had been very ill, she really wanted to hear clearly what God wanted her to do.⁶⁴⁹

Lenore had to return home from her work in Nigeria because of her parents' poor health. She was granted leave of absence from SUM and resumed the work she was doing before leaving for Nigeria.⁶⁵⁰ She was a guest speaker at the YPCES in 1988—89. Being in a foreign land and a foreign environment, prayer is the key to keeping missionaries going, so she was grateful for that support. She sent home missionary updates and still has copies of those. When she came home, the photos show her in a woollen coat as she felt the cold immensely.

⁶⁴⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, pp. 23–24.

⁶⁴⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1986–1987*, pp. 23–24.

⁶⁴⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, p. 23.

⁶⁵⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1988–1989*, p. 19.

Her notes at that time include, “The Tabernacle is warm and supportive of me and the work I am involved in”. As well as their regular prayer and financial support, the Tabernacle gave practical support to the Nigerian church needs such as helping with the education of children of Nigerian missionaries, and money for school literature, and wrote letters to her!”

The Tabernacle gave her a welcome home in 1988 in the lecture hall. Back then the pictures were in 35 mm slide form! Her plan had been to be a long-term missionary, but God’s plans were different. Both of her parents were ill and after a lot of prayer Lenore felt a strong call to stay home. She was in a lot of turmoil and felt led to put out fleeces, which God graciously answered clearly, and she spoke again with Paul Harrison, who was very supportive, given her parents’ health and the chronic rheumatic arthritis which she suffered. She was grateful as she faced a lot of opposition for not returning. She was also grateful for a pastor in COCIN who was clear they would understand her not returning. As the oldest and only Christian in her family, it was her responsibility to care for her parents.



Packaging pharmaceuticals in the pharmacy

By God’s grace Lenore was offered a job at her old workplace, even though they were laying off staff at the time. She now works in a forensic chemistry laboratory, testing for illicit drugs.

She became involved at the Tabernacle again and believes that her experience helped her in supporting the Tabernacle’s and other missionaries on the field and when at home. She began bringing her nieces and nephew to the Tabernacle Sunday School, went to house group, and helped in girls club (for orphaned /foster kids) in the church hall etc.

Whilst she still felt a strong connection to the Tabernacle and her friends there, she began to feel a need to go to a local church for the benefit of her nieces and nephew. She was led to The Grange Church, and after a while when she applied to transfer her church membership in 2002, they told her they had been looking for someone to head up missions, so for many years she did that, taught Sunday School, helped in kids club, and went to home group. Her health does not allow that extent of leadership at present, but she tries to remain supportive of missions and encourage individuals.

Lenore Hadley

Lenore returned to the Tabernacle in conjunction with missions' month in 2016, that consisted of two weeks of joyful celebrations in thanksgiving for the many missionaries sent out from the church.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁵¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2015–2016*, pp. 14–15.

Graeme and Dr Coral Johnson (née Lobegeier)

Graeme Lindsay Johnson is the son of Cedric and Margaret Johnson. Whilst studying from 1977 to 1980, he was living with his parents in Graceville. Cedric and Margaret both came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1958 and continued in membership until their deaths in 2000 and 2017. Cedric was a deacon from 1985 until 1997. Graeme graduated with a Bachelor of Business, Graduate Diploma of D and registered as a Chartered Accountant.

Graeme married Coral Lobegeier and they were received into membership at the Tabernacle in 1983 on transfer from Bundaberg.

Coral was the daughter of Harold and Rae Lobegeier. Harold was a sugar cane farmer of Bundaberg, who died in 1998. She graduated as a doctor, with the qualifications Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, and later gained the Diploma of Obstetrics and Certificate of TM.



Graeme and Coral Johnson

Coral had strong CE involvement in Bundaberg, where her aunt, Olive Hawkins was the leader. Her father and grandparents, Albert and Gladys, were founding members of the Bundaberg Baptist Church and shared a sugar cane farm with Harold. Harold taught Sunday School at Milbank Baptist Church, and was the treasurer and secretary of the Bundaberg Baptist Church for most of Coral's school life. Rae was from Monto Baptist Church and moved to Bundaberg when she married. She was in leadership in the Ladies Fellowship and instrumental in setting up the Bundaberg Baptist Family Day Care. She is currently (2020) living in full-time aged care at Carinity Wishart Gardens.

Coral's grandparents had strong mission links and missionaries often stayed with them—Betty Salisbury, Esther Buckley (both with ABMS in Mymensingh, Bangladesh) and Graham Staines from MEM—the subject of the 2019 movie *The Least of These*. Probably these all influenced her mission openness.

Graeme was to be the accountant for the mission and Coral to use her medical skills as required.

In 1985, they were commissioned for service with the ABMS (Symbiosis) in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The ABMS Chairman and Field Officer for the mission in Queensland

were present at their commissioning service. They left Brisbane for Dhaka on 14 June that year.

In their report to the church, written the day before they left for service for an anticipated four to five-year period, they wrote that it had been a year they could sum up in one word—change—involving Bible College for Graeme in 1985 at BTCQ, and an Obstetrics Diploma for Coral including a “miracle” trip to Auckland for a week in December to sit for exams. Then 1986 had begun with further changes in climate and scenery as they spent nine weeks in Melbourne, six weeks at the SIL, two weeks at ABMS Orientation, and then five weeks in South Australia as “rooky missos” on their first shaky deputation. April and May had followed with a hectic schedule of South-East Queensland deputation interspersed with never-ending sorting and packing. Overall, they could say nought but that their God and His family had been good to them. Deputation proved the fellowship of the global church but they truly experienced deep fellowship in their home church in Bundaberg and at the Tabernacle. Their only regret was that it had taken their departure to Bangladesh to give them an opportunity to transform many who were little more than faces in the congregation to heartfelt friends in the Tabernacle family, and to discover a new depth in that family.⁶⁵²

Graeme and Coral described 1986–87 as “like no other we’ve ever had.” It was a year overflowing with new experiences. They arrived in Bangladesh to be greeted enthusiastically by the Australian missionaries and their families at the gates of the Mymensingh Mission Compound. They lived for one week with a Bengali family and had further orientation at Pabna, Jamalpur, and Tangail. They then did a year of language study, three months at the Heed Language Centre and the remainder with the Headmistress of the Victoria Mission Primary School. To learn the new culture, language, and way of life required patience and endurance. There had been knocks and setbacks and the need to cope with filth, disease, shopping restrictions, travel fears, uncertainties, and a feeling of being on show. But by comparison, there were the people and missionary colleagues as they grew to become part of the ABMS family. The prayers of their supporters and friends, letters, parcels, monetary support and knowing that the Tabernacle members were there behind them was a great encouragement. The love of their Lord combined with the care and nurture of their home family was the backbone of their perseverance amongst so many frustrations and disappointments. They subsequently returned to Dhaka where Graeme was to take on the responsibilities of Field Treasurer.⁶⁵³

Their reports were not so much about what they had been doing but rather what the Lord had been doing, using them. As Graeme took over the responsibilities of Field Treasurer,

⁶⁵² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, pp. 24–25.

⁶⁵³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1986–1987*, p. 25.

the Lord showed them what an enormous responsibility that was. Many decisions could not be made on purely commercial grounds, but all the time they were aware of the question, “What does the Lord want?” The responsibilities were such that further language learning had to be put aside. The Lord was teaching them patience in dealing with their national colleagues, of the injustices that existed in the world, and of the corruption in society. How they handled these issues on a daily basis was part of their witness. Their young son Rowan opened many doors for them, particularly Coral. With a child, she was more accepted by the women in the country and could better talk with them. This was one way through which they were able to represent Christ. Coral’s medical training opened other doors. She was able to meet on a regular basis to share information with other medical people in Dhaka. As a team, they were being used of the Lord to break down some misconceptions that people had about missionaries.⁶⁵⁴

There was so much that happened during the next twelve months. The Mission faced major difficulties in obtaining visas. The country of Bangladesh suffered record floods, cyclones, and then a drought, which ruined the two major rice crops for the year. Graeme and Coral saw the departure from the field of some of their colleagues and then the postponement or cancellation of the arrival of new colleagues. The number of missionaries therefore decreased, yet their programs were continuing. This meant that the remaining staff were shouldering more and more. Amidst all of that, the Holy Spirit was working in the lives of many of the Bangladeshis. New churches from all backgrounds were being formed. They thanked the Tabernacle for its support. This not only helped them but also the local employees who worked in the office with Graeme. Reporting to the Tabernacle on the year gone by, Graeme and Coral concluded with a request to pray about their immediate future. What was God saying through the issue of visa problems yet new churches being formed?⁶⁵⁵

Graeme was accompanied by Rev Norm Weston on a short ministry trip to Bangladesh commencing in February 1988. Bangladesh was fraught with major decisions for both the missionaries and the National Christians in 1989–90. For ABMS, the future now seemed set on complete nationalisation within the next decade. For the Bangladesh Baptist



Birisiri Church Service (Photo: GI Archives)

⁶⁵⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, pp. 24–25.

⁶⁵⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1988–1989*, pp. 23–24.

Fellowship, the problems were enviable ones relating to administration, nurturing and pastoral training stemming from the phenomenal church growth in the preceding years. A significant part of the growth had come from a previously unresponsive section of the community so there has been much rejoicing and praise, to “God be the Glory!” Two of their senior national evangelists took the major step of furthering their theological training overseas. Graeme and Coral commended them, their families and their future critical leadership roles in Bangladesh to the Tabernacle for prayer. and. The year also saw the Centenary of the GBC and it was a privilege for Graeme and Coral to be present to witness the celebration and especially the 240 baptisms in the river at Birisiri.

For the Johnsons once again, many changes and moves included their much anticipated first furlough. They felt that Rowan had settled in well and it was wonderful to feel the support and acceptance back into the Tabernacle fellowship. Graeme returned to Bangladesh for a month mid-furlough to an unfortunately not so well functioning office.⁶⁵⁶

A special feature of the Christmas Program at the Tabernacle in 1989 was the Bangladesh Christmas tree with decorations made by the Bengali people and brought to Brisbane by Graeme and Coral.

Coral was the missionary speaker at the Ladies’ Day Fellowship, while they were in Brisbane. An “esky” luncheon was also held in May where Graeme and Coral spoke of their work. Graeme was also a guest speaker at the Tabernacle in 1990.

There were a number of notable events in their family’s life in the following year. The family grew in January with the birth of Nathan. Rowan continued to grow and amaze them with his understanding of the many things which happened in his life. The Gulf War in January and February 1991 raised some doubts as to when they would return. They completed their furlough and returned in March that year to an uncertain Bangladesh. During the time they were away, the government of the previous eight years was forced to resign, bringing the masses out to rejoice that fact. Bangladesh had general elections in March which brought the wife of a previous president to the prime Minister’s office. As a result, in Islamic Bangladesh, they now had a woman as prime minister. She was hardly in office before the month of May came and with it one disaster after another. Cyclone *BOB 01*, with all its effects on the poor and helpless would dominate the local media for the remainder of the year (unless there was a flood). It is estimated to have killed 140 000 Bangladeshis. The Johnsons were very conscious of the prayers that went with them as they returned to Bangladesh and as time proceeded, they were aware when the reports of cyclone damage began reaching Australia of the concerns the Tabernacle had for them and the people of Bangladesh.

⁶⁵⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1989–1990*, p. 23.

The Saturday evening program of the Missionary Weekend in 1993 included a video from Graeme and Coral. Coral, Rowan, and Nathan returned to Brisbane in June for the birth of their third child, a boy, Mathew. Graeme was expected to follow in a couple of weeks. At the combined House Group meetings at the Tabernacle, Cedric Johnson gave a report of Graeme's work in Bangladesh.⁶⁵⁷ The missionary project included \$2500 for continued support of Jalu, and \$1500 for the Paharia people in Bangladesh. From the reports that those on the field had received from his college, Jalu was doing very well.⁶⁵⁸

Following his studies at Spurgeon's College, London, Jalu served as a missionary in Bangladesh.

As always, in their report to the Tabernacle in 1996, Graeme and Coral expressed their appreciation to the church as a whole and individuals within it, for their support of them and their work throughout the year—for prayer, financial support, letters, and the assistance given to the work through the Missionary Project. No-one could fully know the significance of that assistance. The 12 months of 1996, fortunately for Bangladesh, had seen the country experience no significant disasters, though the year had begun with the effects of the cyclone still evident. The spiritual growth in a number of the people with whom they worked was a significant encouragement. The process of nationalising Graeme's position continued as their primary goal. The most frustrating aspect was seeing the divergence in priorities of the nationals compared with those in the west. While all these business complexities were ongoing, Coral enjoyed spending time with a deserted mother and gained great encouragement from the faith the lady showed.⁶⁵⁹

When Graeme and Coral first arrived in Bangladesh in 1986, they had found themselves as part of a large family of Australian Baptists. The following year there were 24 families, the maximum number of missionaries ABMS had ever had in Bangladesh since the Mission had its beginnings in then, East Bengal, in 1882. By contrast, in 1993 they found themselves the only ABMS Missionaries in Bangladesh.

The decrease in ABMS missionary presence in Bangladesh had been occurring since 1988 and was part of an overall decline in missionary personnel in Bangladesh as pressure and regulations from the Islamic increased. Most of the ABMS projects, including the Joyramkura Hospital and Primary Health Care Project, were gradually handed over to the relevant national church bodies, the Garo Baptist Convention, and Bangladesh Baptist Fellowship. The period 1992–93 had been a particularly significant time of transition as the decision was made to work towards handing over the remaining evangelistic workers to the BBF. Unfortunately, these negotiations did not proceed smoothly and alternative paths had to be explored as it became evident that the BBF

⁶⁵⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1992–1993*, p. 24.

⁶⁵⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1990–1991*, pp. 12–13.

⁶⁵⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1991–1992*, pp. 27–28.

was not ready to accept evangelists who were from the Islamic community. This continued as a real area of tension and committed prayer was essential. It appeared there was also a feeling of abandonment by the BBF as despite strong assurances to the contrary, they watched the departure of Australian missionaries. In a country such as Bangladesh, where taking on responsibility is not an accepted norm, it was to be expected that advice would continue to be sought from “the missionary”. Hence Graeme could continue to expect visits related to many aspects of the work ABMS had already handed over. Graeme and Coral valued prayer for wisdom in handling the situation, in giving encouragement and support to nationals to not only take decisions but to follow through on them. On the other hand, their work was directed to the future. While the past 12 months had been very stressful because of the concentration on the handovers, they awaited government approval for a new development project recently submitted. If it were approved, Graeme would be heavily involved in setting up the project, especially national personnel and administration, and this would present new challenges. Through all these administrative hassles, the Johnsons continued to rejoice in the ongoing growth of new believers from the Islamic community and prayed that this work would continue to grow and consolidate under the leadership of the Bangladeshi evangelists. Bangladesh was a country that needed continued prayer. The year ahead of them was one which would hold many challenges for ABMS and for the Johnsons.⁶⁶⁰

The Bangladesh work of ABMS saw further major changes in direction in 1993–94 as it entered a new phase. No longer having permission to do “religious work”, they nevertheless had a 113-year history of work throughout the land. The national church bodies had taken up their relevant areas of responsibility and, while at times they struggled and seemed to get bogged down in issues which Graeme and Coral considered peripheral, it was a point of praise to see progress. The national church leaders needed continual prayer support. They praised God for His goodness in seeing them through rather stressful times on the family front. The medical problems surrounding the birth of Mathew and then his subsequent bout of dysentery were behind them. Likewise, the very real joys and struggles they shared with two evangelists and their families as they returned to Bangladesh after three and four-years’ theological study abroad. The re-entry culture shock was very deep for both families and continued, exacerbated considerably by uncertainty regarding their new roles. In May, permission was received from the Bangladeshi Government for a community development project in the district of Kishoregan amongst poor landless Muslim Bangalis. Much preparation and planning had gone into getting this project, called “Prottasha” to that point and continued as they moved into employing a national director and field workers. They sought their home church’s prayers for wisdom as Graeme began to intentionally step back from his role

⁶⁶⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook* 1992–1993, pp. 32–33.

but willingly offered advice and encouragement. They were confident that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, they were all equal to the tasks to which God called them. Sometimes, however, they needed encouragement to realise and accept this.⁶⁶¹

Graeme and Coral returned from the Bangladesh Field in January 1995 and it was a joy to have them back in the fellowship. The Tabernacle prayed that the Lord would guide them as they sought His will for the future.⁶⁶²

The 1995 Missionary Weekend *Focus on Bangladesh* was held in April. The Saturday evening program commenced with a casserole tea, then Coral took the audience on a “visit” to a village in Bangladesh. Through drama, she recounted the changes taking place in that country and some of the cultural problems faced by foreigners. Jalu from Bangladesh was the Missionary guest speaker at the Tabernacle in April 1995, preaching at both services on the Sunday. He was the Tabernacle’s guest for three weeks, during which time he spoke at meetings throughout Brisbane arranged by the Tabernacle and ABMS.⁶⁶³ It was a real joy for the church to renew fellowship with him and to hear of his ministry and the challenges he faced in his work for our Lord.⁶⁶⁴

The 1995–96 year was one of unexpected opportunities. Primarily, the opportunity to continue service with ABMS and in Bangladesh, even though only on a part-time basis. With this came the opportunity to periodically visit Bangladesh and to have some significant input with the ABMS staff there and also with some of the people Coral and Graeme knew during their time there. This came not only in the technical area of field administration but also spending time with them and sharing together in the work there. It was good to see how God was unfolding His will not only for Coral, the boys and Graeme, but also to see what was happening to the wider church in Bangladesh. To be a small part of that was a privilege for which they thanked God.⁶⁶⁵

Nothing matched the stress of Graeme and Coral’s initial year in Bangladesh, but 1996 would easily be the second hardest. A year earlier the first seeds of plans for a furlough in 1995 were being planted. As that became definite, the next question was what did God have planned for them and Bangladesh from there? They had gone to Bangladesh with a clear call for Graeme to fill a specific administrative niche. The specifics broadened and varied but always there remained the overall goal of training nationals to take over the accounting functions. As the time of their departure came closer, they continued to ask just what was God’s plan for them? Finally, they left Dhaka on Christmas Eve still not knowing. It was a very difficult time for everyone. Stephen and

⁶⁶¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1993–1994*, pp. 29–30.

⁶⁶² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1994–1995*, p. 13.

⁶⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁶⁶⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1994–1995*, p. 11.

⁶⁶⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1995–1996*, p. 27.

other national staff were all convinced that the guidance and advice of Graeme, particularly within the realm of government formalities, was invaluable and they begged them to return. It was especially hard for Rowan, now seven years old, to say goodbye to his friends, not knowing if he would ever see them again. They all felt very weary and lost as they flew into Brisbane on 5 January 1997. The enjoyment of being around family and friends was warm and wonderful. As the months passed, not only did they begin to feel the truth of the fact that “reverse culture shock is worse than initial culture shock” but the indecision as they prayed and discussed and struggled became at times almost unbearable. They yearned just to be able to know and to move on. They could feel the effects on the whole family. The doors began to open in an unexpected direction. It seemed Coral was to take the opportunity to upgrade her General Practice training part-time. Since then, they had seen not only past fuzzy decisions verified, but other directions appearing, and they felt a turn around. Once again, they were able to see the wonder of God’s plan and to know afresh the peace that only comes from the assurance of being in His will. They knew there were big questions that remained, but also knew that He had it in His hand. Graeme’s role remained unclear. They felt that it was to be part-time because of the doors that had opened for Coral. They also felt that there was still an input he could have to their Bangladeshi colleagues but whether it would be on a formal basis was unknown. What had felt like trepidation, was now excitement as they waited for God’s plans to unfold. They knew that there were many at the Tabernacle who had supported them in prayer, in monetary support, in correspondence, and through just remaining aware of them. They thanked the Tabernacle for its regular giving towards their costs over those years. They prayed for a continued outlooking vision and seeking for each of them to see where they could minister to each other and to those around them through their fellowship.⁶⁶⁶

Graeme continued to work part time with ABMS making regular trips to Bangladesh to attend meetings and to assist in the overseas office. Coral successfully completed her further medical examinations.⁶⁶⁷

In April 1997, the Tabernacle held a Missionary Sunday. Prior to the morning service, Dr Joan Webster interviewed Graeme regarding the work at Joyramkura Hospital in Bangladesh. Missionary displays were set up in the church parlour for the congregation to view and receive information. The annual Missionary project included \$2500 for the supply of a new hospital trolley, beds, and equipment for patient care at the Joyramkura Hospital.

⁶⁶⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 30-31

⁶⁶⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1996–1997*, p. 28.

In 1998, Graeme wrote that writing annual reports had provided good opportunities to sit and reflect. He recounted experiences of visual images flashing through his mind, reflecting the contact between the world in Australia and the world of their friends in Bangladesh: scenes with which he was both familiar and comfortable. However, as he reflected on his work in Bangladesh the dominant scene was of people: not a mass of people, which is very easy to visualise from Bangladesh, but individuals and groups of people. People with whom he had shared a meal, spent time, listened to, encouraged, asked a few questions, shared, and prayed with. He was very thankful to God: for the opportunity that had been given to him, to continue to be part of His work in Bangladesh; for the opportunity to build on relationships he'd had before, even though they were now very different, and for the support received from individuals in Australia and churches within this country. He thanked Him for those who prayed, not only for him and his responsibilities there but also for his family especially when he was away, and for those he had spoken about. One of the lessons that was continually reinforced to him was that without the prayer support of the people here at home, what was happening in Bangladesh would not occur in the way it was.⁶⁶⁸

In a small room in suburban Dhaka one day each week a small group of men met. Sometimes there was a visitor but even then, the time began with reflection on a passage of Scripture. Points of prayer were shared, and a time of prayer followed by the week's study. Over two years they had gone through the Old Testament. Book by book they had gone into the characters and themes of the Old Testament. They had begun to better understand the interlinking of the Old with the New and dug deeper into some areas that would surprise most. These meetings were more than some intellectual exercise. There were times when these men struggled with their faith. They had struggled with some aspects of the Scriptures. They had struggled with God's judgment on His people but also rejoiced in His mercy and love. They had opened themselves to God to be stretched. Graeme thanked the Lord that he had the privilege to spend a little time with them—to be part of their walk and be taught by them—and then to be part of them in sharing the Lord's Supper. This group is one of a number that Graeme had contact with. Their structure may be different, but in them all, God was at work. These were the Lord's people, with Him moulding them



Joyramkura Hospital
(Photo: Garo Baptist Convention)

⁶⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 37.

Graeme and Coral Johnson

in His fashion and, somehow, in a way Graeme did not understand, he had the honour of witnessing this work of God.⁶⁶⁹

Graeme and Coral commenced a Holland Park Home Group in their home in 1996 to fulfil a mutually expressed need for sharing prayer, Bible study and fellowship. The group grew steadily, meeting twice each month commencing with fellowship over a shared meal. Initially, Old Testament characters were studied, and they were challenged as they each lead the discussion. Prayer and sharing had knitted strong Christian support and fellowship.

Graeme and Coral resigned their membership of the Tabernacle in 1998.

At a missionary evening in May 2001, the speakers, Graeme, Rev Harry West, and Morris Lee, shared some of their experiences of ABMS work in Bangladesh.⁶⁷⁰

Graeme and Coral returned to the Tabernacle in 2016 for the church's missions' celebrations in thanksgiving for the many missionaries sent out from the church.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1997–1998*, pp. 37–38.

⁶⁷⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 2000–2001*, p. 29.

⁶⁷¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 2015–2016*, pp. 14–15.

Richard Lamont

Richard was born in 1965 in Brisbane, the son of David and Irene Lamont. His parents married in England in 1947 and migrated to Australia in 1960. They came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1986 having moved from Manly to the inner city in 1972. Richard's father and mother died in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Richard's brother Athol did not come into membership.

Richard came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1981 following his baptism by Revs Paul Harrison and Murray Sinfield earlier that year. After completing his BA in late 1985, Richard was commissioned by the Tabernacle in early 1986, to serve on the University of Queensland Campus with Life Ministries.⁶⁷² He was a guest preacher at the Tabernacle in 1987–88, representing Student Life,⁶⁷³ and continued to serve there until 1988, when he was involved in the pioneering of Student Life at the Queensland University of Technology.

Richard's marriage to Patricia Bawtree, at the Tabernacle in 1988, was conducted by Rev Paul Harrison. Patricia, who is generally known as Tricia, was born in 1965 in Jos, Nigeria, the daughter of David (Benjamin) and Ellen Bawtree of Upper Mt Gravatt. Benjamin and Ellen had been missionaries with Sudan United Mission in Nigeria. Richard and Tricia established their new home in Stafford Heights.

Richard and Patricia then lived in Chermside West and then Cecil Plains, being employed, respectively, as a Christian Counsellor and a primary school teacher. Richard was, for a brief time, a leader of the Tabernacle's Youth Group.

Richard and Tricia lived in Fiji for one and a half years, employed by the Gospel High School in Samabula (Suva), where they were actively involved in the Gospel Chapel community. They planned, eventually, to be missionaries in India with *Servants to Asia's Urban Poor*. Fiji seemed to them to be a good place to prepare for their future missionary service.

On their return from Fiji, Richard undertook further study to qualify as a teacher. His first posting was to Charters Towers and he transferred his membership from the Tabernacle in January 1994. In Charters Towers Richard and Tricia became parents to their two eldest children. Richard at that time was well respected and viewed by the church membership and pastors as an elder.

⁶⁷² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1985–1986*, p. 7.

⁶⁷³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1987–1988*, p. 5.

Richard and Tricia moved to Brisbane in 1998 and, after another difficult work-related experience—the closure of the child-care centre of which he was the director—Richard decided to train as a pastor.

Richard attended and lived with his family at Queensland Baptist College of Ministry (QBCM), now known as Malyon College, from 1999 until 2002 and graduated with a Bachelor of Ministry. Their third child was born while they lived in the QBCM community. Richard was a very popular and intelligent student and won the preaching prize for his year. During his final year, he was the president of the student body. He was well known for his loud laugh, intelligence, articulate communication skills, and competitive table tennis games with Michael Bird, a fellow student.

Richard served as a part-time pastor of the Lindum Branch of Wynnum Baptist Church from 2001 until 2004 when his call to the pastorate was revoked. His and Patricia's youngest child was born at the end of 2003. After the marriage was irretrievably damaged, Patricia filed for divorce and this was finalised in February 2009.⁶⁷⁴

Tricia continues to live and teach in Wynnum with two of their four children still at home with her. She continues strong in her faith and serves her Lord in various aspects of ministry.

In 2019, Richard was a member of Hope Community Baptist Church at Burpengary.

From July until December 2020, Richard served with Youth with a Mission, Townsville doing outreach in Cairns and Thursday Island. He is currently employed full-time as a teacher at Arathusa College—a Christian flexi-school catering for disadvantaged students.

⁶⁷⁴ P Bawtree, Personal communication, 2021.

Rev Neil Bernard

Neil A Bernard is the son of George and Anne Bernard. George had migrated from Scotland while Anne migrated from England in 1956. They met on the boat *SS New Australia* on the journey to Australia. George took up a position as Assistant Minister in a Presbyterian Church in Western Australia, while Anne and her family settled in Brisbane. After six months in Western Australia, George joined Anne in Brisbane, they became engaged, and then married. They became members at the Tabernacle in 1986 following their baptisms, when they were living in Brighton.

Soon after, Anne became Secretary of the Ladies Day Fellowship at the Tabernacle, and George became Chairman of the Willara House Committee in 1987–88. George and Anne also served as relief staff and on the management committee at Willara House. George continued in this role until 1990, was elected to the diaconate in 1988, and as church secretary in 1990. He continued to serve as a deacon and church secretary until his passing in 1996. Anne passed away in 2020.

Neil attended church all his life, His father was a lay preacher in the Presbyterian Church at Brighton. He started attending Brighton Baptist when he was 15 because that was where his school friends were going as it had a vibrant Youth Group. From the age of 15 he also started going to SU beach camps with his friends. He was baptised at Brighton Baptist in 1982. After high school, Neil began a career in commercial radio and television in Brisbane as an announcer and producer. In 1987 the Lord led him to Capernwray Bible School as a student.

George and Anne were looking for a church with good preaching and decided to attend the Tabernacle one Sunday in 1985 and immediately stopped looking anywhere else. Rev Paul Harrison was the pastor at the time. Neil started attending the Tabernacle's evening services a few months after his parents started going there. Neil became a member of the Tabernacle in 1987, on transfer from Brighton, and in 1988 he was appointed Youth Leader.

During 1988–90 as well as being a full-time student at the BTCQ and Youth Leader, he was a part-time announcer on a local family radio station, guest speaker at Capernwray's Summer Conferences, and a member of the organising committee of Youth Encounter—a large youth conference held at Mt Tamborine every August.

Neil's sister, Ailsa became a member in 1987. Neil has another sister Fiona, and a brother Ian who did not come into membership. His younger brother, Lachlan died in infancy.

While a student at BTCQ, Neil had been allocated to the Tabernacle as a "Student Observer". He provided strong leadership in the youth fellowship in 1987–88, and it

was regretted that he could not be allocated by the college to the church for 1989.⁶⁷⁵ The Youth Group had developed into an enthusiastic group with a strong sense of warm fellowship. The effect of God working through Neil's leadership had been quite dramatic. The group welcomed visitors and encouraged one another in their Christian walk. It was thrilling to observe the maturing of these young Christian men and women, who had expressed a desire for more training in practical skills for use in evangelism and community service.⁶⁷⁶

At the beginning of 1990, Neil, then a third-year student at BTCQ, assumed the role of youth pastor with leadership of the Youth Group and involvement with other youth areas of the church. The Youth Group met on Wednesday nights for Bible Study with an attendance of some twenty young people. Neil was still living with his parents in Brighton.

During May and June 1991, the choir, inspired by Neil, began introducing new choruses for praise time in the evening services. It was anticipated that the church would continue with "Songs of Praise" and thereby bring fresh stimulus to their praise and singing.

In his pastoral letter in 1992, Rev Harrison reported a resurgence in the Youth Group, the reward of patient, faithful, caring, and diligent ministry by the youth pastor and the splendid support received from the youth counsellors, John and Glenys Ivett. Neil's father, in his capacity as church secretary, reported that the church rejoiced to have seen Neil's ministry among the youth of the church develop and be fruitful. His preaching skills had continued to mature, and the church was pleased to make him available to address youth meetings and services in a number of churches. Neil was in his fifth year at BTCQ and close to completing his college studies.

The format of the Tabernacle's Youth Group changed in 1991–92 to suit the needs of the young people. These changes under the guidance of the Lord brought new members into the group and matured those in the group. In the middle of 1991, it was decided to combine the YPCE and the Youth Group to form one larger group, instead of two smaller ones. This allowed many of the youth of the church to meet. The group previously met on Sunday evenings for Bible Study, but at the beginning of 1992, John and Glenys, and Neil, restructured the program. Subsequently the Sunday evening focused on ways in which the youth could express their faith and their talents. Alison Lockhart offered her expertise in directing dramas and Anita Thomas in conducting the orchestra. Both contributed enormously to the youth services.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1988–1989*, p. 4.

⁶⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁶⁷⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1991–1992*, pp. 24–25.

Neil had the lead role, as Chris Hawkins, in the Youth Group's production of *Innocent Sabotage* by Stanley Davis, at the Saturday evening program of the Missionary Weekend in March 1992. Twelve members of the Youth Group and the youth counsellors, John and Glenys, had various roles in the play.

As Youth Pastor, Neil saw an increase in the dedication and commitment of the young people in 1992–93. This resulted in increased participation in the evening services and a closer fellowship with other members. Several members of the group were baptised and welcomed into membership during the year. Neil also provided considerable assistance to the staff and residents of Willara House.

In 1993, Neil reported that the Youth Group had enjoyed an exciting and varied program over the previous twelve months. Bible studies had been led by different people, the youth had joined with other churches and been involved in some unusual activities. In July, the youth service included Mark Ashton from Cambridge as the speaker, the youth orchestra, and the drama group. On the following Wednesday night, they joined with Cleveland Baptist for a Bible Study with Mark Ashton, and on the weekend a number of the group, with Neil, attended Youth Encounter at Mt Tamborine.

Minden Baptist asked the Youth Group to lead their 111th Anniversary service in April. The church was packed as Leon Thomas and Richard Kissick led the singing, Cathy Goodwin gave a children's talk, and the orchestra and drama group performed. The same items were repeated at the Tabernacle for a youth service in April.⁶⁷⁸

At the end of 1993, Neil completed his studies at BTCQ, moved on to complete his dissertation toward his B.Th. and ordination, and take on expanded pastoral duties at another church.

In his final report, Neil reported that the last half of 1993 had been both exciting and sad. Exciting for the activities he was involved in with the



Youth Group at Minden
Back row left to right: Catherine Goodwin, Elisabeth Ivett, Kirsten Ivett, Laura Kissick, Fiona Ivett, unidentified
Font Row: Catherine Ryan, Aron Hale, Sarah Kissick, Leon Thomas, Neil Bernard

⁶⁷⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1992–1993*, pp. 28–29.

Youth Group and sad knowing that come the end of the year he would not see as much of the youth as he had previously.

The two things which first came to mind when he thought of the Tabernacle youth were commitment to Christ and to one another, and their love for each other. Neil wanted to thank all those who allowed Jesus to reveal His nature through them to him.⁶⁷⁹

Neil concluded his ministry at the Tabernacle in late December 1993, in order to take a full-time role as Youth Pastor. This was hard for everyone but there was also a sense of joy knowing that Neil was following God's leading in ministry.

Ashgrove Baptist Church offered him the position of Youth Pastor as they had a youth and young adults' group of more than 300 and desired a pastor with a specific emphasis to this group, to assist the other pastors. During 1994–2000 he continued pastoring full-time as well as part-time announcing on the local family radio station and being a member of the Youth Encounter Committee.

Neil continued in pastoral ministry for three years as Senior Pastor at The Gap Baptist Church. In 2001, he commenced as Vice-Principal at Capernwray Bible School, Moss Vale, New South Wales. He became Principal in 2002 and held this position until 2012. During this time Neil travelled extensively, speaking at Capernwray Bible Schools as well as churches and conferences in Australia and overseas. In 2010, Neil graduated with a Masters of Arts (Theology) qualification and in mid-2012, took up the role of lecturer in New Testament (undergraduate students) at MTC and later took on the additional role of Registrar.⁶⁸⁰

After commencing at MTC, invitations to preach became available and after just a couple of weeks, Neil was preaching every Sunday, sometimes twice, or even three times. He also became a lecturer for CALAM (now Malyon Vocational Training (MVT)). One Saturday a month he taught theology and Bible subjects to ethnic students. Some of the graduating students have since gone on to become pastors in Queensland Baptist ethnic churches. Others have pursued further study or become better equipped to serve in their church.



Capernwray, Moss Vale
(Photo: Christian Venues Association)

⁶⁷⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1993–1994*, pp. 28–29.

⁶⁸⁰ <http://ctq.co/speakers/neilbernard.htm>

Neil has also been a guest speaker at Keswick Conventions in Warracknabeal and Atherton, and a guest lecturer at Capernwray Bible Schools in Australia, The Philippines, and New Zealand.

Neil concluded his ministry at MTC in 2017 and in 2019 assisted the Queensland Baptist Office in administration in a part-time capacity.

Neil is now self-employed as a Bible teacher and preacher and is currently ministering at Mansfield Baptist Church, preaching three times a month. On the other Sunday he is nearly always preaching in another church in South-East Queensland. He continues to lecture ethnic students for MVT.

Neil's other interests include travelling, reading, swimming and photography, often concurrently.

Maxwell and Julia King (née Brooks)

Julia May Brooks was born in Brisbane in 1958, the daughter of George and Lucy Brooks, who were married at the Tabernacle in 1954. Julia came into membership in 1976 following her baptism by Rev Neville Abrahams. Max John King and Julia were married in 1980 by Rev W Murray Sinfield and lived in Sherwood where Max was employed as a teacher and Julia as a secretary. Max was born in Stockton, New South Wales in 1956, the son of Gordon and Joy King. He transferred his church membership from Tarragindi to the Tabernacle in 1980. Their children Michelle and Stephen were dedicated at the Tabernacle in 1987 and 1990 and were entered on the cradle roll.

Max and Julia were Senior Youth Fellowship Leaders from 1981, guest speakers at the YPCE in 1986–87, and served on the missionary committee for 10 years prior to retiring from it in 1991–92 (Max was the Secretary of the committee in 1980–81 and again in 1988–89). Julia assisted in the church office on a voluntary basis in 1981–82 and was secretary of the Ladies' Evening Fellowship in 1989–93. Max was heavily involved in the Bible school in 1989–91.

At the Bible school anniversary in August 1993, Julia directed the children in the junior school and kindergarten in a very effective presentation on the theme "Jesus is Alive."

Max and Julia notified the church in June of their call to join WBT as short-term missionaries commencing early in 1994.

Going to Papua New Guinea meant stepping out in a totally new direction and learning again to trust in God and His faithfulness. In September 1993, they were accepted for missionary service with WBT and from that point they had to raise financial support, obtain medical clearances, passports, and visas, organise house rental and sale of car, make the many other arrangements necessary to be away from Brisbane for an extended period, and finally say farewell to family and friends, none of which was easy.

They were commissioned by the church in December 1993. A farewell supper was held for Max, Julia, Michelle, and Stephen prior to their departure to Ukarumpa, in Papua New Guinea.⁶⁸¹ Following statements on behalf of Wycliffe Bible Translators by Richard Austin, and on behalf of the Tabernacle by Rev Condon, Associate Pastor, and a response by Max and Julia, the deacons of the church laid hands on them.

The new year saw them arrive in Papua New Guinea, attend the Pacific Orientation Course at Madang, settle into Ukarumpa, make new friends and adjust to a totally different culture from what they had been used to. Within six months, Max was well established at Ukarumpa High School, Julia had found her niche as a secretary in the

⁶⁸¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1993–1994*, p. 22.

WBT Director's office, and Michelle and Stephen were enjoying grade two and preschool, respectively.

The first year was not without its stresses, but through it all God proved Himself faithful. They had known the truth of Philippians 4: 13, "I have strength for every situation through Him who empowers me." The primary reason for being there was to support the work of Bible translation so that every person in Papua New Guinea could have God's Word in their own language.⁶⁸²



Max in the staff room

The Missionary Project for 1996 included \$3000 for the Ukarumpa High School, for educational aids. The young people of the Tabernacle auctioned themselves as "slaves" raising a further \$1100 to help in the work.

During their four years in Papua New Guinea, Max and Julia experienced in the local community, land disputes, rascal activity, high inflation, earth tremors, homesickness, moving-house, small plane travel, frustration with Pidgin skills, daily interaction with nationals, and busy work schedules. Through all of those situations they proved the truth of the hymn's words "Great is Thy Faithfulness". God had been very faithful to their family and they felt confident that they were in the place where God wanted them to be. Teaching at Ukarumpa High School proved to be a very busy but fulfilling task for Max. Apart from general teaching, his involvement with the teenagers included a grade 11 retreat, teen centre and various fundraising events. Julia filled her time with secretarial duties at the directors' office, coordinating the Ladies' Fellowship and generally keeping an "open house" for Michelle's and Stephen's friends. Michelle and Stephen progressed well with their schooling at Aiyura International School and enjoyed life in Papua



Ladies meeting out in the village

⁶⁸² *ibid.*, pp. 30–31.

Max and Julia King

New Guinea. SIL's main goal in Papua New Guinea was to bring God's Word to everyone in their mother tongue, and it had been encouraging to see a good number of New Testament dedications during the year. In January 1995, the family also appreciated the opportunity to experience a translator's lifestyle when they visited Carl and Jody Campbell in their Sepik village.⁶⁸³



Julia, Michelle and Stephen and a JAARS Cessna

It was exciting to see many years of faithful hard work by SIL translation teams culminating in New Testament dedications throughout the country. Although they were not translators, they had been able to support the translation teams through their work at Ukarumpa. The desire to teach missionary children was what took them to Ukarumpa, and as with the year before, Max continued to appreciate the rewards and fulfillment from teaching at the High School. It was a privilege to witness the graduation ceremony of the Class of 1996—a tribute to God's goodness in bringing these young people to that stage of their lives. The speaker left these words with the graduates, "As you leave Ukarumpa to go out into the world, don't rely on your commitment to God to see you through difficult situations, but trust in God's commitment to never let go of you." Max and Julie were also encouraged by those words, as they had proved God's faithfulness to them in every situation. The first half of the year was stressful in terms of security problems. But even through these times, they were assured that God was their ultimate protection and even Stephen was heard to say that God had his angels surrounding their home and family. The faithful prayers of their supporters meant a great deal to them. Michelle and Stephen had continued to progress well in their schooling at the primary school and Max and Julia appreciated the dedication of the teachers and the interest shown in the children. It had also been a rewarding yet challenging experience for Julia to teach the grade four girls at Sunday School. Max enjoyed working with the staff at the high school and he too had been challenged particularly by the demands of teaching senior physics.⁶⁸⁴

Julia commented that they got pretty used to flying around the country in little planes so they were always keen to know which one they were flying in next. The one in the photo is a Cessna 206—six people including the pilot. Max always used to get the front

⁶⁸³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1994–1995*, p. 31.

⁶⁸⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1995–1996*, pp. 28–29.

seat to balance out the pilot while Julia was in the back with the two kids! These particular planes were owned by SIL (JAARS—Jungle Aviation and Radio Service—is their air company) but they flew in MAF planes as well occasionally. They flew in everything that was on offer from a helicopter, and the Cessna 206, 402, Islander, and Twin Otter. They always felt very safe with their pilots who were amazing when you saw some of the airstrips they had to fly into and out of, and the rugged terrain and weather to be navigated!

Max and Julia completed their final year at Ukarumpa in December 1997.⁶⁸⁵

Because the church prayed, they had been kept healthy and safe (not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually as well) in spite of some anxious moments in that turbulent country; New Testaments, including Papua New Guinea's 100th, had been completed, dedicated, and given to the local people; and Ukarumpa International School had continued to provide a good education to over 500 students, including Michelle and Stephen. Because the church gave, they had been able to continue their work at Ukarumpa, where the cost of living was high, and helped to provide for their needs and they had been able to help some of their national friends in practical ways. Because the church wrote, they had been encouraged to keep going by knowing that people back home cared about them (the days can get lonely when the mailbox is empty!) and they had felt a part of the lives of those back home and enjoyed getting to know them better.⁶⁸⁶

In their final report to the church, written in 1998, Max and Julia said that the past year had seen many major changes in the life of their family. In December 1997, they undertook the major task of packing up to return home to Australia after four years at Ukarumpa. They had to say goodbye to good friends and co-workers without knowing when (if ever) they would see them again. Michelle and Stephen also left close friends and had to adjust to a new school and a new group of friends. Max and Julia both commenced new jobs. The list could go on, but thankfully, one thing had not changed. The God who was faithful in caring for them while they were working in Papua New Guinea was still the same today, and He had graciously provided for all their needs since returning to Australia.

On return, Max was very happily working for International Education Services in Spring Hill, teaching maths to international students who were preparing for entry into Queensland universities; Julia was enjoying her work as church office secretary; and Michelle and Stephen were enjoying grade six and grade three respectively at Good News Lutheran School.

⁶⁸⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1996–1997*, p. 28.

⁶⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 38.

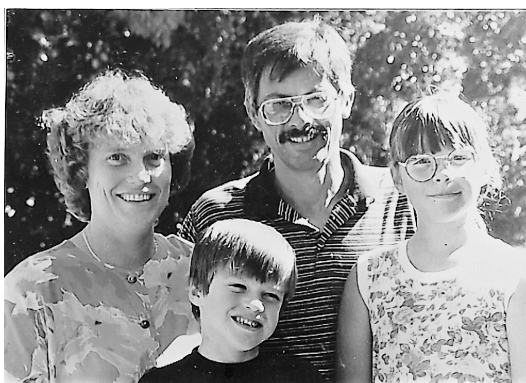
Max and Julia King

With God's help, they had all adjusted well to life back in their home country and they had been enjoying catching up with family and friends. They still missed certain aspects of life in Papua New Guinea, especially the people, but God continued to meet their needs in that area too. God had brought them through many and varied experiences during the four years, and they could honestly say that it had been a positive experience for all of them.

They said a special thank you to their church family at the Tabernacle for its prayers and concern while they were away, and since they had returned.⁶⁸⁷

Shortly before their term of service concluded. The Associate Director for Support Services of SIL, David Huffman, wrote Max and Julia a reference, saying that Max had done an excellent job teaching the youth. He reported that the school was international with children from about 15 different countries and that Max got along very well with this mixture of cultures and was greatly appreciated by the school administration. He emphasised that in the community Max had been a member of the Teen Centre advisory committee, a regular Teen Centre worker, and had provided regular relief for the Hostel Parents. He also shared that Julia was very skilled and efficient, keeping the office running very smoothly explaining that she had gone to Papua New Guinea with extensive training and experience which had been a real blessing to him as ADSA. He reported that Julia had helped out at the kindergarten and primary school and that some of her community activities included teaching primary girls Sunday School, coordinating cultural arts day for the primary school, and coordinating the Ladies Fellowship activities. Clearly, a talented, God-focussed and blessed, couple intent on serving their Master.

In December 1997, the Tabernacle welcomed home Max and Julia and their family.⁶⁸⁸ They settled in Jamboree Heights and almost immediately involved themselves again in the life of the church—Max as a deacon (1998–2012); Kids' Klub leader (1999–2000); young people's teacher in the Bible school; youth group counsellor (1999–2002), Bible school general superintendent (1999–2002), and teacher in the young people's department and Julia as an



Max and Julia King and family

⁶⁸⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1997–1998*, p. 39.

⁶⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 13.

assistant in Kids' Klub (1998–2000); office secretary (1998–2002); and Bible School junior school superintendent (1999–2001). The church secretary wrote in 1998, “Mrs King has been a great help and assistance as she has undertaken some of the administrative work in such a pleasant and cooperative way.”⁶⁸⁹ Their daughter, Michelle, was also involved in Kids' Klub from 2000–01.

Julia shared some of the daily joys and problems of life in another culture with the Ladies' Day Fellowship, in 1997–98. Having been involved in prayer support, it was good to be able to go a step further in upholding our missionaries.⁶⁹⁰

In his report in 1999, John Ivett, the Tabernacle's church secretary wrote that Julia had served very well as the office secretary during the year. Her work was excellent and her involvement in this part of the life of our church had allowed all of its publications to be of a very high quality. Julia had been of much assistance to the pastors and administration of the church and always undertook her work in a faithful and cooperative way. It had been good to have the church office staffed during the day, and this had assisted in the church's dealings with people both inside and outside the church.⁶⁹¹

Having the church office open and operating, even on a part time basis had become an essential part of the administration requirements of the church. The work done by Mrs Julia King was invaluable and of great assistance. The church acknowledged Julia's professionalism and the willing and cooperative spirit she brought to the wide range of tasks that have become part of this job.⁶⁹² Julia continued to serve full-time in the church office until 2002.

Max and Julia transferred their church membership in July 2004, and now worship at Riverlife (formerly Kenmore Baptist Church).

⁶⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 26.

⁶⁹¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1998–1999*, p. 16.

⁶⁹² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2000–2001*, p. 14.

Brendan Henry

Brendan was born in Melbourne, the son of Allan and Gloria Henry. He grew up in a Christian home and moved from Melbourne to Brisbane when 14 years of age. He accepted the Lord and was baptised when he was 16. Brendan and his parents came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1996, following visitation. Gloria was involved in the Tabernacle's Ministry of Special Care. Brendan's sister Natasha had joined the church in 1993.

Brendan completed a science degree and a post graduate diploma in Geographical Information Systems at the University of Queensland and then worked for the Queensland Department of Main Roads.



Brendan Henry

He was appointed a teacher in the Junior Bible School in February 1996 and to the missionary committee in 1995–96. He was elected to the diaconate in 1996. He served on the diaconate until 1999. Brendan was a “guest” preacher at the Tabernacle in July 1997, taking as his subject *The Lost World Regained*. Natasha was the leader of the Buds CE up until August 1998 when she married Richard Laurens and moved to Atherton.

Brendan served in Niger, West Africa (1999–2000). In March 1999, he was commissioned for service as a short-term Associate of SIM. In April, the church farewelled him and praised God for the example he was to all in his service for the Lord.⁶⁹³ Brendan remained on the diaconate during his year's absence. A portion of the missionary project (\$4000) was allocated to provide computer equipment and a printer for his use in Niger.

Writing in *SIM Roads Snippets* in February 2000, Deb Jenkins wrote that:

Brendan has taken to Niger ‘like a duck to water’ except there is very little water in Niger! He managed a ride with SIM Air to Timbuktoo, where there is more sand and dust than anywhere else. He has adapted to working with nationals and missionaries (strange people) and remains until Easter to train and hand over his work to others.

He was working in a team at Centre Biblique de Niamey. Initially he spent a couple of months improving his French, the official language, which improved markedly. He

⁶⁹³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1998–1999*, p. 2.

requested continued prayer as he developed confidence in using the language for the work that he needed to do. He was also learning some greetings and basic words of the Hausa, the major trade language, and a few of the other languages.

There are 19 language groups in Niger. Only four of these groups have any Christians; often less than one percent of the group are Christians. He asked for prayer for the spread of the gospel in Niger.

Brendan had collected information about different churches and started collecting a range of demographic information about the people of Niger (Nigerians) including population, ethnicity, linguistics, education, health, religion, and climate. The information was being entered into a Geographic Information System, which was able to identify where the different people groups lived. It could also show the percentage of Christians in each area, and the number of churches. Part of that information was coming from existing census data. However, as the last census had been in 1988, he was working closely with missionaries in other organisations (e.g. SIL) and with church leaders to obtain more current information.⁶⁹⁴

The database also included information about different churches, where they were located, and information about missionaries and mission organisations, and the different people groups they were working with. A number of missionaries, pastors and evangelists have found this information very useful. Before he left Niger, he trained some other missionaries to help them make the most use of the information he had gathered.

As part of his work of gathering information about churches, he spoke with all of the major church leaders in Niger and many missionaries. It reinforced to him the fact that it is through the work of many that the gospel is spread. He asked for prayer for the missionaries now using the software and the data that he had collected, and that the information would be used to determine the most strategic placement of new workers and church planters.

He quickly achieved a good level of understanding and speaking French. and learnt and spoke some words in Zarma and Hausa.

Generally, he found the Nigeriens to be friendly and helpful. He visited many government departments to obtain information. One of the things that struck him was the openness of some of the Nigeriens to Christianity. In one of the government offices where he was gathering information, the government official he was speaking to asked him to bring him some information to read about Christianity.

⁶⁹⁴ *ibid*, pp. 39–40.

Brendan Henry

Another time, he was buying some food at the small convenience store near where he lived, and a university student he had not seen before asked him several questions about Christianity, leading to quite a lengthy discussion.

In addition to the primary work he went to do, Brendan was involved with other activities in Niger. He taught some maths classes at Sahel Academy, the SIM school in Niamey. SIM also operated a University Student Centre as a ministry to university students. He was rostered to assist at this centre. One evening a week, he taught conversational English.

Brendan requested prayer for the pastors of Niger; additional funds for the Francophone Pastor's Bookset Project to provide sets of books for French speaking pastors in West Africa, which would be of great benefit to more than 9000 pastors in about ten countries; and for the ongoing ministry of the CBN, which exists primarily to provide Biblical teaching and training for Nigerien church leaders and laypersons.

It was a great comfort to Brendan to know that so many were supporting him in the work through prayer and financial support.⁶⁹⁵

Following his return to Brisbane, Brendan resumed his role on the diaconate until 2002 and was a youth group counsellor/coordinator in 2000–02. As Youth Ministry Coordinator, he was appointed to the newly formed Young Adults Council in 2001–02. He spoke on the subject *The Life of a Missionary* at the Tabernacle in September 2001, taking as his text 1 Cor 3:5–15.

The associate pastor, Andrew Otte, commented in 2002 that Brendan had done a good job in the youth work of the church in what had been a very difficult year for him. He trusted that the Lord would continue to lead and bless him in the year to come.⁶⁹⁶

Brendan led a series of Bible lessons for the Sunday morning Bible Study in 2002.

In 2002, Brendan moved to the Sunshine Coast and started attending a local Baptist church



March for Jesus, Niamey, April 1999

⁶⁹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1999–2000*, pp. 40–41.

⁶⁹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2001–2002*, p. 3.

plant known as RiverLife Community Church. The church was formally constituted in 2007.

In recent years, Brendan has continued to minister in various ways, especially as a children's ministry leader through his church. He also teaches religious instruction at two local primary schools. He has been involved as a leader / camp director for several years through SU Queensland.

Brendan's mother is still in fellowship at the Tabernacle.

Max and Ezzie

Max and Ezzie serve with Global Interaction (GI) in a South East Asian country where there are very few followers of Jesus due to cultural, religious and political barriers. This context means there is both great need for Max and Ezzie and their teammates to be present in this community and potential risk to them and their local friends by the team being there. In this publication, for the protection of GI's team, their local friends and the ongoing ministry, Max and Ezzie's names have been modified and the faces obscured in photos.

Max and Ezzie belong to a Mizo tribe from the state of Mizoram in North-East India.

Max was born and brought up in a traditional evangelical family. Both his parents, having retired, are still actively involved in their home church. He is the second of four brothers. Since being born again in 1985, he has consistently had a desire to share the Good News. As he began his pre-university studies in 1988, he committed his life to become a cross-cultural worker in the future. He experienced ups and downs in his spiritual journeys during his science degree studies. Looking for jobs other than cross-cultural work, he found some, but had an unsettled feeling about progressing these opportunities, often being reminded by the Holy Spirit of his own commitment to be involved in cross-cultural work. In 1997, his heavenly Father spoke to him through Phil 1:6. "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the Day of Christ Jesus." Max realized that God was giving him a second chance to fulfil his commitment to Him and recommitted his life to be involved in cross-cultural work. While awaiting his MA results, he had an opportunity to work for a year as a cross-cultural worker amongst a people group in India. He then unexpectedly commenced study in a seminary as part of preparation for his future involvement. Since college and university, he was also very much involved with the youth and pastoral ministries in various places at different levels. After graduating with a Bachelor of Divinity degree, he joined a pastoral ministry team and was ordained by the Baptist Church of Mizoram (BCM) as a full-time minister. While he had been praying and looking for an opportunity to do cross-cultural work, he was given a burden for South-East Asia. In 2005 that became a reality.

Ezzie was born and brought up in Shillong, Meghalaya, a neighbouring state of Mizoram. She grew up in a devoted Christian family and her parents are still actively involved in their home church. She is the youngest of five with three sisters and a brother. She was born again at a very young age but never intended to become a cross-cultural worker. During her college and university studies, she was very much involved as part of the leadership team of her church's youth ministries and in local pastoral ministry. In 1996 after she finished a Bachelor of Education degree, she helped out as a teacher in a cross-cultural school run by the BCM. Then, while in a bus on her way home, she felt God's calling from the verse "Go and make ...". The calling was very

clear and strongly felt. It was there and then that she committed her life to the Master, to be involved in cross-cultural work. She continued masters' studies in linguistics with an anticipation that it would be helpful and effective in future cross-cultural work. No sooner had she finished her studies than she became a cross-cultural worker from 1999 till 2008. In 1999, BCM in partnership with Global Interaction (GI) accepted her to work as an English teacher in Central Asia but she was not able to go as the universities were hesitant to accept teachers who were not native English speakers, so she continued working under the BCM for almost 10 years until her marriage, as a cross-cultural teacher among four different people groups in India. It was a sad moment for her to leave cross-cultural work, to be with her husband, for he was a pastor. She still felt the need to reach out to the unreached. She also felt the call in her heart to continue as a cross-cultural worker and prayed about it.

Ezzie and Max, therefore, are thankful to God for giving them another opportunity as a couple and a family to serve Him and to reach out to one of the least reached groups on earth.

Max and Ezzie were married in 2008 and in same year heard that GI, in partnership with the BCM, was looking for a couple to work in South-East Asia as cross-cultural workers. After much prayer and consideration, they applied for the position and were accepted. Looking back to how God had been leading them, they are confident and excited that God continued the good work that He had already begun in them and would carry it on to completion, until the day of Christ Jesus. Committing themselves to be involved fulltime in His work, they were passionate about seeing Him working in peoples' lives and empowering the least reached people groups to develop their own distinctive ways of following Christ Jesus.

One of the joys for the members of the Tabernacle in early 2011 was to have Max, Ezzie and Puia with them for a number of months as they prepared for service in South-East Asia. They became so much part of the church family that they joined the membership in February 2011 and have gone out to their assignment as part of the church's overseas family. The church watched with interest to see what would be achieved for the Kingdom through their dedication and commitment to the Lord.⁶⁹⁷ Max was a "guest" preacher on at least one occasion during this visit.

The church's commitment to the global work of the kingdom was wonderfully strengthened by the input from Max and Ezzie. The church family considered it a privilege to share in their being set aside before their departure for South-East Asia.⁶⁹⁸ It was a blessing to have them as part of the fellowship and to become part of their

⁶⁹⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2010–2011*, pp. 19,20.

⁶⁹⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2010–2011*, p. 13.

Max and Ezzie

support team as they were commissioned to go out into the world to share the Father's message.

Whenever Max and Ezzie write to the church, it is necessary for them to use code so that the true nature of their work is not obvious. In their first annual reports to the church, Max and Ezzie wrote:

It was wonderful to go through different experiences as we applied for student visas. We were given three different visas in the first three weeks! They thanked the church again for talking with the Father on their behalf and for its support. It was going to be a long way until they became fluent in the language and were able to build relationships with the natives.

It is always a joy for Max and Ezzie to be in the family in Brisbane. It truly was a Tabernacle for them. They had been blessed and encouraged by the family which they could never forget. Every moment with the family was just great and meaningful for them. They continued to feel great to be in this family.⁶⁹⁹

In subsequent years, they wrote:

Starting to learn the language from scratch was really frustrating and embarrassing at times, not knowing any of the host language. We have done a lot of growing and can do a lot of things on our own in the host language—shopping, conversing, watching news, reading local newspapers. Max has already done a topic on the island (BB) and has just started 25 scripture stories in contextual language. Ezzie has done her presentation and started her last unit of the intensive course after which we plan to do a special course together focusing more on the culture. We generally learn the culture from class lessons, through readings and interviewing locals/neighbours on different topics.

We have been trying to develop relationships with the locals but it is not an easy task. When it came to building an intentional, deeper relationship, it took a lot of opportunities, patience and time. Our language and house helpers, old and new neighbours have been the best opportunities we've had so far. We've had a few opportunities to visit families and individuals in their homes and workplaces through occasions like birthdays, weddings, community events. We also need to be creative, looking for opportunities to develop relationships.

Puia struggled with measles, typhoid (for which she was hospitalized), viral fever, flu, etc. Max had a number of physiotherapy treatments for his neck-shoulder-arm problem. Ezzie had to visit her doctor regularly as she was pregnant and eventually gave birth to a healthy baby. There were times when we miss our families and friends back home. However, we deeply experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit throughout this journey.

We were blessed with a baby girl, Nadya who was born in December. She was dedicated at the Tabernacle in 2012. Puia has picked up both English and the Bahasa language.⁷⁰⁰

Later, they wrote:

⁶⁹⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2010–2011*, pp. 56,57.

⁷⁰⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2011–2012*, p. 50.

Our new visas, work permit, stay permits, etc are all in place because of prayer. Max has started his involvement with the Emission Reduction Company in October. We thank God that Max has done fairly well so far and had been to IB areas twice.

There are some people around with whom we can build relationship. It was wonderful that we have been given opportunities with such people of different families and economic backgrounds, different levels of understanding about spiritual things with whom we can discuss spiritual matters in different ways. Recently Father has given us a house church where we can be involved.⁷⁰¹

As Ezzie took up the role of Culture and Language Facilitator for the whole "I" team they went to Chiang Mai, Thailand to attend the CAL facilitators' conference in July. It was an eventful conference for Ezzie, while Max took care of the children. They were able to catch up with their Mizo friends who were also involved in the work.

Max had meetings with the City Waste Management Department concerning problems with the operations at the landfill site and regular visits to the site brought about opportunities to meet with a number of people.

They were able to continue to share with their house helpers and with staff of the City Waste Management Department and were glad that they were able to move to the IB Island although only temporarily. They stayed for six weeks to taste and experience the new location before they came back for home assignment. They did some surveys on their future involvement and were able to meet with some people of the island and visit one village where one of their focus groups was living. It was really nice to meet with those people in their own context.⁷⁰²



Max and Ezzie and their children, 2013 (Photo: GI)

The church welcomed back Max, Ezzie, Puia and Nadya in August 2014. They were not able to stay as long as was hoped due their visa not being extended beyond a few weeks. They also experienced a long delay in obtaining a visa for their field of missionary work.⁷⁰³ Max was a guest preacher at the Tabernacle during their stay.

They were once again very well looked after by their state director and staff and their home church—the Tabernacle family. It was a joy to have everything arranged for their

⁷⁰¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2012–2013*, pp. 49,50.

⁷⁰² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2013–2014*, pp. 46,47.

⁷⁰³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2014–2015*, p 33.

Max and Ezzie

short stay and their home club's senior pastor received them with a heap of goodies from the Tabernacle family. They felt much loved and accepted. It was lovely to reconnect with wonderful friends who had been faithfully supporting them since the beginning of their first term of service and they thanked the Father for each one of them.

While in Australia they spoke in two Bible colleges, a resonate meeting, small group meetings, and various church meetings. They enjoyed fellowship with the people everywhere they went.

They began the second part of their home assignment among the Mizo Churches in October following the program prepared by their headquarters. They visited over 20 churches and a few small groups during their time there. They again had a wonderful time with all the churches, friends, and families.

Their return to the field was delayed due to visa issues. However, it gave them more opportunity to reconnect with leaders of churches, families, and friends. Max was able to attend a training course on horticulture and visit a cashew nut plantation and processing clusters in a neighbouring state. The children had opportunities to get to know their families and learn their culture and language. They thanked the Father for such opportunity. "His plan is perfect."⁷⁰⁴

They thanked their Father for His faithfulness and also for all those who had been praying for their new visa to come through. They also praised Him for taking them safely to their new location, the IB island in August 2015, after a long wait.

Orientation, settling into their new home and environment, collecting various stuff to fill their new home, visits to neighbours, unpacking, organizing, etc., all happened. They thanked their Father for their teammates there for all their support.

New Year 2016! They gave thanks that Max had completed his online horticulture course and they all went to BI for Nadya's passport renewal and their annual break. Head Office leaders came to visit, and they visited a few villages with them. Ezzie started her Bahasa sessions in February. She continued training and facilitating recruited nurturers and also began reading and sharing with them from the Proverbs, to which they were open. They travelled to and attended a whole team annual retreat in March 2016 at IS location. Visits to farmers had been done as steps toward developing an agribusiness program. They were also able to attend a few religious and cultural ceremonies.⁷⁰⁵

They continued their language and culture learning and were able to understand more about the host culture through involvements, interviews, sharing stories with friends,

⁷⁰⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2014–2015*, pp. 45,46.

⁷⁰⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2015–2016*, p. 40.

and visits to certain places. They continued to work on building relationship and sharing stories with the host people in appropriate ways. They also had opportunities to intentionally talk about topics related to spiritual things for which they were grateful.

Apart from his fulltime language learning responsibility Max worked hard for the agribusiness plan—visiting farmers and offices, attending presentations and discussions, and developing action plans. They were also exploring how the agribusiness program could become a good legitimate platform for them.

As they continued to look for other possible involvements besides agribusiness, they started planning to open a reading garden, focusing on poor children or school dropouts in and around the city so that they could have access to good books and learn things from the garden.⁷⁰⁶

Max's second year language visa came to an end in August 2017. He was able to complete phase three and began phase four while Ezzie was able to continue with the national language studies part time. They were glad that they could learn more about the local culture and language and thanked their Father for all the opportunities given to them, that they could continue relationship building and share various stories with their local friends and pray with them from time to time.

The plan for an agribusiness couldn't seem to function under the Foundation's education program so they changed gear and attempted the development of the initiative as a social program under CreationCare, which was another registered entity under the Foundation. With this move they started a reading garden to provide good books for children of seaweed farming community/families and started to try their free English sessions with those children.

Ezzie continued as facilitator for team members' culture and language learning. She also continued giving training to local language nurturers. She had been given voluntary responsibility to oversee the whole Language program in the BI's Language Centre.

They praised the Father that Puia and Nadya are able to continue with their home schooling. They had been able to adjust to it and were growing and



Max and Ezzie and family, 2021 (Photo: GI)

⁷⁰⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2016–2017*, pp. 39,40.

Max and Ezzie

moving forward whilst proving to be a challenge with all the other things in which the family were involved.⁷⁰⁷

They commenced their second home assignment in early July 2018, praising the Father for all His leading and guidance. They were in Sydney for a week of Context Training, listening to lectures, experiences from other cross-cultural workers, and shared some of their experiences as well. Back in Queensland, they were located in Margate where the children joined a public school, which they deeply appreciated. It was wonderful and lovely to be back to their home club, the City Tabernacle, and to catch up with many who have been so passionate and supportive of the Lord's work. They were humbled and grateful to the whole family for the warm welcome, love and care, gifts and all the opportunities to participate during their stay. They also visited and spoke to various clubs and meetings in and outside Queensland who have been financially and prayerfully supporting them and met with lovely people who had been journeying with them.

They returned to South East Asia in early October and were now on their own among the BI people of SEAsia as their colleagues finished up and went home to Australia. The Language Centre and the Creation Care branches were now in their hands. It was challenging at times, however they praised Father for His sustaining grace, enabling them with whatever they needed, during this transition period. They had opportunities to share with their staff through these platforms for which they were thankful.

They were also grateful for opportunities to share with friends during Christmas and Easter celebrations and thankful that they were able to spend some time with friends during their fasting month also.

The children joined a local elementary school which was a big move and pretty challenging. However they were grateful for the opportunity.

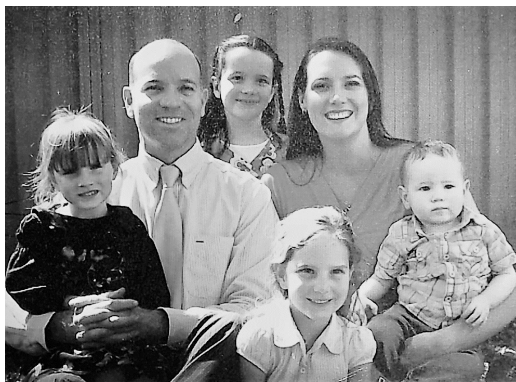
It was great to have an individual and a group from Australia visit in January 2019. They had their SEAsia team retreat in March 2019, which was an encouraging time. They rejoiced and thanked Father again for His faithfulness that the long awaited registration for the Creation Care branch in the Island had been completed.⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2017–2018*, pp. 46,47.

⁷⁰⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2018–2019*, pp. 50,51.

Myles and Emily Ryan

Myles and Emily Ryan and their family had been associated with the Tabernacle for some time in 2011, as they continued to work toward their long-held call to serve God in a camp ministry in Romania. The church was convinced of their heart to serve God, so they were added to the church's list of missionaries.⁷⁰⁹



Miles and Emily Ryan and family

Myles had made a commitment to his Lord in his teens and Emily at age twenty. When Emily was converted, she had a heart to serve people in the third world. Independently of each

other and before they were a couple, they were each moved by a visiting speaker, as he shared of the need in Romania at this particular camp site. From that time, they worked towards the goal of answering that call. Myles visited Romania to check out the camp site and the surrounding area to understand something of the culture and to liaise with Billy Ayre, who had worked in the general area in Romania for some time.

They planned to go with the mission agency Reaching Beyond Borders (RRB) and were planning to be away for five years.

Nevertheless, it was recommended to the church that they support the Ryan family in this ministry. They were assured of the church's prayer support and general interest and were reminded of the importance of regular communication. They were commissioned in April 2012 and left Australia a week later.⁷¹⁰

Unfortunately, the Ryans found it necessary to return to Australia as they could not obtain the necessary visas to stay and minister in Romania.⁷¹¹ The missionary committee met with Myles and Emily again in November during their brief visit to Brisbane and the Tabernacle. Since returning to Australia, Myles and Emily and family were permanently residing in Victoria.

They were utilising free low-standard accommodation provided by the Yackandandah Community Church with whom they believed God had called them to serve and were

⁷⁰⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2011–2012*, p. 23.

⁷¹⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2011–2012*, p. 38.

⁷¹¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2012–2013*, pp. 37–38.

Max and Ezzie

already active in various spiritual ministries within that fellowship. The church provided no further support.

Attached to the Yackandandah Church was a rundown camp site which was not operating at full potential. As they both had indicated that God had called them to serve in a youth camping ministry, it was their intention to develop the site to a higher potential which would enhance ministry opportunities and provide financial income.

Myles and Emily and their children had surrendered virtually all their worldly possessions and exhausted all their financial resources in their pursuit of finding and fulfilling God's purpose for their lives. They stated that in these circumstances they had the peace of God ruling their lives and trusted Him for the future. They expressed great appreciation for the financial and prayerful support provided by the Tabernacle.

In the circumstance that they had been sent out from the Tabernacle and had financial support allocated in the financial year Ministry Plan budget, the Missionary Committee recommended that the church continue to provide financial support for them for the remainder of the 2012–13 financial year. The Tabernacle ceased their financial support in January 2013.

Russell and Wendy Conwell

Russell is the son of Rev Ross and Mrs Sylvia Conwell. After many years as a missionary in Fiji, Ross was the Associate Pastor at the Tabernacle in 2004–06. Russell and Wendy transferred their church membership to the Tabernacle in 2012 following visitation.

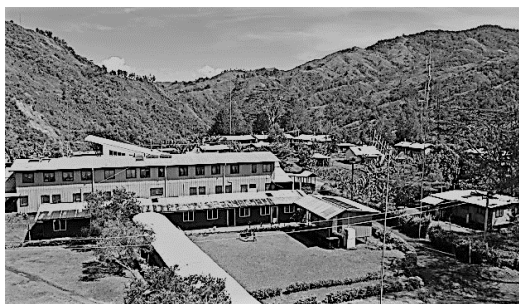
On 24 February 2013, it was a joy for the church to set aside Russell and Wendy and their three girls, Nancy, Heather, and Bonnie to go to the Kompiam Baptist Hospital and School in Papua New Guinea. Russell was to assist with maintenance and other practical tasks in the hospital while Wendy assisted in the school. The church committed to support them with their prayers.⁷¹² The hospital and school are ministries of the Baptist Union of Papua New Guinea.



Russell and Wendy Conwell and family

During May 2013, a special offering was received towards the purchase of seven notebook computers for the school, where Russell planned to use them in training students in basic computer skills.⁷¹³ The offering was fully subscribed reaching the target of \$5000.⁷¹⁴

Russell and Wendy wrote to the church, saying that along with their three girls, they felt blessed to have had the opportunity over the year to be able to serve God in a short-term mission. They had been living and working at the hospital in the remote Highlands. The hospital was about five-hours' drive from Mt Hagen, the closest major town. The hospital and associated aid



Kompiam Baptist Hospital

⁷¹² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2012–13*, pp. 22–23.

⁷¹³ *ibid*, p. 22.

⁷¹⁴ *ibid*, p. 38.

Max and Ezzie

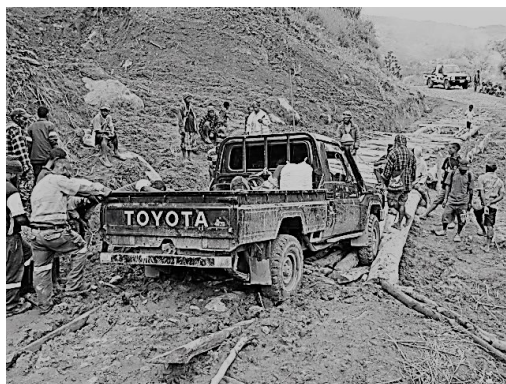
posts provided medical services to remote tribes and villages in a section of the country with little or no government services or infrastructure.

Their role at the hospital was providing support for medical staff and their families. Russell helped with hospital administration and with various projects including the building of new facilities and the maintenance of the remote aid posts. With a small school that caters for the children of the hospital staff, Wendy took on the role as high school teacher with a class of seven students ranging in age from 12 to 17.

The girls enjoyed living in a different culture and the many opportunities that life in Kompiam presented that were not possible back in Australia. Whether it was climbing the surrounding mountains, swimming in the local rivers, or playing with the other kids, they seemed to keep very busy. They started a small youth group for kids of the hospital and also ran a kids' club during the school holidays.

The Conwell's were very grateful for the wonderful opportunity to have been able to serve in some small way, and God taught them much about His faithfulness, protection, and provisions through the journey.⁷¹⁵

On their return, Russell and Wendy were again involved in ministry at the Tabernacle. Russell was a guest preacher during 2013 and 2014. They resigned their membership in 2015.



The Road to Kompiam



Hiking with the locals

⁷¹⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2013–2014*, p. 47.

William and Laurel Holm (née Preston)

William Volodymyr Holm, or Bill as he is commonly known, was born in 1946, in Hanover, West Germany. Bill taught in country Queensland in 1973–74 and studied Ukrainian language and literature while in Canada in 1974–80. Laurel Preston was born in 1951 in Brisbane and became a member at the Tabernacle in 1976, prior to her marriage to Bill at the Tabernacle by Rev Murray Sinfield. Bill and Laurel both came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1983. Their daughters Myfanwy, Tamsyn and Charise were dedicated at the Tabernacle in 1985, 1987 and 1989 and entered on the cradle roll.

Laurel taught high school at various schools in Queensland, and in 1974 in the SIL missionary school in Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea. She was secretary of the Ladies' Day Fellowship in 1983–85 and Superintendent of the Buds CE Society in 1995–96. Bill was appointed to the missionary committee in 1994–95 and was General Superintendent of the All Age Bible School in 1995–99, a position from which he resigned in January 1999. The church expressed its appreciation for his contribution to the ministry of the Bible School.⁷¹⁶ Bill was a guest preacher at the Tabernacle in June 2000, on the subject *Throughout all Generations* based on his text of Psalm 90.

Bill and Laurel hoped to go to Russia to work with WBT in the late 1990s but were unable to secure the necessary funding required by WBT.

They resigned their membership at the Tabernacle in 2001, but renewed it following visitation in 2004. Their three daughters came into membership at the same time. Bill was appointed Coordinator of the Sunday morning Bible study in 2005–06.

Bill's parents were from Ukraine and he had long felt a desire to help spread God's word there. As he approached retirement, he and Laurel were both well and active, so Bill searched the Internet, finding a Christian International school in Kyiv the capital of Ukraine, that was in need of a maths and physics teacher for the 2013–14 school year. This was Bill's teaching area. They prayed about whether to apply and the school was happy to hear from them. After a time during their contact with the school's administration, the school asked if Laurel would teach grade one in 2013–14. She hadn't taught in a primary school previously but was assured that she would manage.

So, all the details of visas and other requirements were completed and in July 2013 they arrived in Kyiv and remained for two years. All the instruction was in English, so Laurel was able to teach. Bill was fluent in Ukrainian, so they were able to move smoothly into the culture there. In 2014–15 Bill continued with the classes he had in the first year, but

⁷¹⁶ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1998–1999*, p. 11.

Bill and Laurel Holm

Laurel was changed to grade eight and nine English teaching, and became the school librarian.

Most of the students were the children of missionaries, but some were from various embassies or business families or were local children. Having a school in Ukraine that could provide a high level of education for the missionary children meant that families could stay on the field knowing that their children could gain entry to university in their home countries. It was humbling to see the gratitude of the parents of the students. Kyiv Christian Academy celebrated its 25th anniversary in October 2019.

Their apartment was very nice and comfortable and bigger than they had expected. They were on the second floor of a six-floor building, built in the Stalin era which was good because building standards later dropped considerably. Although they were on one of the main streets of Kyiv, the apartment was very quiet.

There were only 150 students in the school, so it was quite small but nicely set up.

To stay in Ukraine, they needed a visa which they received while still in Australia. Then they needed a residency permit which was organized, and their final documentation was a registration of their place of residence. The residency permit was a little complicated, but the residency registration was the best yet. It took five and a half hours and ten cents to accomplish something that in the end took less than four minutes. All of the official requirements met, they could stay in Ukraine until July. The authorities were at pains to remind them that if for some reason they changed their address, they would have to register their residence again – another five and a half hours and ten cents.

Their second winter was different in many ways from their first—the snow began about ten days earlier. There had been no forecast of snow, but they woke one Sunday morning in mid-November, looked out of the window, and snow had obviously been falling for some time. The world outside their windows was white, covered with about ten centimetres of snow.



Laurel in the snow



Bill and Laurel Holm

In the winter, they left for school in the dark and arrived home in the dark, and street lighting was fairly minimal. As the snow began to melt during the day it would refreeze during the night as ice. They didn't have too far to walk but each step for Laurel was challenging. There are a lot of steps in even three hundred metres! When the ice is white you at least know it is icy and can take precautions, but there is often black ice.

One afternoon at the beginning of December, they were coming home and were looking through the dimness to see if it was their bus nearing the bus stop. The bus was still about seventy metres away. Bill was looking up to try and read the number and Laurel had just begun to say, 'Watch the ice there', when he put his foot on it and over he went. It was a very heavy fall backwards onto the backpack he was wearing. They believe he cracked a few ribs. Thereafter he took things very carefully as they waited for the six-week healing process.

Bill was assistant coach for the upper school football team. The football season was short because the snow can start any time in November, and some years earlier, and school starts at the beginning of September. There are about eight games in the season and to fit them in sometimes there are two games a week. There were very few schools that the teams played against, so they usually played each other twice.

Being a small school, KCA didn't have many children of the same age. To come up with between 11 and 15 boys or girls of the same age was difficult. The schools they played against were much larger and so had a considerably bigger pool to choose from. The upper-school boys' team could come just from grades eleven and twelve but for KCA the largest number in the boys' team were from grade nine. This made it difficult for them playing against teams made up mainly of older boys from grades 11 and 12.

Sport was taken very seriously. The teams would train three afternoons a week after school and play a match on another day or sometimes two days. Playing football at KCA was very character building. You learnt how to lose graciously.

For their first thanksgiving celebration, Bill and Laurel were invited to join some people they knew from church and school. Three families lived close together in a small village on the outskirts of Kyiv. They arrived about 3:00 pm for a progressive meal. It was already quite dark because of the time of year and low cloud and fog. It was a cold and snowy day and walking between houses was a slow and difficult exercise. Inside however it was warm and cosy, and the friendship and food were great. They had the traditional Thanksgiving delicacies of roast turkey, pumpkin pie and hot punch. It was all very nice. It was great to have a four-day break from school for Thanksgiving and return refreshed for the last three weeks before the Christmas holidays.

Bill and Laurel Holm

The last school term of 2015 was seven weeks. They'd really enjoyed their time in Ukraine and were glad to be of assistance to the school and the families there, but the call of home and family was very strong. Even though things were coming to an end there were still many adventures left for them in the last weeks.

There were three days without any water supply. As was the case each time this happened, there was no warning, so there was no preparation for it. One moment you switch on the tap and have water the next moment you do the same thing and there is no water and no indication as to when it will be restored. There is much rejoicing when the supply returns!



The Kyiv Christian Academy staff

The last couple of weeks were very hectic with final exams, marking and packing. They wanted to bring home only what they could fit into one large suitcase each and a backpack each. Having no way of weighing the cases, it was with a sense of trepidation that they packed as much as they could into the bags. Heavy winter clothes that they would not use in Australia were gladly given to those helping refugees from the east of Ukraine. All the goodbyes were difficult. In just two years, they had made such good friends. Their final contact with the school was at a track meet just two days before leaving for home. As they walked from the oval at the end of the meet they could see and hear some of the kids they had grown to love waving and calling goodbye.

Their final adventure was the return home. Except for Bill breaking some ribs and coughs and colds, they'd had a safe two years in a tumultuous and grieving part of the world, for which they acknowledged God's goodness to them in all the time away.

This is my Father's world. O let me ne'er forget,

That though the wrong is oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.⁷¹⁷

After returning home, Bill and Laurel slipped back into work similar to what they had been doing before. Laurel taught Sunday School and Bill helped lead a Bible Study and took the chapel service at the Princess Alexandra hospital once a month.

Bill and Laurel participated in the 2016 missions' month celebrations in thanksgiving for the many missionaries sent out from the Tabernacle.

⁷¹⁷ C Rice, *This is my Father's World*, Warner Chappell Music, Inc. 2012.

Russell and Kelly McKay (née Robertson)

Russell was born in 1981, the son of Graham and Jeanette McKay. He was raised and educated in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. In 1986, when Russell was three years old, his father passed away, leaving his mother to raise her three children. Russell's uncle, Graham May, became his father figure and significantly shaped his approach to life. Although his family were not regular church goers, Russell attended Sunday School from the age of six, and became an active youth leader in both his church and at his high school after giving his life to the Lord at aged 16. He was baptised at age 18 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.



Graham May, Russell McKay and Jeanette McKay,
2007

Kelly was born in 1980 in Port Shepstone, KwaZulu Natal, the daughter of David and Pamela Robertson. Kelly's father was the son of a Baptist lay pastor but growing up, the family did not attend church. Kelly's family was transformed when she was in her late teen years when her mother started going to church and encouraged her to join in. Kelly was very close to her father, who passed away in 2008 from heart complications and this resulted in a significant landmark in Kelly's spiritual development. Kelly was born again after high school, in her early 20s, and baptised at the age of 30 at Port Shepstone, South Africa.



Kelly McKay's baptism

Three days after their marriage in 2010 at the Norwegian Settlers' Church in KwaZulu Natal, Russell and Kelly moved to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where they attended and served at Fellowship of the Emirates. Their daughter, Rachel, was born in 2012. Russell served as the leader of the helpers, ushers, and greeters' team and together the couple were blessed to see God growing his Kingdom. From around 500 congregants when they first started attending, the church had grown to over 2000 by the time they left in 2013.

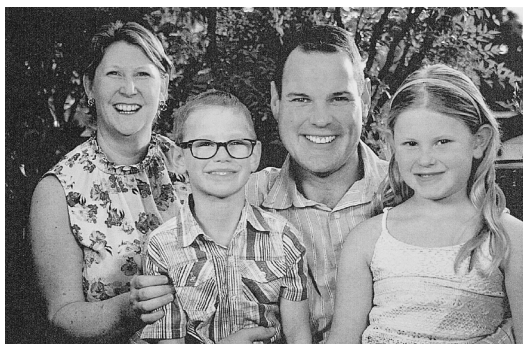
Russell and Kelly McKay

The family moved to Brisbane and started attending the Tabernacle. Russell and Kelly came into membership in 2014 following visitation. Their son, Joel, was born in 2014.

Kelly's father died in 2008, but both Russell and Kelly's mothers usually visit them, wherever they are living, for two to three months every two years or so.

At the Tabernacle, Russell has served as a deacon, chairman of the Missionary Committee, Kids' Church teacher, and has supported a new Youth Ministry working with the small number of young people in the church of high school age. Kelly has served as Kindergarten Coordinator and supported CE. The family grew to quickly cherish and form strong bonds with friends and "family" at the Tabernacle, which offered them a valued sense of community. The cherished connection of people and place led the family to apply for and become Australian citizens in 2018.

Russell's work as an economist typically involved short term assignments in the international aid and human development sector in Australia and overseas. On one such assignment in Jakarta, Indonesia, Russell felt a strong call from the Lord to work in Jakarta on a longer-term basis. Over the weeks and months that followed, and in prayer with Kelly, opportunities became clear and the couple were commissioned by the Tabernacle to be missionaries in Jakarta, serving with GI.



The McKay family

Whilst Russell was in full-time employment, the couple planned to propagate the successful multicultural Tab Tots ministry from Brisbane to Jakarta at the Gereja Kristus Rahmani Indonesia Church.

Upon arrival in Jakarta the family were blessed with the Lord's very generous provision. The Tab Tots Jakarta ministry started strongly and continued well. This playgroup-based ministry is offered in English and Bahasa and supports young children to know the love of Christ through his word, and through his people. At the same time key opportunities to involve mothers, and sometimes fathers, of the children pave the way for kingdom building through the church.

Whilst living in Jakarta, Russell and Kelly's two children, Rachel and Joel, attended the BINUS International school in Simprug and were becoming quite fluent in Bahasa.

Opportunities for the family to reach out to the community where they lived, worked, and learnt and engaged meaningfully with people around them were also prolific. It was

important to fellowship with others, share their lives, and when appropriate tell of the good news of Jesus.

Whilst physically away from the Tabernacle, Russell, Kelly, Rachel, and Joel worshiped at the Jakarta International Baptist Church—a group of English-speaking believers in Jesus Christ, from many different nations and backgrounds, who live in and around Jakarta. Connections to the Tabernacle were strong through prayer, constant and consistent sharing of information, messages of affirmation and ongoing relationship.

Recognising that all Scripture is important, Russell and Kelly found Proverbs 27:17 and Ephesians 4:29 as being particularly important both in their personal life, and in church service.

Russell and Kelly were forced to return to Australia prematurely in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They continue, however, to support the local believers who are continuing the work of Tab Tots Jakarta.



The McKay family in Indonesia



Tab Tots Jakarta,
Kelly, Angela Hoie and children

Part 2 Sent forth from other Churches

A number of missionaries and pastors have come into membership or fellowship at the Tabernacle after commencing full-time service. It is therefore considered that they were sent forth by the church in which they had previously been members. Their service is summarised in the following.

Stephen Glassop

Although not commissioned for pastoral ministry by the Tabernacle, Stephen was in membership at the Tabernacle for a large proportion of the time that he was engaged in ministry.

He was born in Sydney in 1847, the son of Rev James and Sarah Glassop. His father was the minister at the Unconnected Balmain Baptist Church for many years and a London City Missionary and was elected to the committee of the New South Wales Baptist Union in 1868. Stephen married Matilda Pontifex, the daughter of John and Emma Pontifex in 1870 in the Castlereagh Street Baptist Church, Sydney.

Stephen was active in the Band of Hope, Temperance League, the Daughters of Temperance, and the Loyal Orange Institution of New South Wales. He was also a lay member of the New South Wales Baptist Missionary Committee in 1871.

Stephen first came to Brisbane in July 1884, on what would appear to have been a reconnaissance trip and undertook preaching engagements in the Albion and Fortescue Street Baptist Churches, conducted an evangelistic service at the YMCA, and presided at a Band of Hope meeting in the Fortescue Street Chapel, before returning to Sydney in August. He was accompanied by Matilda and their three children when he returned to Brisbane in September.

Stephen came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1885 and Matilda came into membership a year later in 1886. They both transferred to Thompson Estate (Annerley) in 1888, before being readmitted in 1892, and then transferring to Taringa in 1914.

Stephen and Matilda were living at *Alameda*, Ellerslie Crescent, South Toowong in 1885 and in 1913–34. When living in Toowong late in 1913, he gave his occupation as minister of religion and when living at Inglewood earlier in 1913 as minister of the gospel. Previously he had been a collector at the General Hospital (1892–1909).

In December 1884, it was reported that the church at Fortescue Street had been without a pastor since the resignation of Rev Charles Padley on account of ill health and the services had been principally carried on by Stephen.⁷¹⁸

In 1889, Stephen delivered an address at the anniversary tea meeting of the Thompson Estate Baptist Church.

In April 1890, he was often referred to as Rev S Glassop in the BAQ's advertisements for the preaching appointments in conjunction with the half-yearly meetings. It is unlikely, however, that he had been ordained.

At the annual meetings of Assembly of the BAQ in 1896, a report of the Queensland Baptist Preachers' Society was read by Stephen. It stated that, although nothing of great magnitude had been accomplished during the past year, much encouraging work had been done. The report was adopted and appreciation of the labours of the society was placed on record.⁷¹⁹

In 1897, Stephen wrote to the committee of the Cleveland School of Arts, on behalf of the Preachers' Society, asking on what terms the committee would let them have use of the School of Arts and piano for morning and afternoon services on Sundays. A reply was sent granting use of the hall and piano at 5/- per Sunday.⁷²⁰ Later that year, it was reported that the "Baptist Connexion" had taken the Water Street Hall, South Bundaberg, and intended to hold regular Sunday morning Sabbath School and afternoon mission services. The first of those were conducted by Stephen.⁷²¹

Between 1885 and 1900, he preached at least 15 times in 10 Baptist Churches in Brisbane and Ipswich. While still in membership at the Tabernacle, he served as itinerant pastor to a number of Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist Churches in Walkerston (Mackay), Mt Morgan, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Dalby, Toowoomba, Rosalie, Jireh Baptist, Skyring Creek, Pomona, and Maleny before moving back to Toowong in 1915.



Stephen Glassop, c. 1900

⁷¹⁸ *The Courier Mail*, 3 December 1884, p. 5.

⁷¹⁹ *The Brisbane Courier*, 22 September 1896, p. 7.

⁷²⁰ *The Brisbane Courier*, 1 January 1897, p. 4.

⁷²¹ *The Bundaberg Mail and Burnett Advertiser*, 26 November 1897, p. 2.

Stephen's name appears in the list of Baptist Ministers in Queensland 1849-1905, and again in the officially published list of the Baptist Union of Queensland in 1916.⁷²²

Stephen was appointed to take charge of the Gympie Baptist Church for a short time from January 1907 following the transfer of Rev Robert Robertson from Gympie by the QHM Committee.⁷²³ He was welcomed in February 1907 and within three months of arriving in Gympie, he was elected President of the local Temperance Alliance.

In 1918, while serving as the QHM pastor at Wondai, Stephen suggested that the Sunday School should establish a library. The Tabernacle Sunday School sent a substantial donation and Messrs WR Smith and Paterson sent some interesting works.⁷²⁴ Stephen was the acting pastor of the Taringa Union Baptist Church for seven months in 1918–19.⁷²⁵ The annual report of the Taringa Church contained special recognition of the Stephen's services and an expression of gratitude for his faithfulness in the work, and his success in maintaining the efficiency of the church as a power for good in the neighbourhood.⁷²⁶

During the Spanish Influenza pandemic, which resulted in the deaths of 13 000 Australians, out of the nation's population of five million, he was able to render valuable assistance to the residents of Imbil, near Gympie.

His personal mission was to inaugurate the work in connection with a new cause established by the Congregational denomination, which he successfully carried out. His advice and help in connection with the outbreak of influenza were warmly appreciated, and on the eve of his departure the residents presented him with an inscribed gold watch, in recognition of his service.

Imbil is a small township 290 km from Brisbane. At the time, it had no protestant church, but there were occasional weeknight services, supplied by Congregational and Baptist ministers. Stephen was sent there to hurry on the work, and to visit the people.

The 'flu broke out, but his practice of homoeopathy met the need. Doctors, nurses, and a hospital were 40 km away. The first family to contract the 'flu was that of Mr Myers. Stephen treated Mr Myers and others successfully, and after recovering, they sent others to see him. He treated from 20 to 30 patients every day—one day there were 17 fresh cases. Within the large group he treated with homeopathy, there were no deaths.

Stephen was driven out in the mornings by different people but principally the schoolteacher, six to 11 km in different directions to see sick people. The experience

⁷²² D Parker, 1999. *Baptist Ministers in Queensland, Australia 1906–55* Baptist Union of Queensland

⁷²³ *Gympie Times and Mary River Mining Gazette*, 19 January 1907, p. 3.

⁷²⁴ *The Australian Baptist*, 19 March 1918, p. 7.

⁷²⁵ *The Australian Baptist*, 18 March 1919, p. 10.

⁷²⁶ *The Australian Baptist*, 2 September 1919, p. 10.

shows how God opens the way for helpful service when His servants are willing to enter the door.⁷²⁷

The presentation of a 15-guinea gold watch for Mr Glassop, and £4/4/ for Mrs Glassop was made on the lawn outside of the hall. The Roman Catholics suggested this, so that it should not have the appearance of the church's work. The people only had a fortnight to raise the cost of the gifts.

Back in Brisbane, he continued preaching into his late 70s.

In 1926, Stephen was appointed a life member of the BUQ. In replying, he said that he would rather preach a sermon than try to express his feelings. He told of his great-grandchildren, and those present felt moved by a deep respect and honour for the man so blessed in years and service for their Lord.⁷²⁸

Stephen died in 1936, a few weeks after suffering a stroke. Matilda died in 1949. Stephen and Matilda had 4 children, of whom two died in infancy. Their two surviving children did not any involvement at the Tabernacle.

The Australian Baptist reported that Stephen, was a foundation member of the Petersham Church, Sydney in 1882 and for about half a century, a lay preacher and indefatigable Christian worker, loved and honoured by all the churches, and a life member of the Queensland Union, had passed to his reward. The service at the Taringa Church, was conducted by Rev John Latimer aided by several other ministers, and afterwards at Toowong Cemetery.

⁷²⁷ Presentation to Mr Stephen Glassop, For Distinguished Service in *The Australian Baptist*, 22 July 1919, p. 4.

⁷²⁸ *The Australian Baptist*, 5 October 1926, p. 10.

Richard and Rosemary Austin

In the late 1970s, Richard sensed that the Lord was calling him to dedicate his life and his family's future to full-time Christian service. After some searching, he and Rosemary felt the Lord confirm that they were to become involved in the Bible translation movement and subsequently joined WBT. They became passionately committed to the goal of translating the Word of God into every language on earth. They trained with WBT in Papua New Guinea in 1980 as the cross-cultural part of their preparation, then served in Brisbane (1982–94) as state directors and later at the WBT National Centre in Kangaroo Ground, Victoria (1995–98).

Richard was a speaker at the Tabernacle during the Missionary Weekend in 1985, along with other representatives of WBT, and screened the film *It Takes a Team* at a missionary committee meeting. He spoke at the church again in 1988, 1990, 1991 and 1992 and chaired the Saturday evening Missionary Weekend meetings in 1993 and 1994.

Richard and Rosemary joined the Tabernacle in 1990, on transfer from their commissioning church in Victoria, Frankston Forest Baptist, which remained loyal in supporting them throughout their ministry.

Richard and Rosemary's work with WBT in Brisbane was largely public relations, recruitment, and promotion, along with a preaching ministry. Richard was on the Mt Tamborine International Outlook Committee and on the WBT Australia Council as a Board Member. He acted as elective leader at the International Outlook Missions Convention. He represented WBT at a number of churches, including the Tabernacle.

Richard visited Papua New Guinea in August 1990 to conduct a furlough workshop designed to prepare WBT members for their furlough in their home countries. Over subsequent years, Richard had the opportunity to travel to other places in the Pacific and South-East Asia to hold these workshops. He also had a number of trips to Victoria for meetings of the Council and the WBT biennial conference.

Rosemary conducted WBT Women's meetings at their home and office in Greenslopes and offered hospitality to members of WBT passing through Brisbane. She spent much of her time corresponding with Queensland members serving around the world, as well as with family, friends, and financial partners. They were thankful for the Tabernacle's



Richard and Rosemary's
Commissioning Service

adoption of them into the church family, having enjoyed for some time the fellowship and solid biblical teaching that the church provided. They also appreciated the church's partnership with them in making known the worldwide work of Bible translation.

Member care kept them busy in 1990–91 with a visitation program extending to Cairns and Mt Isa. Their ministry outreach locally had been steady throughout the year and Rosemary had a good year at their centre in Greenslopes.⁷²⁹

Richard and Rosemary observed that, there was an upsurge of interest in missions by young people. In the space of two months during the 1992–93 year, the WBT office received 17 enquiries and three Queensland couples prepared to join WBT.

Opportunities to minister in churches about world outreach saw Richard travel to Yeppoon and Atherton, as well as to local Brisbane. He also addressed students at the Baptist Theological College, Kenmore Church of Christ Theological College, and the Bible College of Queensland.

They enjoyed the fruit of their labours as Queensland members moved out to work with WBT overseas including Tabernacle members Max and Julia King.

Several WBT prayer-groups had begun in various parts of Brisbane, including at Wynnum. Richard and Rosemary encouraged these groups by joining them occasionally and sharing news of members and the progress of Bible translation around the world.



Richard and Rosemary Austin

In 1994, Richard decided to take a study sabbatical, attending classes at the QBTC, and doing practical church work at Cleveland Baptist. He had opportunities to preach, give his testimony, lead services, and speak at a missions' breakfast. They both attended a bi-weekly Bible study. They were conscious of the 1994–95 year being a time of grief and transition, as well as a stretching time of intense study for Richard. They were very grateful for the church's financial assistance while they were on study leave.

Richard was the master of ceremonies at the Saturday night missionary weekend meeting in 1994. Not long after that, in 1995–96, they accepted new assignments at the WBT National Office in Melbourne as personnel administrators and moved to Victoria.

⁷²⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1990–1991*, p. 12.

Richard and Rosemary Austin

Their new roles involved guiding and directing applicants through to membership and handling enquiries from those interested in serving with WBT. They enjoyed meeting keen applicants who were taking a big step of faith in obeying God's will wherever it took them.

Richard and Rosemary paid a short visit to the Tabernacle a year later and were able to report that, although their new roles were busy and the pressure of work constant, they were thankful to the Lord for his continued grace that enabled them to keep going. They were grateful for the church's prayers for them at the Throne of Grace and for their financial support.

The 1997–98 year passed quickly. They had seen many people pass through their office on their way to play a part in the great commission of Jesus Christ. Translation, literacy, support roles, career members, short term members, guest helpers, casual helpers—they all had their own separate tracks into membership and service. It was encouraging to see so many people wanting to move out of the normal well-defined paths within the community in order to move into missionary life. Some were older people in their second or third careers.

At the same time, Richard and Rosemary were preparing for their own retirement. In contemplating their career, they saw how the work they had done had reached into the lives of hidden people, little, seemingly unimportant people, but people precious to the Lord. These people were receiving the written Word of God and moving out of the darkness of false gods and superstitions into the light of Christ.



Richard and Rosemary Austin

In 1998, after 20 years in full-time service with WBT, Richard and Rosemary retired. Even though they continued to serve the Lord in various ways, including some occasional work with WBT, they were becoming aware that they had made the right decision in retiring. It meant that Richard was still able to take on the occasional speaking engagement. The church prayed for God's rich blessing on their future service for Him.⁷³⁰

They resigned their membership at the Tabernacle in 2009.

⁷³⁰ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1998–99*, p. 14.

Miss Jeanette Austin

Jeanette, or Jenny as she is generally known, is the second of Richard and Rosemary Austin's five children. She grew up in Victoria and moved with her family to Brisbane in 1982.

She returned to Melbourne to undertake studies at the Bible College of Victoria (BCV), had a year's break in 1983 working at the South East Queensland Electricity Board in Brisbane, and returned to Melbourne in 1984–85 to complete linguistic training at the Summer Institute of Linguistics School and raise a support team. She was commissioned by the Frankston Forest Baptist in Victoria in 1985 and went to Papua New Guinea in 1986.



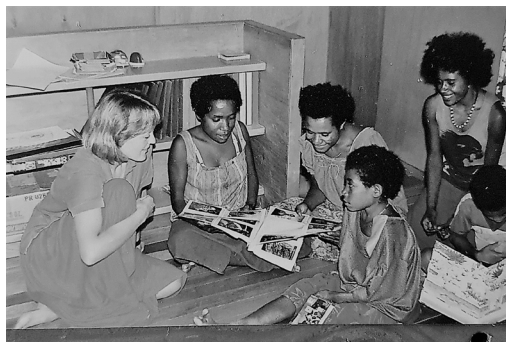
Jenny Austin
(Photo: Wycliffe Bible Translators)

Jenny transferred her membership to the Tabernacle in 1993 after attending the church for some time. She served on the church's Missionary Committee for six years, commencing in May 1993.

At a Home Group meeting in early 1994, Jenny spoke about her call to full-time service. It was the dramatic film *Mountain of Light* that convinced Jenny, in 1977, that God was calling her to be involved in the task of Bible translation. The film graphically showed how much minority people groups need the Lord and that the Scriptures in their language has the power to transform lives.

Jenny trained for six years to be a Bible translator, including three at Latrobe University gaining a degree in linguistics, two years at the BCV and one year at Wycliffe Bible Translators' (WBT) training school, the South Pacific SIL. After briefly serving in a translation project in the mountains of Morobe Province in Papua New Guinea, she realised she was better suited for a support role and returned to Australia to explore suitable options.

After a few years working at WBT's National Centre in Melbourne as a writer in the media department, Jenny reached a point where she needed to take stock and rediscover her direction



Jenny with some village people of Yemli, PNG.

Jenny Austin

in the Lord's service. In 1990 she took leave of absence, moved back to the family home in Brisbane, and found a job in the city. For the next four years she endeavoured to discern the Lord's plan for her life, whether to return to missionary service or to develop a secular career.

Two weeks after joining the Tabernacle, she recommitted her future to the Lord, who unmistakably called her back into full-time service. It was a moment of clarification that brought deep joy and made such an impression on Jenny that she never doubted the Lord's calling thereafter.

Soon after, the WBT Director invited her to join the team in the Brisbane office, which consisted of her parents and Des and Jenny Oatridge, missionaries who'd been translating in Papua New Guinea.

In August 1993, following Jenny's presentation to the missionary committee, it was recommended that the Tabernacle support her in her missionary service.

Jenny has served in various support roles for the majority of her career in WBT. Apart from her work as a writer at the National Centre, she served as a regional representative in the Brisbane office at Greenslopes for nearly 10 years. Reception work, organising training courses, being part of the ministry team, practising member care and maintaining regular correspondence with members overseas were skills that Jenny developed during those years.

Jenny and the WBT Brisbane team had many opportunities to promote the Bible as the Word of God, powerful in the languages of the world. They scheduled events and speaking engagements in churches, Bible colleges and schools to explain why it's important that everyone hears the Gospel in their own language. As a result, some Australian Christians heard about the work of Bible translation for the first time and many joined WBT and other missions.

In 2000, all expatriates working in the Solomon Islands had to be evacuated when armed rebels started a coup. Three American translator couples working with WBT relocated to Brisbane, and Jenny and the team supported them until they were able to return to their work.

That same year, Jenny attended a Member Care Conference in Singapore. She enjoyed the interaction with WBT staff from many countries and learned improved methods of member care,



Jenny in the Greenslopes WBT Office

including how to debrief members who came home from difficult circumstances on the field.

In the 2000–01 Yearbook, Jenny recorded how the skills she picked up at the conference were soon put to use. She had to debrief a family who had been held at gunpoint and robbed in their home in Uganda a few months previously. Later, that family recovered from their ordeal and went on to serve in leadership roles in WBT.⁷³¹

In 2003, Jenny accepted an invitation to take up a position in the Personnel Department at WBT's National Centre. As New Member Coordinator, her responsibilities built on her years in Brisbane where she cared for Queensland members by encouraging and guiding them. She says that she fitted into her new job so smoothly that she felt she'd been made for it. While it had been hard to say goodbye to her colleagues, church friends and especially her siblings and their families, she felt the Lord had prepared the way for a new phase of life. She had a new focus, new colleagues and worked at the national instead of the state level. She found it stimulating to be at the hub of the action.

Her role, later renamed Assignments Coordinator, allowed her to track alongside individuals throughout their preparation for overseas assignments and to develop relationships of care and support. There seemed to be a bounty of people who wanted to serve the Lord full-time and it was wonderful that a good proportion were finding their way to WBT and the work of Bible translation.⁷³²

In 2006, she wrote that throughout the previous 12 months WBT had sent out 12 Australians to work in translation, literacy, and support roles. She had learned that her job was not simply a matter of finding a suitable position for a new member, but involved preparing them for it in practical, academic, and spiritual ways. The Personnel team looked at the whole person, not just what skills they brought to the organisation.⁷³³

During the following years, she helped well over 100 people to find a place in the Lord's work, either in Bible translation, literacy, Scripture engagement or support roles.



Handing out the Kriol Bibles at the Katherine Bible Dedication

⁷³¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2000–2001*, pp. 33–34.

⁷³² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2003–2004*, pp. 40–41.

⁷³³ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2005–2006*, pp. 47–48.

Some of the highlights of her work in Melbourne were occasional trips to the field. One, in May 2007, was a WBT bus trip to attend the Kriol Bible dedication in the Northern Territory. Jenny was the main cook for the trip from Melbourne to Katherine where the celebration was held. It was a significant event, for Indigenous Christians. If anything can guide and give direction to those who are seeking a better way, the Bible in their own language has the power to do it.

Two years later, the Black Saturday bushfires in February 2009 came within minutes of threatening the WBT property and its residents. Many watched the progress of the fire on the nearby Kinglake range, never imagining that more than 100 people would die in that community. The whole regional community were deeply affected by the tragic event.

A month later Jenny represented WBT Australia at SIL's biennial conference in Papua New Guinea. It was a time to encourage the Australian members who attended the conference and Black Saturday was an important topic of conversation. Jenny also discovered that the people with whom she had done field training some 23 years before, had completed translations of the Scriptures into eight Papua New Guinea languages.

In 2010, Jenny took a short Sabbatical after more than 20 years of service in WBT.

In August 2011, Jenny accompanied several Pastors, including John and Lynne Williams from the Tabernacle, to the Philippines on a WBT Pastors' tour. The trip opened their eyes to the way people live in that area (Kidapawan, Mindanao) and the challenges they had in understanding and applying translated Scriptures to their lives. Some months later, the Obo Manobo New Testament was dedicated, and the tour participants heard that it had been well received.

In 2012, Jenny was asked to represent WBT Australia at the 30th anniversary of Bible translation in Vanuatu. During the event in Port Vila the local translators demonstrated, through reading a verse of Scripture in each of their languages, how important it was to reach the remaining 50 to 60 languages with the Gospel.

Jenny has occasionally had the opportunity to return to Brisbane to report to the church and to visit her family and friends. In September 2010 she visited the church and spoke about her work. She also spoke at the Missions Weekend in 2013, which was the year she celebrated her 25th year in WBT. Then in June 2016, she spoke at a special event held by the Tabernacle to honour Bruce and Lee Haste and Margaret and Dwight Hartzler for their years of missionary service, and to celebrate the many missionaries sent out from the church.

Throughout the years of mission work in Brisbane and Melbourne, Jenny has always been acutely aware of the key role her Tabernacle church family played in the task. She often expressed her appreciation of their support, thanking them for their practical

partnership with her in the Gospel, and hoped that they also were encouraged by the way the Lord was extending his Kingdom through their efforts.⁷³⁴

Jenny continues in 2021 in her role with WBT in Melbourne.

⁷³⁴ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2006–2007*, pp. 54–55.

Part 3 These also trained for Service

We are not all called to full-time service for our Lord, but we are called to be willing to serve if He calls us.

During the 1960s, several, mostly young people, felt the need to increase their knowledge or felt a call to full-time service for their Lord and commenced studies in theology or missiology. In some cases, no record has been found of their completing their chosen course of study, or if they did complete it, whether they entered into full-time service.

Miss Pat Weston

Pat, presumed to be Patricia, was a member of the YPCES at the Tabernacle, who entered the QBI as a full-time student in 1961, with a view to full-time missionary service.⁷³⁵ It is not known if she entered full-time service for her Master.

She is thought to be the daughter of Lionel and Betty Weston of Carina, who came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1960, when they were living in Annerley. They transferred their memberships to Annerley in 1963, then moved to Bullsbrook, Western Australia sometime between 1968 and 1972, when Lionel was transferred to RAAF Base Pearce. Neither Pat, nor her brothers, Graham and Thomas, were members at the Tabernacle.

John Sherwin

Following his baptism by Rev Fred Smith in December 1959, John was received into membership at the Tabernacle in June 1960, when he was living at 25 Heather St, Wilston. He was a member of the YPCES in 1960 and entered the QBI as a full-time student in 1961, with a view to full-time missionary service.⁷³⁶ It is not known if he completed his studies or entered full-time service for his Master. He was removed from the Tabernacle membership in 1983.

⁷³⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1960–1961*, p. 9.

⁷³⁶ *ibid.*

John Schutte

John was baptised in 1966 at the Prospect Baptist Church, South Australia and joined the Flinders Street Baptist Church in Adelaide.

In late 1970, he advertised in the Dutch Australian Weekly:

Young man, 32, gives private English lessons at your home, hours of your choice during the day or evening. Practical method. You learn it playfully. John Schutte, 37 Burwood Avenue, Nailsworth.

He transferred his membership to the Tabernacle in 1971 when he was living alone in Douglas St, Greenslopes. He may have been unemployed in 1972.

John studied at the QBI and was removed from the Tabernacle roll after he moved to New Zealand where he was attending a Presbyterian Church.

John is thought to have been living in Christchurch, New Zealand working as a cook in 1978.

Miss Janice Wheat

Janice Elizabeth May Wheat was born in Warwick, in 1944, the daughter of Mervyn and Joyce Wheat, who were married at the Tabernacle in 1942 by Rev Thomas Warriner, the Principal of the QBC and pastor of the Vulture Street (South Brisbane) Baptist Church where Mervyn and Joyce were in membership. They came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1942. Mervyn was a corporal in the AIF at the time. He was discharged from the AIF three months after Janice was born.

Janice's sister became a teacher and was living with her husband, Raymond Overend (who was in membership at the Tabernacle from 1967 to 1975), in Brugam, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea in 1980, where she was Principal of the Government High School and Ray was Principal of the Pastors' College of the South Seas Evangelical Church. Their brother, Maxwell, became a Baptist minister in Ferny Grove in 1971, married Jennifer Mutzelburg in late 1972, and then served in Caloundra from 1974 until 1992.

Mervyn and Joyce transferred their memberships in 1947 when they moved to Margate. Janice transferred her church membership from Margate to the Tabernacle in 1966, while living at Willara House and studying medicine at the University of Queensland. She was convenor of the sunshine and social committee and a vice-president of the YPSCE at the Tabernacle in 1967–68. She was only able to complete two years of her medical studies before health problems forced her to discontinue. She worked in the public service for a short time before going to the BTCQ in 1969. Health issues again forced her to withdraw from the three-year deaconess course after two years. She was

These also trained for service

listed on the electoral roll in 1972–77, as living with her parents in Margate. Janice transferred her membership to Clayfield in 1972–73. Her continuing health issues meant that she was unable to enter full-time service for her Lord. Janice is still single, living in Mt Gravatt East, and in fellowship with the Uniting Church.

Miss Julianne Slater

Julanne Phyllis Slater was living with her parents, David and Maisie Slater in Grange in 1972, working as a stenographer when she started worshipping at the City Tabernacle.

She came into membership at the Tabernacle in October 1972, following her baptism by Rev Neville L Abrahams in July—a result of God’s direct answer to her earlier prayers.

Her involvement in the church was mainly in church music, and some years later in an outreach/inreach called Come Celebrate where the church was carefully decorated for Christmas, and open to the public during weekdays, special services and involvements for that important time of celebration.

In 1974 at a meeting with a Wycliffe Bible Translator, in the home of Ormond and Grace Porter, she learned that translators had their completed New Testament translations lie around in the mission’s print shop simply because there was no typist available. This was in pre-digital days, and Julianne believes that the invention of computer technology is nothing short of God’s gift to a Bible translator! She thanks the Lord, for this amazing tool in making the availability of His Word easier throughout the world.

Julanne felt God’s call to go to Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea to help with the “no typist” situation but was completely surprised to have an opportunity to live with a translator and his family in his native village and to type his language translation of Proverbs for him and the tribe he served. Even more so when it later transpired that after 17 years working with that people group it was his joy to find that his Proverbs translation was the breakthrough of God to those people who then understood that what he was saying was the truth – they were exactly what Proverbs said to them. While in PNG, she also typed the book of Acts in another language for another translator, and various other grammatical papers for the mission.

Although the PNG Wycliffe directorate suggested she seriously consider joining their team full time, Julianne returned home to find an opportunity of forming a typing pool of ladies in Queensland who were able to type up many Scripture portions and associated language literature for the Wycliffe branches in PNG in Darwin.

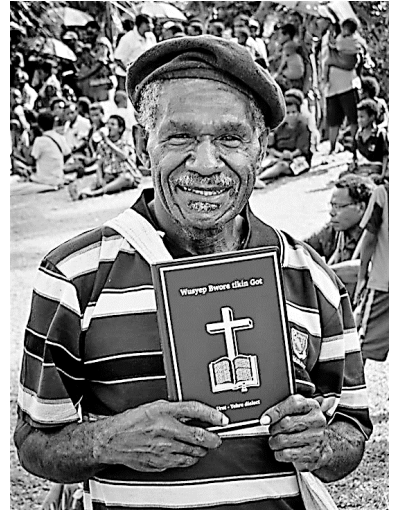
Julanne transferred her church membership to Bowral, New South Wales in September 2004 when she was called to serve as the Accounts Manager for Capernwray Bible School in Moss Vale. Capernwray is a worldwide enterprise to deepen the Christian life of students for future ministry. Her involvement there was also into the individual lives of the students to mentor, train and guide them in their walk with Christ, and to contribute to their assessment for the qualification through the School.

Julanne was very involved with the Bowral Church, once again through her musical interests and contributing to the life of the church in special celebrations, majoring on “inreach” to the congregation as well as “outreach” to the local community. Although not without “rocks on the way” this term of service was total joy and formed a basis for her current involvement in a church in Toowoomba to which God called her in 2018.

Recently, Julanne was surprised, shocked, and delighted, to learn that a casual conversation with Martin & Elisabeth Combs in 1974, was the catalyst for them to volunteer for their own missionary translation service in PNG. It has significantly impacted her to know that a casual conversation of nearly fifty years ago had such a contribution to the Lord’s work. Her response was to prayer: “Lord, empower my words, open opportunities, and encourage me to speak of You to further Your Kingdom”.

She declares: “Our words always have impact, and it is good that we may not know that at the time, and perhaps not for many years, but we are blessed by Him in the doing.”

In reflecting on all of this, she can only say, “To God be the Glory”.



A Papuan with his New Testament



Julanne Slater

These also trained for service

Ms Natasha Leontieff (formerly Natalie Lepcha)

In late 1980, Natalie Catherine Lepcha was living with her mother Margaret and sister Evangelina. Her father, Nikolas, who anglicised his name to Nicholas had died in July. Nikolas had arrived, aged 30 and unaccompanied in Australia in 1951, as a displaced person from Pinsk, Belarus, Soviet Union. He was single and gave his religion as Orthodox. Nicholas married Margaret Leontieff, who lived in Woolloongabba and was naturalised by 1958. Their marriage was performed by Rev Albert Butler at the Tabernacle in 1955. They had moved to Annerley by 1963.

Natasha's mother came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1949–50 and Natasha grew up in the church and Sunday School.

In 1980, Natasha was working as a waitress and came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1983. Her sister Evangelina had been in membership since 1977, having come in on transfer.

Natasha had four sisters: Irina, Elizabeth, Evangelina, and Marina who was also in membership at the Tabernacle and who married Milton Morsch there in 1983.

Natasha undertook studies at the Moody Bible Institute by correspondence, and at the beginning of 1983, commenced studies at the Queensland Bible College. She was also on the staff of Willara as a deputy matron and cook, and then acting matron for a period while the matron, Mildred Elder was absent.

Mrs Elder resigned as matron after four-years' service, in January 1985. Natasha was able to take over on a temporary basis with the assistance of the committee and others from the church who gave their time freely. This was a difficult time but the committee appreciated Natasha's dedicated service, and those who assisted her in the Lord's work at our 'back door'.⁷³⁷ She continued in this role until January 1986.

After Natasha completed her service at Willara House, she moved to Melbourne to pursue her study of art. While in Melbourne she attended the St Kilda and Collins Street Baptist Churches.

Natalie adopted the name Natasha in 1980 and then became known as Natasha Leontieff (taking her mother's maiden name) in 1995. She now lives in Ipswich and has renewed her involvement at the Tabernacle.

⁷³⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1984–1985*, p. 20.

Andrew Novic

Andrew came into membership at the Tabernacle in February 2016, following visitation.

He served with Josh Williamson in street evangelism, as a tutor in English Connection, and as a Boys' Brigade Officer.

He had previously commenced trained for the ministry but had withdrawn. He was the preacher at the evening services at the Tabernacle: in January 2018, preaching on *Broken Promises*, using as his text Luke 22:31-34 & 54-62; and in April 2018 on *Zeal for His Father's House*, using as his text John 2:13-22.

Andrew is now doing an internship at the independent Baptist, Grace Bible Church, Holland Park, which he commenced in April 2019, while studying at the Queensland Theological College.

Part 4 Short-term missionaries

Several members of the Tabernacle have undertaken mission trips of between a week and six months. They were either: unemployed; undertook the trip in conjunction with their secular employment; or undertook voluntary work supporting local churches.

Donald and Beverley Wilson

Donald William Wilson, or Don as he was commonly called, and Beverley Joyce Wilson were living at The Gap in 1977–80, where Don worked as a finance officer/insurance officer and Beverley was a nurse. They both came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1983, following their baptisms by Rev Paul Harrison. Before coming to the Tabernacle, Don and Beverley had contact with Cec Lockhart through their membership of Prison Fellowship. They served alongside Charles Day doing visitation and outreach in Spring Hill and Fortitude Valley and continued in this ministry for 26 years. They gave insight to their Christian lives at the 1993 anniversary celebration of the Tabernacle Bible school.⁷³⁸

Don and Beverley were part of a team to minister in Mysore, India in 1993. Many were brought into the Kingdom as a result of the visit and contact was maintained with the church in Mysore.⁷³⁹ There is little doubt that this either initiated or confirmed Don and Beverley's sense of calling to the Indian Mission Field.

In October 1994, Don reported on their visit to the Tabernacle. In November of that year, Rev Frank Condon, Anita Thomas, Don, and Beverley, went as the Tabernacle's team in connection with the William Carey Bi-centenary celebrations. They were supported by the church financially and in prayer during their time away.

After their return, Frank Condon presented a submission to the Missionary Committee to fund the construction of a Baptist Church at Mysore at a cost of approximately \$10 000. Subsequently the missionary appeal target for 1994 was set at \$6000 of which \$5000 was for Mysore. The actual amount sent to Mysore was \$4665.

By July 1994, the foundations of the Moksha Marga Baptist Church had been finished and the slab laid. The completion date for construction was December that year. The first worship service was planned for Christmas Day.

God gave Beverley and Don a ministry of support and encouragement to Pastor Mark in Mysore, Pastor Naveen in Malvalli, and their families and churches. They wrote to both pastors each week and received regular correspondence from them. They praised

⁷³⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1984–1985*, p. 12.

⁷³⁹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1993–1994*, p. 9.

God for the Tabernacle members who were prayer and/or financial supporters of Partnership Ministry in South India.

Pastor Mark asked Beverley and Don to return to Mysore in March 1995 for the dedication of the church building. The pastor and church members were extremely grateful to the Tabernacle for their gift, praying for the Tabernacle in their corporate time of prayer and fasting each Friday.

Don and Beverly requested that the Tabernacle appoint them as the church's official representatives at the dedication service and provide them with a letter of greeting to take with them. They also asked that the church support them in prayer before and during the time away and provide an opportunity to report back to the church, after their return. They did not seek financial support for this trip.⁷⁴⁰ In May, they gave a report and showed slides of their visit to the Missionary Committee.

In April 1997, the Tabernacle held a Missionary Sunday Service, during which Don and Beverley were interviewed by Dr Joan Webster regarding their trip. Displays for the congregation were set up in the church parlour. The mission project for 1997 included \$2500 for the church in Mysore for a new water tank and extension work to the Alanahalli training centre and repairs to the existing bore and pump set at the village of New Hope, Mysore.⁷⁴¹

Subsequently, in February 1998, Don and Beverley were commissioned for their role of leadership and encouragement of the local work through the ministry of Partnership Ministry.⁷⁴² Evangelistic outreach meetings were held when they visited India, some in new villages and others in established ministry areas. They then made annual visits to India to oversee the work.⁷⁴³

In April 1998, they reported on their fifth trip to India in February - April, where they had aimed to encourage the ministry teams and the believers. They were most thankful to the Tabernacle for their prayer support, of which they were very much aware, during their time away.

This visit had been their longest yet—five weeks—and during which, a total of almost 1300 people claimed Jesus as their personal Saviour and Lord. The majority of these came to Jesus during the outreach meetings, but there were some who were converted when the gospel was shared by invitation in their homes. The ministry teams had followed up these new believers and each had received a New Testament. They were

⁷⁴⁰ City Tabernacle Archives.

⁷⁴¹ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1996–1997*, p. 29.

⁷⁴² City Tabernacle, *Yearbook, 1997–1998*, p. 13.

⁷⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 30.

Short-term missionaries

being disciplined and were meeting for worship services, Bible studies and prayer meetings in house churches in their villages.

While they were in South India, the Lord gave Beverley a plan for the extension of the existing ministry to school age children. The plan was already implemented in the Mysore area and was to be extended to Malavallu and Doddaballapura. The ministry had been conducting vacation Bible schools during the summer school holiday months of April and May, but there had been no specific ministry to children throughout the year, apart from Sunday services.

Up to 30 school age children, mostly from Hindu families, in each of 18 Mysore villages were already hearing Bible stories and learning Christian songs one afternoon every week. Through the extended ministry, it was anticipated that soon, a total of at least 1000 children would be participating weekly. Club activities were also planned. This would necessitate providing a number of sporting bags, each containing a cricket set, basketball etc. Very few children in South India have access to this type of equipment. When they attended the children's ministry, they found that some of the Hindu mothers came along with their children and remained until the end. So, they were in a position where the Holy Spirit could speak to their hearts as well. They believed that the daily children's ministry was a wonderful tool of evangelism to reach out to whole families for Christ.⁷⁴⁴

The local church wrote to the Tabernacle saying that God had blessed the ministry and they had learnt personally to become more dependent on their Lord as they faced new experiences involving the ministry in both Brisbane and South India.

While visiting the ministry areas, Don was given many opportunities to lead Bible Studies with the workers and believers and to encourage them in their Christian walk. Don and Beverley were also involved in evangelistic outreach meetings at which many people claimed Jesus as their personal Saviour and Lord.

Beverley also enthused Christian women to become involved in this outreach to children.

They were looking forward to what God had ahead for them, believing a part of that would be attending the graduation service of two Bible College students in 1999.⁷⁴⁵

Don and Beverley resigned their church membership in December 1998.

Their daughters are Amanda Rabenhorst (who came into membership at the Tabernacle in 1985) and Sandy Wilson.

⁷⁴⁴ City Tabernacle Archives.

⁷⁴⁵ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 1997–1998*, p. 40.

Don died in New Farm in early 2008. Beverley died in 2020. She was being supported at home with palliative care when she passed away. Her daughter Sandy reported that she was ready to go Home to her Lord, and was at peace.

Rev Henry West

Henry Edgar West, or Harry as he was generally known, was born in Bald Hills, Brisbane in 1924 and grew up in the Bald Hills Methodist Church. He was in his second year of teaching, at Coowonga, when he enlisted in the Citizen Military Forces in 1942, while living in Rockhampton. He returned to Brisbane after the war and attended the Albion Baptist Church, where he met Edith Templeman. They were married there in 1945. After their marriage, they lived with Harry's parents in Toowong and attended the Toowong Baptist Church. They had two daughters, Ruth Ferguson, and Janet Wells.

Harry completed his theological studies in 1950 and concluded his ministry at Clayfield Baptist Church in late 1951. He had been a student pastor at Clayfield for the final two years of his college course.

Radio station 4IP's program on Sunday, 25 March 1951 included a Recorded Talk by Harry—Convention Speaker of the Christian Endeavour Union.

Under the banner *Mission to India*, the *Courier Mail* reported in late 1951, that Harry, 28, who had been the Clayfield Baptist Church minister for the last three years, his wife and daughter, were set to sail from Sydney on 4 January for Goalpara, in western Assam, 480 km north of Calcutta. said the newspaper article reported that Harry and his wife would have to spend two years learning the language before undertaking full missionary work.⁷⁴⁶ Harry, Edith and their daughter Ruth were farewelled for Assam in India at a public meeting at the Tabernacle on 3 December 1951.

Harry and Edith then served with ABMS from 1951 until 1965. They commenced their time in India at Baghpara, a small village in Assam. Senior missionaries were on hand to guide and help them in every way possible. The first two years were set aside for language learning and cultural understanding.

After a few months, Harry and the family went to Darjeeling, in the foothills of the Himalayas, for intense work studying Bengali—the main local language—alongside missionaries from other countries, at Language School. In 1953 they went to Comilla, in the south of East Pakistan, where they continued their language work. 1954 saw another relocation to Birisiri, a mission station in the north east of East Pakistan.

⁷⁴⁶ *The Courier Mail*, 29 December 1951, p. 5.

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Harry proved to be very capable over the years in his grasp of Bengali - both written and spoken. He used his skills as a part-time teacher and then as principal at the local Boys' High School. He also taught at field camps throughout the area as part of his missionary work.

After a year's furlough in Australia in 1957, the Wests returned to Birisiri where Harry became the principal of the Teacher Training Institute, which provided government registered training to indigenous people to become primary school teachers. As well, he was principal of the Bible Training Institute where pastors were trained for various Christian organizations. All lectures were given in Bengali.

Harry's main vision was to train indigenous leaders to take over the positions which missionaries were filling, including his own. During this time, he introduced extension programs, requiring all students to implement what they'd learnt at the Institute, out in the rural villages.

Harry understood very well the vital role that good Christian literature plays in developing Christian understanding and character. He established a printing press in Birisiri and spent as much time as he could providing Bibles and literature in Garo (the tribal language) and Bengali. He was also on the committee for the revision of the Bengali New Testament in Calcutta. After 12 years on the mission field, the family returned to.

Harry was an enterprising visionary who could see the vital necessity of literacy (which was lacking due to poverty) and the continuous need to educate Christians using Bibles, local hymnody and other Christian literature.

He had a great love of the Garo people where he mainly worked, put in his heart by his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

On their return from the mission field, they lived in Taringa, while Harry was in pastoral ministry at Moore Park Baptist Church, before moving to the Cleveland Baptist Church. On retirement from pastoral ministry, he was chaplain at Clayfield College for ten years. He also did some part-time lecturing at the BTCQ in Greek.

From 1975 until Edith's passing in 1995, they lived at Cleveland. Harry remained at Cleveland until at least 1999.

On 22 November 1997, Harry married Marg (Margery) Brooks in a back-yard ceremony in the home of Marg's sister Joan and brother-in-law, John Chenoweth. Marg's parents, Edgar and Hazel were members at the Tabernacle, as were her sisters Joan and Hazel. Both of Marg's sisters served on the mission field, and their stories are recorded elsewhere.

Marg had transferred her church membership from Wavell Heights to the Tabernacle in 1969 and Harry came into membership in June 1998 on transfer from Victoria Point.

In 1998–99, when the church was without a senior pastor, Revs Harry West, and Norman Weston provided the pastoral care and oversight of the congregation and undertook preaching roles.

Harry also led some studies in other world religions for the adult Bible School in 1999–2000 and the JCE had a two week visit from the Harry, who spoke about the Passover. He also explained the Communion service to the children. In 2000–03, he led a Home Bible Study Group.

Harry and Marg spent six weeks in Bangladesh in February–March 1999. This was Margery's first visit to Bangladesh. Prior to their departure, specific prayer was requested that Marg would be able to cope with the anticipated culture shock of the range of experiences that awaited her in Bangladesh. How well she coped is not known but she did not return to visit Bangladesh during Harry's subsequent visit.

During their visit, Harry met and prayed with the staff at the Joyramkura Hospital, some of whom he had previously served alongside, and held meetings and prayed with the Christians in Mymensingh, Dhaka, Birisri and nearby Sagardigi.

He also attended the Garo Baptist Convention's Annual Meetings in Gajni and the centennial celebrations of the Birisiri Mission Girls' High School.

The major goal of their visit was to encourage the local Christians. Three weeks after returning to Australia, Harry had open-heart surgery. Harry and Marg praised the Lord for his kindness, guidance, and timing. Harry returned twice more to Bangladesh, but Marg did not accompany him.

Harry died in 2017. He had been living at Carinity, the Baptist retirement home in Brookfield, since 2003. Marg died in 2019.

Kathleen Kingston

Kathleen Dorothy Kingston, or Kath as she is commonly known, and her husband Edwin (Ed) Kingston were married in the Rockhampton Baptist Tabernacle in. In 1970, they were living at Morayfield, Ed had become a pastor of the Caboolture, Wamuran and Woodford Baptist Church. They served in Innisfail and then as missionaries at Yuendumu, Northern Territory from 1975. After a period of pastoral ministry in Rockhampton and Lawnton, they returned to Ali Curung in the Northern Territory, for a second term of missionary service. Ed died, aged 65 in the Alice Springs Hospital in 2003, following which Kath moved back to Brisbane and became a member at the Tabernacle in 2004 where she served as the supervisor of Willara House from February 2004 until the end of 2006. She subsequently joined the Willara House Committee and served on the committee until 2015. In 2008–09 she was a casual supervisor on a number

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of weekends. In 2010–11, she again relieved as supervisor during periods between permanent staff appointments.

Kath was commissioned by the Tabernacle for a two-week teaching ministry to fellow believers in Bangladesh in 2005, in conjunction with the 10th Anniversary of Symbiosis International. She accompanied Rev Peter and Mrs Wendy Francis and Rev Ian and Margaret Wright. They shared their experiences with the Ladies' Evening Fellowship in August 2005. Kath became a member of the reconstituted Missionary Committee in 2005 and continued in this role until 2011.

Kath has been the Coordinator of the Nursery at the Tabernacle since 2013 and from 2015 until 2020, she was a visitor as part of the ministry of special care program.

Dr Joshua and Mrs Laura Francis

Joshua Reginald Francis, or Josh as he is generally known, is the son of Rev Peter and Mrs Wendy Francis. Josh graduated with BAppSc, MB BS and later gained the GradCertDiv. Josh and Laura came into membership at the Tabernacle in 2006 on transfer from Beenleigh. Josh was elected to the diaconate in 2006 and served until 2011 and was also appointed chairman of the Missionary Committee in 2006 and Leader of a Young Adults Home Group in 2011. Laura was the coordinator of Tab Tots in 2006–07. Josh had significant editorial input into the quarterly publication of the *Better City Life* magazine. Laura is a registered nurse and also gained the GradDipIntHealth.



Joshua Francis, 2017

In October 2006 Josh and Laura, along with their daughters Trudy and Gabriella, travelled to Kapsowar, Kenya for Josh to complete his final elective as a medical student and to serve with Africa Inland Mission, supported by the Tabernacle. Kapsowar is a small rural town about six hours drive north-west of Nairobi, two hours to the north of Eldoret. The hospital, operated by the Africa Inland Church provides health care and a witness to the Lord Jesus, servicing a population of about 100 000, spread out over a large area of farmland high in the mountains. The hospital was then staffed by nurses with various levels of training, a missionary surgeon, a missionary medical superintendent and, while Josh and Laura were there, two Kenyan doctors. Josh reported that the medical elective provided a daunting but exciting challenge, with him becoming involved in the management of many conditions familiar to practice in Australia, but with limited resources for investigation and treatment, as well as learning to deal with some very unfamiliar presentations.

During their two months in Kenya, Josh and Laura saw many open doors for sharing the gospel in a setting where the imperative of witnessing and discipling was such a clear and present challenge. They were thrilled to be able to share in teaching and preaching, to be building up and built up, as they walked alongside brothers and sisters in Christ in another part of the world, in another part of His body. They had wonderful times of fellowship with local churches as well as with long and short-term missionaries serving alongside in Kapsowar and in Nairobi, where they visited for one week.

Exposure to medical practice on the mission field means exposure to great need. It brings home the challenge to love as we have been loved by God not just with words and talk, but with actions and in truth. Josh and Laura prayed that the images burned in their minds would never leave them but would call them back again and again to love those that God loves, and to show that love as He has shown it to them, by being prepared to give of themselves for the sake of Christ and His people and for the sake of the lost.⁷⁴⁷

Josh was the leader of *Christianity Explored*, which was conducted during Tabernacle Training Time, in 2007–08. Josh and Laura moved to Perth, Western Australia in December 2010, and subsequently in 2014 to Darwin, at which point they resigned their membership at the Tabernacle.

Fiji Mission Trip – 2009

The Tabernacle sent a mission team to Fiji in 2009. In the church's yearbook, they reported that they praised God for the team who had shared with our co-workers in Fiji during July. The team consisted of Rev Ross Conwell, Mr Colin Berning, Dr Chris Ho, Mr Garth and Mrs Rebecca Klee, Miss Patricia Larkin, and Miss Emily Shannahan. Once again, they thanked God for the vision and passion of Ross who led the team. It was noted that Ross and Sylvia had planned to go to Fiji again in mid-2010, but, unfortunately due to circumstances beyond their control were unable to go and serve their Lord.⁷⁴⁸

Ross had served as a missionary in Lautoka, Fiji with the South Pacific Evangelical fellowship for many years and when health considerations forced Ross and Sylvia to return to Brisbane, Ross was an Associate Pastor at the Tabernacle in 2004–06.

⁷⁴⁷ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2006–2007*, p. 58.

⁷⁴⁸ City Tabernacle, *Yearbook 2009–2010*, p. 48.

Fiji Mission Trip – 2017

The Tabernacle has a long association with the South Pacific Evangelical Fellowship (SPEF) Church in Lautoka, Fiji. The most recent mission trip occurred in the first week of July 2017. The team of fourteen had been in contact with Pastor Semi Lotu at SPEF and a busy schedule of work and outreach was organised. The team planned to undertake significant refurbishment of the church hall with painting, kitchen refurbishment, and toilet and bathroom upgrades.



South Pacific Evangelical Fellowship Church, Lautoka building (Photo: Darryl Poulsen)

The identified skills required were:

Love of and commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ; commitment to mission and evangelism; willingness to undertake practical works within the SPEF buildings; knowledge and skill in carpentry, sewing, cleaning, minor works, children's ministry, adult ministry, evangelism across cultural groups; and willingness and ability to mentor, coach and uphold going forward, the pastors and SPEF leaders.

The team consisted of Allan and Ann Cameron; David and Charmaine Driver; Graham and Alison Jacobsen; John Larkin; Larry and Rebecca Lee; Russell McKay; Neil Pfeffer; Darryl and Gwyn Poulsen; and Pastor Mark Redman.

The team had prayed that whilst in Lautoka, the way would open for mission outreach opportunities in the local community. There was considerable excitement for opportunities to take part in Sunday worship services, evening men's and women's fellowship, school kids' ministry, and Friday and Saturday evening evangelism visits to a village where SPEF regularly conducted outreach activities and provided practical support.

A key priority of the mission visit was establishing ongoing mentoring relationships with the pastoral team of Semi and his wife Rona, and the youth pastor, John Brown. The organisers praised God for raising up a



Pastor John Brown (JB), Russell, Mark and John at work (Photo: Darryl Poulsen)

committed team with the range of talents and skills to enable these important aspects to be completed well so that the SPEF membership would be greatly encouraged and affirmed in their work for Him.

Members shared Scriptures both during the mission trip, amongst each other during daily devotions, with SPEF in various contexts, and on return in reflection of the Lord's blessings on the trip.

Their report served as an accountability measure for the church's leaders and as information for the wider church membership, and as prompts for prayer for SPEF and for those continuing in support of SPEF going forward and confirmed achievement of the trip objective was to minister to the Lautoka SPEF Church through mentoring, prayer, and practical works.

Reporting back to the wider Tabernacle membership, the team emphasized many highlights of their time in Fiji: getting to know the pastors and church members; fellowship amongst the team and the SPEF members; sharing with the Fijian ladies; the ladies' fellowship evening; the first Friday night dinner at Tanoa—so simple, so welcome; the singing (*Through it all, Jesus is the answer*); laughing; seeing the changes achieved; seeing the Fijians become involved in the work as the week progressed; being part of cooking the Lovo and the Saturday night Lovo feast at the church; the Fijians' desire to have the Scriptures in English; dessert at the Grace Kitchen; and hearing about the mission work of the South Korean Christians and their work in industry and training the Fijians for greater economic sufficiency; the generosity and commitment of the Fijian women cooking our lunches each day; Semi's Tuesday night message; the way the Fijians opened up to us as we all shared together in increasing ways; repeated answers to prayer in practical ways such as Brendan donating scaffolding, sufficient fabric being available for the new curtains, just enough red carpet being 'on sale' for the chapel platform, and shop keepers being generous with the white goods; Larry's craftsmanship was spot on;



Alison, Charmaine, Rebecca and Ann at work
(Photo: Darryl Poulsen)



Semi addresses the locals and workers
(Photo: Darryl Poulsen)

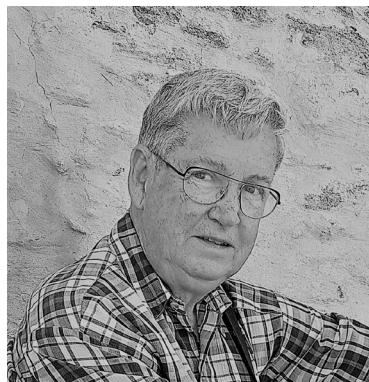
Short-term missionaries

Sam being at church after not being there for ages; the volume of work achieved, far greater than planned or anticipated; Mark's fall not having significant ramifications; sharing dinner, the meke with SPEF and experiencing another side of Fiji; and I love working holidays.

About the Author

From infancy, David knew life in the GyMEA Baptist Church, Sydney, where under the ministry of Rev Keith Wilson, he was involved in the Sunday School, Christian Endeavour, Boys' Brigade, Youth Group and Worship Committee, until he moved to Canberra just after his 21st birthday.

His grandfather, Rev Alf Driver was a Baptist pastor for over 45 years and Secretary of the Australian Baptist Home Mission for 19 years and spent several months ministering to the people of Yuendumu. David's parents, Stan and Ellen, who were founding members at GyMEA, provided a strong Christian foundation, leading to his conversion and baptism as a teenager. He offered himself for missionary service and prepared for this, gaining degrees in Science, Education and Psychology, but the call never came. The closest he came to missionary service was seven years teaching in Christian Schools and almost 20 years, part-time lecturing at Christian Heritage College in Brisbane. For a number of years, including the second week of his honeymoon, David was involved in Scripture Union / Inter-School Christian Fellowship Summer Camps.



David has fellowshiped in numerous Churches of Christ and Baptist Churches in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland, while working as a teacher. At various times, he has served as a Sunday School teacher or superintendent, deacon, church secretary or treasurer, home-group leader, preacher, and lay pastor. Along with his wife, he has worshipped at the Tabernacle since moving to the inner suburbs of Brisbane in 1996.

His interest over many years in family history enabled him to develop his research skills, which made possible the location of published resources and the identification of potential sources of information, used in the writing of this book. This interest extends beyond mere names, dates, and places, to anecdotal information and an interest in the person whose life is being described.

During his working life as a teacher, David was the author of several series of high school mathematics textbooks. He has also written an unpublished account of his grandfather's life, titled *A Fisher of Men: The life and ministry of Rev Alf Driver*. He was the lead author, with Hope Colegrove, of *For God, King and Country*, published by the Tabernacle to commemorate the service of the World War One servicemen and women who are listed on the Tabernacle's Roll of Honour, in conjunction with the centenary of the Armistice in 2018.

Commitment to Jesus and His mission is the bedrock of local Baptist churches.

The hallmark of the history of the Baptist movement over the last 400 years has been the understanding that the local church exists to share the Good News of Jesus by word and deed to those in their immediate locality and to those further away. It was out of this context that in 1792 William Carey began his missionary work in India and is credited with being the father of the modern missionary movement. Carey's influence had a major impact on Australian Baptist churches in engaging intentionally in mission beyond their own region.

Since the end of the 19th century, the City Tabernacle Baptist Church in Brisbane has commissioned and sent out over 70 men and women to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to communities well beyond its geographical boundary. These men and women have served in regional Queensland, other parts of Australia, and throughout the Pacific with the majority serving in Papua New Guinea but also in Irian Jaya (West Papua), Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Asia has been a focus, initially on the Indian subcontinent and now Bangladesh as well as Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, China, and South Korea. Mission staff have also served in Africa in Niger, Sudan, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, and the Congo. A smaller number, often a single missionary or family has ministered in Cyprus, Romania, Ukraine, and Czech Republic in Europe and in Panama, Central America.

The book also records the crucial partnership of the local church with mission agencies, the most significant being the Baptist denominational mission Global Interaction, previously known as Australian Board of Foreign Missions, Australian Foreign Mission Board, and Australian Baptist Missionary Society.

Rev Keith Jobberns

