

POSSESSING THE FUTURE

A History of the Ulverstone Baptist Church
1905 – 2005

Laurence F. Rowston

The original paperback copy, which contains photographs,
can be obtained from the Ulverstone Baptist Church.

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of the Ulverstone Baptist Church

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PREFACE

Denominationalism is dead, so they say. It is for some, especially for those who move from church to church seeking “worship experiences”. But for many, denominationalism is alive and well and they value their tradition. Denomination offers answers to life’s questions. It offers a place of belonging. Denomination helps them accomplish their mission for no single congregation can do it alone. Denomination provides a family far wider than one’s own local church. Congregations must be places in which meaning and belonging are found.

Baptists in Tasmania have a wonderful history. It is colourful and varied and it is yet to be fully told. For instance we know little of what happened between the formation of the Baptist Union of churches in Tasmania in 1884 and the birth of the Ulverstone Baptist Church on 24 September 1905.

For fifty or so years the Ulverstone church was numbered among the Home Mission churches. Therefore, its story, and particularly the stories of its pastors, is the story of at least seven of our churches for they too were Home Mission churches at the time. All the Home Mission churches benefited (and sometimes suffered) from the exploits of these same heroes. Apart from telling the story of God’s dealing with the Ulverstone church over its 100 years, this book also attempts to tell something of the fortunes of the Home Mission’s first fifty years.

This book has been a long time coming. In 1984 the Hobart Baptist church celebrated its centenary and I offered to assist in the writing of a history of this outstanding church in Tasmania’s capital. More was asked of me. I was asked to take on the full task. It was suggested that I might also write something on the forerunner to this church in the capital, the Harrington Street Particular Baptist Chapel (1840-1886). Both books were published and in doing so I was introduced to much more of Tasmania’s Baptist history than what can be learnt from these two churches. I have been collecting information ever since, including photographs, and so I was thrilled to be asked to produce this volume for the Ulverstone Church. Much of what I had collected needed to be put in an orderly way so the story of what Tasmanian Baptists have been doing on this island for the glory of God could be readily available to any who wished to read it.

I wish to thank those who have provided assistance. There are the Baptist archivists in West Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland: Dr. Richard K. Moore, Rev. John Walker, Lindsay Newman, and Rev. Dr. David Parker respectively.

Then a number of the ministers profiled in this book also sent me valuable information. My thanks are also extended to a number at the Ulverstone church itself, especially to Neville Viney who assisted where he could and oversaw the publication. Then there are the proof-readers at the church, Audrey Robertson and Jean Neasey. My thanks go also to Graham Clements of the Hobart Church who also proof-read the completed manuscript.

This book is dedicated to Doreen Thurston of the Hobart Church who, even before this was commenced, was at my request carefully working with copies of all the church news of our State Baptist publications. She has sorted and presented the church reports church by church. Over 1000 pages of reports from seventeen of our churches in seventeen individual volumes are now housed in our State archives at the Tasmanian University. Many of the volumes commence with reports from 1895. A number of these volumes are already in our churches for our local church historians to delve into. We need to be reminded at times that if we don't do this chore of investigating our own denominational history, nobody else is going to do it for us. These volumes have been a great help to me in compiling this book.

Our Baptist faith as found in the pages of this book on the Ulverstone Church is something we share with the whole Church of God. Our Baptist history as found in this book is something God has given us. My prayer is that those who read this history of the Ulverstone Church will be encouraged in the work they are doing in their own local churches. This book is our remembering of the grace of God. The church which will possess the future will be the church that has learned to remember, which finds in past mercies the sure ground of future hope.

Laurie Rowston,

honorary historian for the Baptist Churches of Tasmania

FOREWORD

Laurie Rowston gives an engaging account of a century's Christian witness in Ulverstone on Tasmania's central North West Coast. Ransacking written sources and drawing out fascinating memories from a range of key individuals, the author tells a stirring tale. It's one of tenacious, visionary faith that ought to spur fresh generations of readers to renewed commitment and bolder gospel mission.

I am delighted to write this preface because I had a bit-part in this history. I will always be grateful for the supportive way the people of Ulverstone Baptist helped shape my teenage faith and encouraged me to discern God's call on my life. They were significant among those who shepherded me towards college training and, in due course, commissioned me to wider Christian ministry. But I am just one among many mentioned in this account whose ministries, whether at home or abroad, were nurtured by this congregation. It says a lot about the vitality of a church when it maintains such a fruitful focus on equipping its young adults to pursue Jesus' great commission!

Laurie has chosen to weave this history mainly, but not exclusively, in terms of the Home Mission and around the church's successive pastoral leaders. Considerable edification is certainly to be found in such visionary initiatives and saintly examples. No one can doubt the exemplary Christian character, commitment and leadership capacity of many key individuals we meet in these pages. We thank God for their inspiration and impetus to our own discipleship.

Our Baptist commitment to the priesthood of all believers should not diminish the importance of effective leadership. Rather, it validates such leadership within the context of mutual ministry. It highlights the evoking of individual gifts which God gives both for building up the church body and for proactive missional advance. From this perspective, Ulverstone Baptist's heritage is one of ordinary people, redeemed sinners, who were warmly human, frail and often vulnerable. Through their willing availability, God's Spirit nevertheless empowered some extraordinary deeds of evangelistic outreach, church-forming and compassionate community engagement.

While much about the past should rightly instruct and inspire us, we live today in a period of breathtaking change. As 21st century Christians who carry forward the priceless heritage of faith "once delivered to the saints", we face unprecedented challenges. We must help each other live the unchanging gospel meaningfully in a radically different cultural context where most of the 'props' of Christendom have already gone but where spiritual hunger is widespread. Whilst understandable nostalgia could entrap us in the patterns and structures of yesterday, we know that our Unchanging God beckons his people forward into fresh initiatives, new forms and creative Kingdom ventures.

I trust that God will rekindle in readers of this history something of that pioneering vigour, clear-sighted tenacity and evangelical passion by which Ulverstone Baptists have always been known.

Garry R. Billing, Superintendent, Baptist Churches of Tasmania

Chapter 1

Harrison, Fisher and Salisbury

Beginnings

The rich agricultural and potato-growing country of the northwest coast has few areas to rival the Ulverstone district. This solid and growing town is situated at the mouth of the Leven River, about 130 kilometres from Launceston. The first two blocks of land were sold in Ulverstone in 1852 and the town was surveyed in 1856 in a rectangular pattern.

The Baptist Union of Tasmania, which was formed in 1884, reported in the beginning of 1903 that, "The year just closed has been one of the best in the history of our churches in this island, probably the best. Our pulpits are all well supplied. No removals have taken place; peace has prevailed; our missionary interest has been well sustained, and the spirit of evangelistic zeal and denominational loyalty has distinctly increased. Our augmented membership is largely due to the special missions, but not wholly, for most encouraging progress has been made without special effort, notably at Burnie and Devonport."

In 1900 there were 725 Baptist church members across the island.

At the 1901 Annual Assembly William Dubrelle Weston, the Union honorary legal adviser, proposed that the assisted churches and the home mission stations be grouped in a Home Mission Union, with a superintendent. "The paid superintendent who would hold a small church and be paid jointly by that church, the Home Mission and the Sustainment Fund," he said. He continued, "The Churches are doing so little for the support of the Home Mission. There is zeal for foreign missions. 'This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.'"

Baptists began a mission work in Ulverstone in 1902. The town had a population of about 1,150. Neighbouring Penguin, twelve kilometres from Ulverstone, had a population of 540. The Ulverstone mission was placed under the care of the Burnie Baptist Church.

The Rev. Samuel Harrison, the pastor of that church, spent a week in Ulverstone during November 1902. But soon the care of Ulverstone mission was transferred to Devonport Baptist's care as Burnie had commenced a new work at Penguin and were also conducting services at Wynyard and Stowport. The Penguin Baptists hired the Rechabite's Hall for their meetings.

At the Annual Assembly of the Baptist Churches in 1903 it was agreed to extend the work on the North West coast and a steady stream of Tasmanian young men began to be employed in ministry.

Church services began in Ulverstone at the Town Hall on 15 February 1903. The Rev. George J. Mackay of the Devonport Baptist Church, assisted by Amos Sidwell of Hobart, conducted the first service. It was reported that the Town Hall "was crowded to the doors".

Mackay, originally connected with the Primitive Methodists, made his first contact with Baptists when he joined the Hobart Baptist Tabernacle as a young man. So zealous was he and so promising as a preacher that in 1897 he was transferred to the Devonport Baptist church to work as an assistant to the Rev Harry Wood. He took charge at Devonport once Wood moved on.

Pastor George Edgar Harrison

On 7 June 1903, Harrison, the eldest son of Samuel Harrison, was inducted into the Ulverstone work. Union Council had approached George and he agreed to come from his home in Sydney to Tasmania to head up the work and to study for ordination. The appointment would be for twelve months. The Baptist Union Council would pay him the sum of 50 pounds per annum.

The Harrison family arrived in Australia in 1883, having come from Bradford, England. After a short period in commercial work, Samuel entered the Primitive Methodist ministry and was posted to the Bathurst district. Pastorates followed at Kempsey, Wickham and Granville. Being convicted of the truth of believer's baptism, he was baptized in the Petersham Church in June 1896. After a few weeks at Tamworth, he was inducted into the pastorate at Ashfield. In 1903 he had arrived in Burnie.

The Advocate and Emu Bay Times reported on 1 August 1903, "A baptismal ceremony was conducted in connection with the Baptist Church at Button's Creek, in the vicinity of the beach. There was a large concourse of people assembled to witness what in Ulverstone is an unusual spectacle. The Rev. G.J. Mackay delivered an appropriate address upon the subject of believer's baptism, after which the ceremony was carried out. Pastor [G.E.] Harrison delivered an earnest address concluding the service. At 7 o'clock Mackay preached in the Odd Fellows' Hall taking his text from 2 Cor. 5.7. There was a very large congregation, and the rev. gentleman gave a most powerful exposition on his subject. At the close he intimated it was his intension to visit Ulverstone at regular intervals alternately with Pastor [Samuel] Harrison of Burnie."

But by November 1903 the Ulverstone work was removed from Devonport's care and placed under control of Union Council and the Home Mission. George Harrison was made a Home Missionary.

The first recorded offering in June 1903 was six shillings and nine pence. Harrison's train fare from Burnie was one shilling and sixpence. The rent for the hall was three shillings and six pence a week. The cost to hire a horse to go to Penguin was four shillings and it cost ten shillings to hire a horse and trap to go to nearby Abbotsham and Penguin. The first church advertisement in the Advocate cost eight shillings and the first recorded wedding was Charles Radford of Blythe to Bertha Ling of Penguin.

In May 1905 Harrison had resigned as Home Missioner; his health had deteriorated. He stayed on in the district for many years retaining his membership and entering business. While associated with the Wynyard church in 1912, his wife died in an automobile accident. He joined the Devonport Baptists the following year. Later in life he remarried and ran a chain of delicatessens. Myra, his new wife, is remembered as someone who "could shave the last ounce of ham off a bone!"

Harrison's farewell service was held on 22 June. Present was F.W. (Jack) Fisher from Lilydale, Victoria, who was formally welcomed.

Pastor F.W. (Jack) Fisher

Fisher, who had grown up in the Port Melbourne Baptist Church, had been brought from Victoria to replace Harrison. The Baptist Union really wanted to place him at Wynyard but considered that the need was greater at Ulverstone-Penguin. He was placed under the supervision of Mackay and began his studies towards ordination. Accompanying him from Victoria was his invalid mother and largely dependent sister.

Weston sent him a set of T.W. Robertson's sermons saying, "I am sure you will find these of the greatest use." Mackay is told, "Fisher is fluent but will require a good deal of coaching from you in the way of preparation of regular addresses. Recommend him to the Ulverstone people as a very fair speaker and a very good young man." Weston tells Harrison, "Fisher doesn't have the same eloquence in speaking you have, but certainly has an exceeding nice manner and will, I am sure, get on well with your people."

Fisher was to be paid eighty pounds per annum and anything more up to 100 pounds, according to what the people might give.

"A Regularly Formed Church"

In August 1905 the Baptist Union Council agreed that the two churches would be called the "Ulverstone and Penguin Church".

The Ulverstone Mission was now meeting at 19 Main Street, in the Odd Fellow's Hall, later known as the Gaiety Theatre.

It was in the Odd Fellows' Hall on the evening of 24 September 1905 that the Ulverstone Church was constituted with five members: Mr. R.A. Whitlock, George Edgar Harrison, George Gill, Mr. H. Barker and his wife. Rev. J.J. Piercey of Burnie, who had replaced Samuel Harrison, was also present. Both Mackay and Piercey preached.

Reported the Advocate and Times of 26 September 1905, "The Rev. G.J. Mackay, vice president of the Baptist Union of Tasmania, conducted divine service in the Odd Fellow's Hall, Main Street, on Sunday night. The attendance was large, all available seats being occupied. The rev. gentleman preached an eloquent sermon from the words, "I am the good shepherd," the audience listening in rapt attention. During the evening Mr Mackay contributed a vocal solo which was much appreciated. At the close the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, after which members were enrolled, and the services which have hitherto been conducted as a mission, will be constituted as those of a regularly formed church."

The Penguin church was constituted four days later in the Penguin Rechabite Hall.

In January 1906 Ulverstone agreed to open a building fund account. This was opened in the Saving Bank with an amount of 4 pounds, one shilling.

Fourteen persons were present for the first church business meeting on the 17 January 1906 in the Odd Fellow's Hall. Present were George Mackay, Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Rigg, Miss Rigg, Miss B. Riggs, George Harrison, George Gill, Mr. and Mrs. H. Barker, Mr. and Mrs. N. Clarke, and Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

Fisher only stayed for nine months, leaving for the Longford-Perth Baptist Church circuit on 31 March 1906 to work as the Rev. Harry Wood's assistant. As a farewell gift, the Ulverstone-Penguin Church presented him with his own bicycle. In 1907 he moved to Wynyard and Yolla, then on to Deloraine in 1909. In 1914 he returned to Longford.

On 6 August 1906, Penguin asked for, and was granted separation from Ulverstone as regards worship and the running of their own business affairs. However, they continued to share the Pastor with Ulverstone until 1955 when it was considered in the best interests of Penguin and Ulverstone that they each had their own Pastor.

Rev. J. Robertson

Robertson of Victoria followed Fisher at Ulverstone. He was living in Launceston at the time and had planned to live and work in Ulverstone before the pastorate was offered to him. He commenced in April 1906. He only stayed on for a short term. Harrison continued to be of assistance during this time.

Pastor J.W. Salisbury

At the Baptist Union Council meeting on 6 August 1906, it was said that "the distinctive truths of the denomination should be taught in every town along the coast and that the Union Council, realising the importance of the Ulverstone work, had sent them the best man they could secure." The man was Salisbury. Only the previous month had he been located in the Bracknell District as assistant to the Superintendent of the Home Mission, the Rev. Vincent G. Britton. He was appointed Home Mission pastor for Ulverstone-Penguin for three months under the supervision of the Rev. James Palmer of Latrobe. He stayed on until March 1909, resigning due to ill health. He was paid two pounds a week.

In 1906 authority was given to investigate land for purpose of building a church in Ulverstone. By July 1907 a block was bought for the sum of 155 pounds in King Edward Street on the site where the lawyers Friend & Jones now have their offices. There must have been a difference of opinion over the purchase because the church news of August 1907 reported, "Several members and sympathisers have left our town." The church had been experiencing "large" congregations prior to this. The land debt was cleared by April 1908. Even so, it was never used and the land was sold off in 1914.

Upper Castra

In 1907 the first Home Missionary, William M. Kenner, who preceded Britton in the Bracknell District, donated land for a church building at Upper Castra where he lived. With the assistance of Martin Spellman of Launceston, who had been one of Kenner's converts in the early days, a little church was erected in 1908 and immediately became one of the Ulverstone's preaching and Sunday school outstations. Prior to the

erection of the chapel, the mission at Upper Castra under Kenner rented out the State School and the Anglican schoolroom. In 1908 there were thirty-one Sunday school scholars. Walter Filluel, who lived there at the time, was among those who contributed greatly to the cause.

Kenner, a teacher employed by the Education Department in 1882 had run foul of the Education Department for conducting services at Sassafras. He subsequently resigned his teaching position and joined the Baptist Home Mission. In 1902 he was the Sunday school Superintendent at the Perth Baptist Church. Once the Upper Castra cause was established, the incumbent at Ulverstone was required to make the twenty-two kilometre journey by any means possible, even if that meant a bike.

The Ulverstone Sunday school began on 1 December 1907 and work grew week by week. Deacon Barker was the first Superintendent. He was also Treasurer for a number of years.

Baptismal services continued to take place at the beach.

On 16 August 1908, Penguin opened its new building in South Street, Penguin. By June 1906 the Church had purchased the land. Ten days later Salisbury baptized ten candidates in the new building.

Early 1909 a Christian Endeavour Society was formed at Ulverstone. Church meetings were now held in a room adjoining R.A. Whitlock's shop in Reiby Street.

Betrayal

Because of ill health, Salisbury concluded his work as a Home Missioner at the Ulverstone - Penguin Church on 8 March 1909. He was advised to live inland. He soon transferred to Bracknell.

In 1911 he transferred to Wynyard. Yolla was his next placement but at the end of January 1912 he resigned from the Home Mission. He informed the Home Mission Committee that he was considering

“taking up work in one of the sister states.” But the Home Mission Committee received reports that indicated otherwise. “But in the event of the rumour,” the Committee reported, “concerning Salisbury’s contemplated entrance into the Anglican Church proving correct, we shall send no representative [for his farewell].”

He was located at Bracknell having commenced services for the Anglicans, and was “assiduously visiting” the district. He drew a number of Baptists away from the Bracknell Baptist Church. In 1913, the Home Missioner at Bracknell, Sterling Clarke, resigned from the Home Mission.

Rev. C.H.J. Warren.

Warren, who had come from Queensland to work at the Sheffield Baptist Church in May 1908, resigned from the Sheffield Church in December because of ill health but conducted an interim at the Ulverstone–Penguin Church for a few months from April 1909.

Both he and first wife, Laura, trained at the Queensland Baptist College and offered themselves for missionary service but due to lack of financial support from the mission concerned, entered the home

ministry. Laura died in 1902 and he soon remarried. After three rural pastorates in Queensland, they moved to Sheffield. From Ulverstone they moved to Victoria and subsequently to the Western Australian and South Australian Baptist Unions, with Warren retiring in 1936.

Chapter 2

Heaven, Clarke, Butler and Britton

“Our own Church”

Pastor William L. Heaven

In 1909 Heaven came to Tasmania to enter the Home Mission work at Ulverstone. A welcome was given to Heaven, his wife and four children in August. Born in 1867 in Gloucester, England, he accepted Christ when he was twenty-one and was baptised and became a member of a Baptist church. He began preaching in 1898. He migrated to New Zealand and there entered the ministry in 1902. He married while in Kaipoi.

In October 1909 fund raising for a new building at Ulverstone commenced. In December 1910 the Congregational Union offered to sell its “Leven” church property at 60 Alexandra Road, Ulverstone, to the Baptist Fellowship for 400 pounds. The idea of buying the Congregational church building “almost in the center of the town” arose at a meeting in August 1906. This historic old weatherboard church had been erected in 1878 on a site given by Robert Quiggin, and was one of a group of Congregational Churches that flourished along the Northwest coast. In 1903 the church was used by a local politician as his office. On 31 January 1904 the Presbyterians reopened it as a house of worship. They thoroughly renovated it inside, with comfortable seating. A very suitable organ was also purchased. But at the end of twelve months the Congregationalists had taken it back. On 16 December 1910 the Ulverstone Baptists unanimously decided to purchase the building. They looked forward to vacating the Odd Fellows’ Hall for it was “cold, unconsecrated, and in some respects uncomfortable and an unsuitable place to hold Divine service”.

In 1909 the Ulverstone Church did not expect or receive any financial assistance from Upper Castra. The Upper Castra members wanted their work closed. Union Council felt that Upper Castra’s troubles would pass but Ulverstone had lost interest in the outstation.

In 1910 the Home Mission reported that all the workstations were proceeding satisfactorily except Ulverstone. All the Home Missioners in 1911 received a pay rise except for Heaven. He was on 140 pounds annually. He concluded the pastorate in February 1911.

Heaven’s other ministerial charges included Hopetown in Victoria, and Bracknell, Sheffield (1914-1922), Wynyard and Yolla. He served twice at Wynyard (1912-14, 1926-32) and Bracknell (1911-12, 1922-24), and was at Yolla (1932-38) where he retired in good health. He was seventy-one years of age. During his first time at Wynyard in 1912, he informed the Home Mission Committee that he was considering resigning and that he would look for another area of employment. He had three sons: Ron, Bert, and Cliff and daughters, Muriel (Mrs. E. Bye, Wynyard) and Daisy (Mrs. J. Hamilton, Boat Harbour). He died on 10 July 1944, aged seventy-seven years. He had always been in charge of Home Mission causes.

Sterling G. Clarke

In February 1911 Clarke transferred from his home church of Longford even though the Home Mission thought of bringing Fisher back to Ulverstone. At Longford, where he was Superintendent of the Sunday school, he had been encouraged to preach by the Rev. F.J. Dunkley who was stationed there. Clarke's father was "an old identity [in the Bracknell District] when he used to travel on foot from Longford to Bracknell and Blackwood Creek, and back to Longford on the same day, preaching the old, old story." Dunkley, from Wellington, NSW, had been appointed Home Mission Superintendent in 1909. He had seven students under him. One or two ordained men supplemented these understudies. In 1910 the weaker churches such as Deloraine, Longford and Wynyard came under the Home Mission control. In return for financial aid, they submitted control to the Home Mission. Home missionaries in locations other than Longford were assisted in their duties by local preachers. On his farewell from Longford, Clarke was given a copy of "Foster's Encyclopedia of Illustrations".

"Our Own Church"

In May 1911 the purchase of the Ulverstone Congregational Church was finalised. The purchase provided a new impetus to Ulverstone Baptists. In June 1911 they celebrated the event with a working bee, saying,

"We are in high glee because we are soon going to worship in our own Church. Our Pastor had called a working bee to clear up the ground and clean out the Church. The men rolled up with picks and shovels, spades and hoes, slashes and mattocks, and a wheelbarrow. Being Empire Day some thought a revolution had broken out. They thought probably some one had been dishonoring the great Empire, or speaking lightly of our King and we were going to avenge that slur. But when our Pastor came along armed with buckets of boiling water they thought some one had started a bacon factory, and there was going to be a wild boar hunt; and when the ladies flourished their brooms folks did not know what to make of things; eyes scanned the heavens to see if there were any cobwebs in the skies. But the small boy is right every time: 'It is the Baptists! It is the Baptists! They are alive at last; they are going to show Ulverstone they mean business.' A good afternoon's work was put in. We all returned home tired out, but determined to have another go on Saturday."

Stuart McDonald well remembers the original church. "The old weatherboard building beside the two Norfolk Pine trees became a substantial and meaningful part of my life in that period from the cradle to marriage," he says. "The old manse was behind the church, as were the two 'dunnies'. How times have changed! I remember a banana passion-fruit vine hanging over the neighbour's fence. When they were ripe, they were most attractive."

The building was officially opened on 11 June 1911. Ulverstone Baptists worshipped in this building until it was demolished and sold off in 1957. It is believed that a Mr. Harmon at some time turned the structure round from east-west to north-south.

It was reported at the half-yearly meetings of the Baptist Union of Tasmania (BUT) in Burnie in 1912 that the “outlook at Ulverstone was distinctly hopeful and conversions had been recorded.” On 17 June 1911 a Band of Hope was formed.

But a year later the Baptist Annual Assembly report on Ulverstone was not so encouraging. “The work at Ulverstone had for some little time been giving us some concern, and it was thought advisable to make an alteration there. S.G. Clarke should go to Bracknell.” At the time there were forty church members at Ulverstone but 50% had not attended in the last twelve months. Following a roll revision, the membership stood at twenty. Only fifteen of the twenty were regular attendees.

Clarke preached his farewell sermon at Upper Castra on 18 February 1912. Dunklev was present for the farewell social on the Wednesday. The next day Clarke baptised five people in the River Wilmot. The spot chosen was close to Spellman’s Bridge some 300 metres below the local Post Office. Kenner participated. The service commenced by the singing of the hymn, “Down in the valley with my Saviour I would go.” The baptism service was considered a fitting testimony to the successful ministry of Clarke in the district.

Clarke commenced at Bracknell on 11 March 1912 and stayed for a year. Reports from Bracknell during his time there, indicated that nothing was amiss. In 1918 he wrote to the Home Mission seeking a new position but was told that there were no openings for married men.

Rev. Albert Butler

Following Clarke’s departure, Butler transferred from Yolla and commenced on 29 March 1912, staying only about eighteen months. Butler was the son of Edmund Butler and his wife of Perth, Tasmania. In August 1909 Butler was farewelled from the Perth Church for the Home Mission work on the Northwest Coast. He was presented with Burkett’s complete commentary on the New Testament. He was the first to leave Perth with a call to ministry. Within two years of his departure, two more were also farewelled from the church: Fred Wood, the son of the Rev. Harry Wood, for Wynyard’s outstation at Boat Harbour, and Ern C. Walsh. Butler began with the Home Mission at Bracknell in January 1911 as Dunkley’s assistant. He was twenty-two years of age. He was soon moved to Longford and then to Yolla/Wynyard. After completing his college course, he attended the Hobart University. At Ulverstone he married Laura Martha (nee Ball) of Longford. They had two daughters, Mrs. Ian Fraser and Roma and two sons, Dudley and Graham.

A Junior Christian Endeavour Society began at Ulverstone in 1913 and it soon had forty-eight on the roll. In 1914 the site that had been purchased in King Edward Street, was sold and the money applied in debt reduction for the Congregational church. The church never used the site.

That year Bulter was transferred to the Deloraine Church. From 1916 to 1924 he pastored the Moonah Church. During the First World War he served as a chaplain. Following Moonah, he exercised his ministry in the large Baptist Churches in New South Wales and Queensland. He fulfilled the office of President of the Union in each of the three States, and also served on the Foreign Mission Committee of each State. He

visited the Foreign Mission Field in India to make personal contact with the Mission Stations. In Tasmania he was President for 1921/22, a member of Union Council and for a short time editor of the "Baptist Church Chronicle".

He died in 1947 while President of the Queensland Council of Churches and minister of the Brisbane City Tabernacle. He was President of the Queensland Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society and a prominent member of the Temperance League. He had been minister of the City Tabernacle for eleven years, and was regarded as an outstanding preacher. His voice was frequently heard over the national network in devotional services.

Rev. Vincent George Britton

In January 1914 Britton was appointed Pastor, transferring from the Sheffield church. Britton was born on 11 February 1866, at Scotchtown, near Kempton, in the midlands of Tasmania. His parents were Roman Catholics and as a lad, he served as an altar boy in the Roman Catholic Church. To attend school each day he had to walk five kilometres through thick bush. He made first contact with Baptists when his family had removed to Dysart, then known as Constitution Hill. An Englishman, Francis Speake, a Particular Baptist and former member of Harrington Street Baptist Church, Hobart, had established a milling business at the top of the hill over which the main Hobart-Launceston road now runs. Speake built the small Baptist chapel and young Vincent Britton was occasionally attracted to its services.

Vincent left school when he was about thirteen years of age. In Hobart he joined a whaling expedition for eighteen months, which took him as far as Java. His duty was to look after the quarters of the boat steerers and harpoonists. When he returned to Hobart and received his pay, he had about twenty-five shillings to draw. "But money was not the trouble," he said, "It was like heaven to get off that ship and I was soon at home again. Nothing would induce me to take a second trip." The account of his year at sea is given in Wesley Bligh's book, "Altars of the Mountain".

He became a butcher in Launceston. Attending a mission run by the Rev. George Grubb in the Albert Hall, he made a decision for Christ and joined the Launceston Baptist Tabernacle. He became a teacher in the Sunday school and worked for seven years with the Launceston City Mission. The City Missioner, Baptist Robert Marshall, made an indelible impression upon him. In 1898 he joined the Home Mission and was posted to Bracknell and Blackwood Creek, replacing Kenner. The work revived. Services were commenced at "Creekton", one of William Gibson's Estates. Services were commenced at Liffey. Regular services were also held at Cluan in the State School, where, in later years a church was built.

Britton of short, stocky build, was a man of great strength. His physical strength and prowess made him respected amongst the hardy, rough pioneers, many of whom literally feared to match their strength against his. He was an expert horseman. His genial disposition and his deep human sympathy and understanding soon won for him a response in the hearts of the people and gave him ready access to their homes.

After seven strenuous years at Bracknell and Blackwood Creek, Britton and family moved to Deloraine, in about 1906. Finding the work in good heart, Britton sought openings for work in the surrounding districts. He was instrumental in having a church building erected at Quamby Brook. A few miles away at Meander, a similar work was opened in co-operation with the Methodists.

In 1910 Britton was called to the pastorate of the Sheffield church. Properties were acquired at Beulah and Staverton. While at Ulverstone in 1913, Britton was appointed Home Mission Superintendent in succession to Dunkley. This appointment obliged his termination at Ulverstone and his removal to Latrobe. Britton saw a home missionary as one “who can live on little, do a lot of work and come up smiling every time.”

During Britton’s time, evening services at Ulverstone saw forty to fifty people in attendance. Work continued at Upper Castra and Penguin.

In 1914 Alf Hingston supplied palings for the erection of stables at the rear of the church in Ulverstone.

Joshua T. Soundy of Hobart laid the foundation stone of a weatherboard manse behind the Ulverstone Church in October 1915.

With the assistance of James Clemens Salter, services were conducted at Penguin and for a time at Upper Castra.

Britton’s duties as Home Mission Superintendent at Latrobe for nearly thirteen years included a large district incorporating Sassafras, South Spreyton, Moriarty and Vinginstowe. Thus he required assistance in his work. The likes of Salter, H. R. Tunks, William J. Bligh and Reg Wootton, received their earliest training under his direction. Britton served as part-time chaplain during World War 1. The theme of his sermons after the War, “There is no discharge in this war”, touched a vital note.

During his fifty-six years in the ministry, Britton was pastor of only six churches. Apart from Bracknell and Deloraine, there was Sheffield (4 years), Ulverstone-Penguin (3 years), Latrobe (11 years), Deloraine again (2 years) and then Perth (8 years). While at Latrobe during the Depression, Britton opened a butcher’s shop so his Baptist people could purchase meat at a reasonable price. “VG” held the position of Home Mission Superintendent for over twenty years. He died in 1950.

Chapter 3

Fisher, Salter, McHugh and Steel

The Great War and the Great Depression

In 1915 the Home Mission was faced with the war years. A couple of Home Missionaries signed up and left the work. Home Missioner S.W. Simpson was killed in action. In the churches the able bodied men were also absent. Some of the Home Mission outstations closed. But the war had made even a more marked effect. It was found that a considerable proportion of those who had gone to war from the churches did not return to them on their return to Australia. It was a time of mental and spiritual upheaval. The routine of their lives had been broken and the habit of church going interfered with. The war introduced an age of doubt about everything. It has been said that up until the war Australians were a nation of creedless puritans, a nation with a morality but without a faith. The war increased this lack of faith in a personal God and in the life of the world to come. For many, the Christian God was given a high place on the list of missing persons!

Rev. J.W. Fisher

Fisher was welcomed back to Ulverstone in April 1917. He had married Miss. R. Rawson of the Launceston Tabernacle and she became Ulverstone's church organist. A fine woodworker, he built the Ulverstone communion table and trays, which were used for many years. In 1920 Home Missionaries such as Fisher were only getting salary and allowances of 169 pounds annually. By 1921 this was raised to a maximum of 180 pounds per annum. By 1926 this had dropped to 150 pounds. In 1921 there were fifty-seven baptisms in the Home Mission churches. This was seen as satisfactory.

In April 1917 two lamps were purchased with 100-candle power each for the church at a cost of eight shillings and six pence each.

It was during Fisher's ministry that a serious outbreak of influenza occurred and interrupted church life for some months. Meetings within doors were forbidden. Open-air services replaced the normal services.

The practise of bringing in evangelists to reap "the harvest of souls" was again seen in 1922 with the visit of the Rev. Adam Clark of Victoria, for a ten-day mission. The following year the church was involved in a United Mission with gifted Queensland Baptist evangelist, Dr Wilfred Jarvis, and his associate Morgan.

Work at Upper Castra was at a low ebb due to removals from the district.

Fisher remained until 20 May 1923. He remained Secretary of the Union up to that time.

He subsequently served the Victorian Baptist Union at Rainbow (1923-24), Geelong (Marshall Street and Belmont) (1924-29), Warrnambool (1929-35), Ballarat East (Victoria Street) (1935-39) and Regent (1939-

46). He is remembered as a man of gracious personality, generous mind and deep spiritual conviction. In all churches where he laboured, he left affectionate memory and solid work. It was said of him, "He is a man of few words but of fine fidelity."

Rev. James Clemens Salter

Salter transferred from the Home Mission Smithton Baptist Church, commencing at Ulverstone-Penguin on 19 June 1923. He originated from the Gannawarra district in Northern Victoria. He began with the Tasmanian Home Mission at Latrobe in 1919, as an assistant to Britton. The following year, he was at Smithton.

His removal expenses to Ulverstone were five pounds. Sixty years later the pastor's removal expenses at the time to Ulverstone were \$4500!

To begin with, Salter visited his Ulverstone-Penguin flock by bike. He soon graduated to a horse and jinker. Finally he took possession of a car.

Queensland evangelist Dr. Jarvis returned for another mission late in 1924.

Up to 1926 hopes were high for the erection of a "modern" brick church but it was a difficult year. Membership dropped and money was tight, not only for this Home Mission church, but all Home Mission churches. In 1926 the Home Mission's yearly grant from the Sustentation Fund, which had been set up by William Gibson Senior, was 660 pounds. The Home Mission raised another 2000 pounds that year. It had twenty-eight outstations connected to its seven churches.

The Ulverstone Church now had sixty members. The collections for February 1928 were the highest ever for that month, 11 pounds and 8 pence. By early 1927, there was an attempt at reviving the Sunday evening services, which were basically prayer meetings.

On 11 September 1927 Rev. Edward Holloway of the Sandy Bay Baptist Church opened a week's mission.

In 1928 Robert Anderson and Alec G. Pease were made life deacons.

Salter, with his wavery voice, continued until the last Sunday in February 1929. His next posting was to Moonah in the South. He remained there until early 1954. He was Baptist Union Secretary from 1933 until the end of 1939.

He served in the First World War in the Middle East as a Light Horseman of the Rats of Tobruk fame, and was senior chaplain in WW II. He was an artist, but one that could never sell his pictures. He was also a lover of old pictures and souvenirs of Tasmanian aboriginal life. He had two sons, Allenby and John. He died on 6 January 1960.

Rev. Ron H. McHugh

On 14 April 1929 Tasmanian McHugh, who had been studying at the Baptist College in Melbourne, took over the pastorate. He was ordained on 9 May. The report of the half-yearly Assembly of that year, reported

that McHugh “blows a trumpet of no uncertain sound, and during the Devonport Assembly revealed himself as a ‘lad of parts’. His maiden effort on Home and Foreign Mission night gave evidence of considerable native ability.” He originated from the Launceston Tabernacle where he was a most active worker in the Sunday school, in Christian Endeavour and as a local preacher. He began in the Home Mission in May 1924 as Britton’s assistant at Yolla. By 1929 he was known as the “Flaming torch of the North-West”.

But, at the deacons’ meeting July 1930, there were complaints of a lack of progress. Visitation was not being carried out sufficiently by McHugh. Twenty Baptist families had left the district, the organist and Sunday school Superintendent, Lucy Spellman, Martin’s wife, among them. Not one new family had replaced those who had gone. McHugh resigned at the end of August. He said, “My work in the district is not meeting the success that I would like, hence my resignation.” A Home Mission minute records, “The ministry of the Rev. R. McHugh was apparently a failure.”

The Home Mission placed him at Smithton for one month and informed him he was free to move interstate. He moved to Queensland. But his departure from the Ulverstone Church made little difference. The work continued to show little success. Thirty years later, in 1952, the Launceston Tabernacle reported, “The Rev. Ron McHugh has died in Queensland.”

By April 1931 the Tasmanian Baptists had seventeen churches and Home Mission Stations, with about twenty-five outstations. There were 1400 on the church rolls. Progress was slow because of the limited population and the many removals from the State. Church membership between 1921 and 1933 had increased by only 149. Ulverstone was just one church which suffered badly through removals. Valued church members were moving to the cities or moving interstate. For generations Tasmanian Baptists have greatly increased the strength of the mainland churches and the pattern continues even today.

The Depression

What advance was being experienced ceased with the coming of the Great Depression. Home Mission money was tight. It had an overdraft of 230 pounds, 130 pounds over the limit that the bank allowed. All staff, including the Superintendent had salaries reduced 10%. The bank soon lifted the overdraft to 200 pounds.

In 1931, on account of shortness of funds, all new Home Mission work ceased. There were 400 members in the Home Mission churches, 600 children in their Sunday schools, sixty-six teachers, eighty Christian Endeavour leaders and thirty-five local preachers. The financial shortfall for 1931-32 was sixty-seven pounds of an income of 1943 pounds.

Tasmania, as Australia, and indeed the world, was moving into a long depression. Early in the thirties the finances of the Baptist Union and the Home Mission were bearing up even though Baptists across the State, as well as the populace in general were suffering severely from depleted incomes for many, and with actual unemployment, in the case of others. The local churches were finding it difficult to keep the promises of

support made in better times. Cuts were also made to the salaries of the ministers of churches, independent of the Home Mission. Some of the smaller churches were restricted to meeting only the demands of their own church-work and requirements.

Rev. Robert Steel

It was into such an environment that on 6 September 1931, Home Missioner Steel arrived from the Burnie church, with the view of supplying for twelve months. By March 1932 the Ulverstone folk wanted him to stay for three years. The Home Mission Committee agreed and requested that he place himself in the hands of the Education Committee and begin studies.

Steel was born in 1875, one of a family of eleven. He was eight years of age when his family arrived in Hobart from Yorkshire, Leeds, England. The family soon moved to Launceston. He learned the carpentry trade from his father and together they worked on many Launceston projects, among them the installation of cross-arms on the poles along the middle of Brisbane Street that were to carry the first electricity lines to the town. From the very first, Robert was a keen worker for the church and as a young man was a Sunday school teacher at the Memorial Mission Church. At twenty-six years of age he decided to become a preacher. He began with the Home Mission at Bracknell in late 1905. In 1907 he was placed at Yolla. In 1909 he was transferred to Wynyard. In April 1910 he commenced at Smithton. Four years later the Home Mission accepted his resignation. Records fail to give any indication of his whereabouts between 1914 and his arrival in Ulverstone in 1931 apart from the fact that he was a soldier in the First World War. In 1932 he married Miss Jowett of Spreyton.

Decline

The decline in Baptist work through the Great Depression years continued. In 1933, there were twelve pastoral changes for the eighteen Baptist churches. Further, the Rev. Edward B. Woods, BA., B.D., the mainspring of the Union, resigned from Burnie to move interstate. Home Mission Superintendent Britton was in the Launceston Hospital following a level-crossing accident in which his car was totally destroyed. The call for help was sent interstate: "We cannot offer princely salaries, nor feed ambition with great churches, but we can offer great and effective spheres of service for the Master." In 1934 Britton's twenty-one years of leadership came to an end. The Home Mission churches, halls, and manses were generally in a bad state of repair.

Even though the Ulverstone church too was going through financial strictures, nothing could dampen the zeal of Steel and the Church Secretary, Miss Winnie Nibbs. She appealed to Baptists across the state to send in funds so that the tiny church vestry at the rear of the old church, in which the Kindergarten and Junior Endeavourer were meeting, could be enlarged. "The enlargement of the vestry will cost twenty pounds, and the church cannot see its way clear to provide the money," she reported. The attendance numbers were growing. Even the hall in which fifty children were accommodated for Sunday school was too small for the purpose. The appeal was successful. Soon both the vestry and the hall (with the removal of

the fire place) were enlarged. Monthly socials were also held to raise monies for these extensions. They paid off the debt in less than two years.

Nibbs, a school teacher, has the distinction of being the only woman Secretary of the Ulverstone Church. She held the position from 1932 until 1935. In time she married Hamlet Roberts. Later she was actively involved with the Burnie and Elphin Road Churches. Her brother, Gordon Nibbs was at one time the pastor of the Smithton Baptist.

In 1932 a "Discipleship Campaign" was conducted. Ray Revel, the blind soldier evangelist, also conducted a mission. By June 1934 the church was in an improved financial position. By now the church was staging an annual chrysanthemum show and fair in May.

In November 1934 John Roberts-Thomson conducted a successful ten-day mission during his college vacation. The church reported on Robert-Thomson's crusade, "Our mission work here has been quite encouraging. Sunday night the church was filled. The young people are responding well to the call to the Master's service. There were fourteen decisions at Penguin and Ulverstone." The following month, Dr. Graham Scroggie, famed Bible teacher, visited for a united churches' service.

Women in Ministry

In January 1935 Eva Braid left for studies at MBI. In 1937 she was accepted as a missionary to the Solomon Islands. She was a sister to Harry Braid who for many years was a member of the Tasmanian Legislative Council. She married Cyril Radcliffe, also a missionary. However her overseas service and life was cut short due to suffering from one of the many tropical diseases which missionaries faced at that time. She died in 1945. She is buried in the Barrington Methodist Cemetery.

Alma A. Barnes, a school teacher and tireless worker for the church returned to Penguin from Smithton in February 1935 and began preaching regularly at both Ulverstone and Penguin. She soon took over as Secretary of the Penguin church. She was also speaker at the Ulverstone Sunday school anniversary in 1935. Barnes transferred to Launceston Memorial Church in early 1938 and associated with W.E.C. and its missionary training college at St. Leonards.

Steel's Ministry

Steel remained until 19 December 1935. It was recorded that he "was a great success in every way. His tolerance towards those whose views are somewhat different has made him many, many warm and sincere friends in the Ulverstone district." Steel responded saying that, "He had been in many places but he had never been with such a fine, friendly company of church people." Steel was transferred to Smithton.

Probably few churchmen were better known in Northern Tasmania than Steel. Following Smithton, he also had churches at Deloraine (1937-39), Latrobe (1939-42), Newstead (1942-45), Altona, Victoria (1945-49), Launceston Memorial (1951-52), Rossarden and Storey's Creek (1953), Montello (1955-58) and a pioneering work at George Town (1958-62). He studied under the Tasmanian Extra Mural scheme, and was

ordained in April 1940. During his ministry at Newstead, open-air evangelical meetings were conducted in the Newstead shopping centre. He was President of the Baptist Union for the year 1943/1944. Following the death of his first wife in 1948, he married again. One of his proudest achievements was the Baptist Church at Forest, which was built when he was pastor of the Smithton church. “A working bee of 26 of us began building the church at Forest at 5 am.,” he recounted. “It was finished by 9.13 pm and we held a service. Of course, it was not a big church, but it was the first Baptist church in the Forest district.”

Church was his life but he never had any money. After twelve months folk would probably hear the same sermons again. For Steel the Christian faith was warfare. He once stood for the Labor Party. He retired at eighty-seven years in April 1962. Steel “an enthusiast for physical fitness and a man of big heart and boundless energy,” died on 1 November 1969, aged ninety-four.

The Rev. Richard W. Dobbinson took over as Home Mission Superintendent in 1935 and his assessment that year was sober in the least, “We have [in the Home Mission] no men with any degree of evangelistic fire coupled with balance and the whole field shows our lack in this respect. I want to make a big change in the field. Everywhere it is beset by the traditions of the last century.” In January 1936 Dobbinson wrote again about the work, “I want no cranks. Sane and energetic men are needed before any other qualifications. At the same time we must have College trained men. If I can only get hold of a few fellows as above who are not burdened with large families and can make do with a small salary, both they and the work will quickly advance.”

Chapter 4

Langton, Macintosh Brown, Dine and Roberts

A Building Fund

Rev. Joseph G. Langton

Langton commenced at the Ulverstone-Penguin Church in January 1936, transferring from the Perth-Longford circuit. He arrived with his new bride.

Langton was born on 4 August 1896 in Enderby, in Leicestershire and worked as a builder in the family business. He attended a Seventh Day Baptist church and was involved in Boys' Brigade. He served in WWI as a musketry instructor. He married Lucy Elizabeth Wesley on 2 March 1921 and they migrated to Tasmania in Australia in 1922. He had five children: Ada Lucy, Joseph (Ralph) and John Wesley (Wes), David and Clifford. In Tasmania a builder on the north-west coast employed him. He was also accomplished at bricklaying and in construction of brick kilns.

He entered the Home Mission at the Deloraine Church in January 1926 where he remained until to 1929. Six years at the Perth-Longford circuit followed. A petition was sent to the Home Mission by the Deloraine folk in protest upon his pending transfer to Longford. Upon his arrival at Longford, the Home Mission informed him that there would be no expenses for a motor car (usually twenty pounds annually) and that he should concentrate on his studies. His wife died on 17 December 1933 in tragic circumstances. She was just thirty-eight years old. Not long after Hilda Prestonia Newton of Launceston agreed to marry him because she "had met a man with five children and felt God say to her that she should look after them." They were married on 27 April 1935. Subsequently they had three children, Hilda Rowena, Prestonia (Tonia) and Philip.

He was finally ordained, having studied through the Extra Mural Course. He was passionate for constitution matters and for Baptist principles, such that he would embarrass his wife at meetings over such matters. The Home Mission saw him as "an able preacher of the evangelical type". Stuart McDonald has "some faint recollection of Langton's long sermons".

Langton's son Philip remembers that his father would weep in the pulpit over lost souls. He would often say, "The Lord told me," or "The Lord said this to me." While at Ulverstone he informed the church Secretary, Fred Ell, "The Lord told me that you are going to buy a new set of baptismal waders." Ell, who had a small grocer's shop in Reibey Street and was extremely careful with money replied, "I will once the Lord mentions it to me!" "Ell was thought by some to be Jewish," says McDonald, "But this idea was based only on the fact that he was somewhat 'tight' in his business. Very often he chose number 38 in

Sankey's hymnbook, "Jesus Loves Even Me". He would stand in front of the pulpit with his hands clasped behind his back. He was also rather reminiscent of Zaccheus in stature."

But by 1936 Ell and Langton seemed to be at odds. At the annual meeting of that year Ell resigned all positions associated with the diaconate.

In 1936 the church did away with fairs and the like for raising funds, and introduced an envelope system.

Late in 1936 a Senior Boys' Missionary Union commenced. A Senior Girls' Missionary Union (SGMU) already operated. The Rev. H. George Brice of Sunshine Baptist Church with his Baptist Boys' Touring Club visited for two weeks early in 1937. Langton worked with a Mr. V.R. Byard of Wynyard in leading a Sixteen Days' Mission in 1937. With joy, the church reported, "It looks as if a score of genuine conversions have taken place."

Stagnation

By 1937 the Home Mission churches were still weak numerically and financially. The Ulverstone and Penguin Home Mission churches were receiving assistance to the sum of 100 pounds a year. The other Home Mission churches at Yolla, Smithton, Wynyard and Boat Harbour were also being given help in the matter of stipend, ranging from twenty-one to 110 pounds per annum. Every Home Mission church and manse building was in urgent need of general renovation. Of Ulverstone it was said, "It must be provided with a better building as the present one is in a bad state of decay".

The Upper Castra property was finally sold off in May 1937. In the late 1940s it was transported to 108 Main Street, Ulverstone and converted into a dwelling.

The blind evangelist Ray Revel returned for another week in 1937.

The "Forward Movement", endorsed by the Baptist Union with the aim of bringing in those on the fringe of the church, of improving the prayer meetings, of allowing an exchange of preachers was endorsed by the membership in 1937. But by April 1938, the majority of Ulverstone members did not support it continuing. What is needed said those who objected, was that individually and as a church we need is to be right with God, and then the Forward Movement would begin.

A work was attempted at Riana but during winter 1938 it lapsed "until winter was over". That year deacon, Mrs. Dr. Connell who had commenced a Sunday school at Lowana, moved that services commence and offered petrol to cover travelling costs. In July 1938 the Home mission reported, "Ulverstone is going along fine."

At the end of 1938 Langton moved to Melbourne to begin at the old West Melbourne Baptist Church. His pastorates continued at Sandringham (1941-48), Dawson Street, Ballarat (1948-52) and Westgarth (1952-55). While at Sandringham he joined the Teaching staff of the Victorian Education Department teaching Social Studies and English and working as a librarian. He was involved with the Home Mission in the

establishing of a church in Belgrave South and at Chelsea Heights. He died in Brighton on 23 February 1970 after spending seventeen years in Tasmania and thirty-one years in Victoria.

Rev. E. Macintosh Brown

Brown took over the oversight at Ulverstone in January 1939. The transfer went on “happily”. While at Burnie, the Rev. E. B. Woods introduced Brown, who was connected with the Tasmanian Methodist Home Mission, to the Baptist ministry. He entered the work of the Baptist Home Mission at Yolla in 1925. In 1926 he spent six months on the Osmiridium Fields at Adamsfield as evangelist for the Tasmanian Council of Churches. In 1926 a Home Mission posting to Sheffield followed. Sheffield at the time had five outstations and required a large amount of travelling and some power of endurance, especially during the winter months. In 1930 Brown completed his examinations and was ordained. In February 1932 he requested a change and was moved by the Home Mission to Latrobe. He remained there “under very trying circumstances” until January 1939. In connection with Latrobe, he conducted meetings at Moriarty once a month and was chairman of the Latrobe hospital. In 1934 he planned to stand as a Labor candidate in the Federal Parliament. An outstanding preacher, with his military bearing and moustache, he was a man with a conviction born of experience, study of the word of God and of history. Brown defined a home missionary thus, “He must know his God, but he must also know his fellow man, and to know them he must go where they are, live amongst them, share their tasks and their burdens, and throughout it all point to Jesus Christ.” For himself, he felt that his work was among men.

By the beginning of World War II, Ulverstone and Longford finally became economically independent of the Home Mission. Dobbinson retired and a number of short-term superintendents followed, namely those of the Rev. Allan C. Prior, Frederick Clifton Aldis and Sidney E. Dorman.

In May 1939 Ulverstone gave thought to moving the Pine Road Presbyterian Church, Penguin, to Alexandra Road. Mid 1939 the church joined with the Protestant churches of Ulverstone in a Moral Rearmament Campaign. At the end of that year the Rev. George Williams of Gawler, SA., conducted a ten-day mission at which about six young people recorded their decisions. That year the church replaced the Sankey hymn book (and others) with the new Baptist hymnal.

Wanting to work in a wider sphere, Brown only stayed one year. A farewell meeting was conducted on 8 January 1939. Secretary Ell testified to the happy time they had enjoyed during Brown’s brief ministry. Brown boasted, “The work at both Ulverstone and Penguin is in good heart and I should say a great deal better than it was when I took over this time last year.”

He transferred to Victoria but was soon found at Red Cliffs, at the Knox Memorial Presbyterian Church in Victoria. The Victorian Baptist Superintendent, the Rev. J.E. Newman, had temporarily eased him out of the Baptist ministry. Newnham expected all his men to make an appeal for Christ at the end of every church service and Brown refused to do so. He was not an evangelist. Interested in the Oxford Movement, he lived a sacrificial life: he literally gave away the shirt on his back. A strong Labor man, he stood for

Parliament. In 1945 he was back with the Baptists at the South Yarra Church, and in 1947 at the Rainbow Baptist Church.

In January 1940, during his break from the Victorian College, John D. Williams, conducted an interim ministry. The Rev. Edward Woods, now affectionately known as “Daddy Woods”, conducted an interim pastorate from March 1940 but by August he resigned. He had found the work too much. He was seventy-nine years of age.

Pastor Tom R. Dine

On his first approach to the Home Mission Committee early 1940, Bible College graduate, Dine of Sydney, was told that there were no openings in Tasmania. But within months the Committee invited him to take charge of the Ulverstone and Penguin churches. He began in August 1940.

The Ulverstone church informed the Home Mission, that it needed a settled pastor, not a Home Missioner. The church was informed that such a change would cost it an extra fifty pounds a year. On hearing this, the church at first voted against it. A Home Missioner was generally paid 234 pounds a year with one pound ten shillings a week traveling expenses and a manse provided.

In November 1940 the Ulverstone church gave serious thought to becoming independent of the Home Mission. This was finally agreed to, by a majority vote the following month.

The Home Mission Committee wanted Dine to stay on at Ulverstone and Penguin but he informed the Committee that he had accepted a call to Sandy Bay Baptist Church. He preached his farewell sermons on 12 January. Aldis of Burnie filled in at deacons’ and church meetings until mid March 1941.

Rev. Albert F. Roberts

Roberts was inducted into the pastorate of the Ulverstone-Penguin Churches on 15 June. Roberts, the older son of Albert Edward and Isobel Roberts, grew up in the Hobart Baptist Church. The family had arrived from Ballarat, where they had attended a Methodist Church. Albert studied music pianoforte and pipe organ, and possessed a fine bass voice. Although a member of the Tabernacle, Albert was organist and choirmaster of the Swan Street Methodist Church. In 1934, on his twenty-first birthday he announced his intention of training for foreign mission work. That year he qualified as a pharmacist at the University of Tasmania. He then trained at MBI and at the Baptist College of Victoria gaining an L.Th.

Roberts was not able to proceed to the foreign field and so entered the home ministry at Perth-Longford (1939-41). Albert was ordained in January 1939.

Roberts’ work at Penguin entailed a weekly Sunday afternoon service, an evening Sunday service once a month and a weekly midweek service. While at Ulverstone and Penguin, Roberts represented the State on the Foreign Mission Board.

The War Years

Early in World War II, Roberts tried to get back into his old Army Unit in Hobart, but they had their complement of dispensers. Even so, much of his time was taken up with “Home Front Chaplaincy”. This meant conveying the not-so-good news to families. He was a warden in the Air Observer Corps and this sometimes meant night shifts, reporting all air movements and/or sea-front movements from the spotting tower on the golf course. Many of his sermons dealt with contemporary events.

Together with Methodist and Presbyterian Ministers, he secured a regular Temperance session on the local radio station.

In September 1941 Roberts sought to have the debt on the manse cleared and this was accomplished in 1945.

When the total blackout regulation came into force, Roberts would drive to and from Penguin in total darkness. Even though a black out order applied to the church in 1942, evening service attendances kept up. The insurance cover for war damage comprised: Ulverstone manse 600 pounds, Ulverstone church 450 pounds, Penguin church 300 pounds plus values for plant and contents. By June 1942 it was noted “our young men have been absorbed in the fighting forces, and it appears that at last we have reached the stage where we have no more young men to give.” December 1943 a five-shilling canteen order with a Christmas letter was sent to each of the thirty service men and women in the services.

Early in 1944 Lawrence Trevor Ling, son of Charles Henry Ling and Elsie (nee Hunt), brother to Murray Ling, drowned in a prisoner-of-war sinking. Prisoner Clark, also drowned in that sinking.

A Building Fund

In January 1944, a building committee was appointed and a building fund started in earnest. The main sources of income, raising approximately 200 pounds per annum, were the tomato plot worked in partnership with the Committee’s Treasurer, Walter Filluel, an annual fair and vegetable show, and straight out giving by members and friends. Building plans were finalised by February 1944. The church expected congregations would be between 125 and 150. Over the following years funds grew slowly, (300 pounds by early 1944) but estimates continued to rise. The amount thought needed was 2000 pounds.

Roberts’ Leave

Roberts and his wife Rachael (nee Banks), who came from the Kew Baptist Church in Victoria, had three sons, and a daughter. It was the daughter that prompted them to leave Tasmania even though the church had invited him in January 1944 to stay for another three years, doctors had warned that another Tasmanian winter might kill her. Roberts left for the Brighton Baptist Church in South Australia, with farewell services on 12 March 1945. In South Australia he was President of the Baptist Union in 1952 and again in 1972. He also served as Secretary of the State Foreign Mission Committee, Chairman of the ABFM Board, the Evangelistic Committee and the Young People’s Board.

A move to Victoria followed in 1954 where Roberts pastored the Brunswick Church for four years (1954-58). Then he became Secretary of the Asia Regional Committee of the Australian Baptist Missionary Society (ABMS - now Global interAction) for six years. A pastorate of eleven years at Hillcrest in South Australia followed and a two-year Home Mission appointment at Renmark. In retirement, he served in a number of interim pastorates, including Canberra and Eastern Shore (now CityGate Baptist) in Hobart. He was a man of firm convictions. He always had good pastorates. He was the official speaker for the opening of the Ulverstone Baptist Sanctuary in June 1960. He was also guest speaker at the church's 80th church anniversary celebrations in 1985.

Chapter 5

Holloway and Tuck

No Longer a Home Mission Church

Rev. Albert Edward Holloway

Holloway was welcomed on 17 February 1946 from Freemantle, WA. Born in Tasmania in 1878, he was one of Sheffield's "most prominent Endeavourers". He commenced with the Home Mission at Bracknell in 1912 and was moved to Smithton in January 1913. He commenced in Yolla in December 1915 stayed for two years before moving onto Smithton in 1918 and then late in 1918 to he went back to Bracknell. He concluded at Bracknell in March 1922. While on tour in 1922, Britton found the properties at Bracknell in "splendid" condition and Holloway received a commendation. He was ordained in 1922. His final Home Mission appointment was at Deloraine (1922-25). Three years at Sandy Bay concluded his first stint in Tasmania. He and his wife, Ruth, who originated at Smithton, moved with their two daughters and son to Wagin in West Australia commencing in early 1929. He had a keen interest in Foreign Missionary work. He became President of the WA Baptist Union.

The Co-Operative Plan

In March 1946 the Tasmanian Executive Council of the Baptist Union finalised the form of agreement for the co-operative plan with the Victorian Baptist Union. The plan was put into operation for an initial five-year trial period. When it was first suggested the comment was made, "Men sweltering on the Mallee would be glad to cool down in Tasmania for a year or two!" The co-operation proceeded for the mutual advantage of each and without infringing on the autonomy of either. The agreement also covered the Home Mission where the help was most needed. Rev. Jack Manning, superintendent of the Baptist Victorian Home Mission, became Tasmania's Superintendent also. Major ministerial problems were greatly reduced. Long standing debts turned into credits. The Tasmanian churches were on the same rising tide as the churches in Victoria. A "Sites, Building and Loan Fund" was established. Stipends were lifted to Victorian standards. The old churches such as Latrobe and Deloraine ceased to talk of defeat. New churches were born. Victorian pastors moved to Tasmania and Tasmanian pastors moved to Victoria. None appreciated it more than the Home Mission pastors. Causes such as Tarroona, South Hobart and Lenah Valley, in the south, were born.

In November 1946, the Rev. W.F. Betts, evangelist from Methodist Fitzroy Mission, conducted a fifteen-day mission as part of the "Interdominational Australia wide Bible revival Campaign".

Memories

Attendances were growing and a good number of young people were coming into membership. Among them was Stuart McDonald. He has vivid memories of Holloway. "He left some amusing memories, not because he was a comedian, far from it, but because of some idiosyncrasies," explains Stuart. "For instance, when he gave thanks for the collection, he seemed unable to close his eyes, and we wondered if he was counting the offering in the plates while he prayed. On one occasion, he took three of us to Hobart for a Christian Endeavour convention in his Ford Prefect. When we started to descend Spring Hill he disengaged the gears and we coasted down the hill. As we neared the bottom he started to rock backwards and forwards, explaining as he did so, that if we could get the car over the next 'little rise', we'd be able to coast down the next hill. We three joined in vigorous rocking in rather amusing vein, however, our efforts were all in vain. The 'little rise' turned out to be a couple of miles of uphill highway. During the business meetings of the convention, 'Bertie', as we affectionately dubbed him, set the record, in our estimation, for the number of speeches, either in support of, or opposed to, motions before the chair. He had a friend, an evangelist, whom he enlisted for a campaign in the church. This worthy nearly caused a riot when he lambasted the congregation for listening to the serial, 'Blue Hills'!" Holloway, who always had a black hat, lacked a sense of humour in that he could not see the funny side of himself.

During Holloway's ministry the building fund grew. By September 1946 it stood at 1000 pounds, by October 1948, 1400 pounds and by March 1950, 1600 pounds. Holloway endeavoured to have a new church building erected but funds were still not sufficient. Stuart continues, "Holloway was very keen to have us replace the old building with a new one, so plans were drawn up (in 1951). That was as far as it went because the membership at that time had no enthusiasm for raising funds or bending backs for such a cause.

Ulverstone's fortunes in 1947 were indicative of that of the Baptist work as a whole. The increase in the membership of the Baptist Union churches between 1921 and 1947 was only 50!

Reg Gillam

In 1947 Reg Gillam left for MBI. Gillam grew up in the Ulverstone area and although he attended the Methodist Church. It was under the ministry of Mr V. R Byard of Wynyard, who was conducting a two-week evangelistic crusade in Ulverstone, that he was converted. Byard, a Wynyard businessman, was well known for his ability as a great song leader, a very good organist and a harp player. He also had a reputation for being a very gifted preacher. He was a regular visitor to Ulverstone.

In 1943 Gillam was baptised by Roberts. On returning to Tasmania from MBI he was sponsored by the Ambassadors for Christ for two years at a Community Centre at Bronte Park, during the time of the Hydro Electric Commission (HEC) development. He commenced a Sunday school and led monthly services. From November 1952 he spent nearly four years in the Home Mission Bracknell-Cluan circuit.

Gillam later moved back to Ulverstone where he was an active member before relocating to the Devonport Baptist Church where he served as an elder.

Eric Turnbull

In August 1947 Eric Turnbull relinquished the task of Sunday school Superintendent to pastor the Spreyton Church where his ministry was greatly appreciated. His mother, Alice Viney, was the church organist at Ulverstone. He preached his first sermon at the age of fourteen. Throughout his teen years and beyond he was most active in the ministry of Ambassadors for Christ. Many open-air meetings were held along with evangelistic crusades and regular Saturday night meetings in quite a number of North West Coast towns. In 1949 he was the pastor of the Eaglehawk and White Hills Baptist Churches, outside Bendigo in Victoria. Eric and his wife Margaret spent time at Rossardon when the Baptists were seeking to establish a work there.

Eric became the honorary lay Pastor of the Penguin Baptist Church in July 1957. The attendance at services improved. Most heartening of all was the rebirth of the Sunday school which soon had sixty-three scholars, But Turnbull resigned from the Penguin pastorate on 21 February 1960. Upon his resignation, Turnbull took a number with him from both the Penguin and Ulverstone churches and they began worshipping in Penguin under the caption of "Baptist Reformed Church". Letters of appreciation for services rendered to the Ulverstone Church over many years were sent to all twenty of those who left the Ulverstone Church for the new cause.

Over the next few months the Home Mission Superintendent visited Penguin four times, accompanied by some members of the Home Mission Committee. The Penguin Church had suffered because of Turnbull's strong advocacy of Unconditional Election and Limited Atonement (Hyper-Calvinism). At the same time the Rev. David Nibbs resigned from the George Town pastorate. The reason given was theological: again the rediscovery of the old and strong attachment to doctrines such as "Limited Atonement". The introduction of severe Calvinistic doctrine also threatened the unity of the Elphin Road Baptist Church where David Nibbs had previously served.

In 1961 along with Charles Rodman and Hugh McNeilly, Turnbull was ordained in to the ministry of the Free Church. In 1967 Turnbull moved to Hamilton in country Victoria in order to pastor the Free Church there. From Hamilton he moved to St. Kilda to pastor its Free Church. Following his leave from the St Kilda Church in 1980, he established the Australian Free Church at Chadstone, Melbourne. Today he is still ministering at the recently formed Australian Free Church at Penguin. Interestingly this newly formed church meets in the original Penguin Baptist Church premises where Turnbull was Pastor until he withdrew from the Baptist ministry.

Early in 1949 the Rev. John Ridley conducted a mission with ninety decision cards being signed.

In November 1950, the church meeting agreed (17 to 11), "We will definitely, under no circumstances, be associated with the 'World Council of Churches. The debate lasted past 11pm.

Leah Cubit

In 1950 Leah Cubit was farewelled for missionary service with the Borneo Evangelical Mission in Borneo. “My introduction to missionary work,” she explains, “was when the Rev V. G. Britton of Perth Baptist Church rode his bicycle out to our farm, now the Research Farm at Cressy. He was collecting money for ‘the brown boys and girls’. I was six, and I believe he prayed for me that day.” Cubit spent her teen years at the Ulverstone Church where she publicly answered God’s call at a missionary meeting. The missionary was the late Mr Lumsden, who spoke on Papua New Guinea. Cubit, a nurse, attended MBI (now the Bible College of Victoria). She also studied tropical diseases and linguistics.

“I saw God raise up joyful churches,” she confesses, “witnessed people being released from Satan’s jungle and the thorny grip of evil spirits and witchdoctors. Children educated in my school went out as pastors, teachers, medical workers, and Christian leaders in Borneo. The Bible, hymnbook and other Christian literature was been translated into their own language. All the way the good hand of the Lord, my God, has been upon me. Every promise of His has been fulfilled, not one has failed.”

Holloway’s Departure

Holloway continued with the church in Ulverstone and Penguin until 31 May 1952 when he and his wife and their son Wilfred left for the Clare Baptist Church in South Australia, which was part of the Clare Circuit. The membership of the Clare Church nearly doubled during his time there and the Clare Circuit became financially self-supporting. He died in January 1959 while pastor at the Georgetown Circuit in SA.

The Rev. Max Brewer served as moderator until Ken Tuck’s arrival. The Rev. Hilton Preece carried out a brief interim during 1952.

Morris and Levett

Early in 1952 Tasmanian Trevor Morris and English born (Tasmanian educated) Fred Levett conducted a short mission showing films of their travels. They returned in early 1963 for another week. In 1935 they joined the Midway Movement for World Evangelism, and began twenty-seven years of globe-trotting, taking the Gospel message to ninety-three countries. During those years the two evangelists travelled through three revolutions, camped with pygmies, lived with Indians in the Andes and were feted with jungle rat in Borneo.

Rev. Kenneth E. Tuck

Tuck transferred from Bracknell and commenced in October 1952. Tuck, son of Professor H.P. Tuck and his wife May, lived his early life in Hobart, where he associated with the Baptist Tabernacle. He was educated at Hobart High School and the University of Tasmania. He received his B.Sc. in 1947 and his M.Sc. (in chemistry of sugar). He was an excellent cricketer.

In 1945 he was in charge of the preaching at the Ware Street Mission of the Hobart Church. In April 1946 he commenced pre-college pastoral training at the Home Mission Church at South Hobart. In 1948 Tuck,

was farewelled to commence ministerial training at the Baptist College of N.S.W. In 1951 Tuck gained his B.D. from the Melbourne College of Divinity. An M.A. and also a London B.D. followed. Following ordination on 15 December 1950, he pastored the Gosford and South Carlton Baptist Churches (N.S.W.), each for a year. He returned to the Tasmanian Home Mission with a student pastorate in the Bracknell Circuit in February 1951. The young church organist at Cluan was Allison West, the niece of Harold West. They were married in 1952. Together they held a series of missions within the district. While they both sang, he played the accordion, piano and violin. They had two daughters, Carol and Karen.

McDonald was greatly taken by Tuck, “Ken Tuck was a giant physically, and spiritually,” he recalls. “Often, he would be seen walking the streets of Ulverstone late at night, or in the early hours, praying as he walked. His sermons were full of solid teaching. They were inspiring and challenging. His sermons were so inspirational that many in the congregation could be seen jotting down notes. The reverential atmosphere in the services was such that people would assemble ten minutes before the service commenced. Bibles would be open as we prepared ourselves for worship and not a voice would be heard. His preaching was foundational in my later move into pastoral positions.” McDonald held pastoral positions at the Margate Christian Church, Hillcrest Christian Fellowship and the Salvation Army Corps in Devonport and the Sassafras, Sheffield and Ulverstone Baptist Churches.

Fund raising continued for the new building. Books of bricks were initiated in 1953. Enthusiasm for a new building was kindled and working bees initiated. Concrete blocks were manufactured behind the church and the working bees were fun times.

The envelope system of giving was disbanded early 1954.

With his colleague, the Rev. Alec White, Tuck in 1954 ran a two-week mission at Kings Meadows.

In July 1954 it was agreed that the old church be moved “to its future location”.

John Cord held a mission at the church in 1955.

In March 1955 Walter Filluel was appointed a Life Deacon. He served as a deacon for fifty years of which forty-two were consecutive. He died in 1972 aged ninety-five years. He had been in membership for sixty-five years. For many years, the monthly deacons’ meetings were held in Filluel’s home in Amherst Street, which later became a manse.

Separation from Penguin

In 1955 Ulverstone and Penguin agreed to separate. That year Penguin reverted to a fellowship and came under the Home Mission again. With few in attendance, it tried in vain to find a pre-college student. Its Sunday school was in recess. Laymen from near by Baptist churches maintained services. Finally in 1958 there were baptisms at Penguin, the first time in six years. It was re-constituted a church in 1959 and steadily strengthened.

Tuck’s Final Years

In September 1955 Tuck left to take up the position of Director and successor to Rev. John Ridley at the Australian Institute for Evangelism in N.S.W. Tuck held the position for more than five years. Then on account of Alison's health, he accepted a teaching position in the Launceston High School and became part-time pastor of the Elphin Road Church. Late in 1963 he began a five-year pastorate at the Taroona Baptist Church. Then followed five years at the Manifold Heights Baptist Church in Geelong. His final pastorate was at the Wonthaggi and Korumburra churches (Victoria), for three years. During this time Tuck became very ill. He died of cancer on 1 August 1977 at the age of fifty years. Tuck followed the old, tried and proven paths. He believed that preaching the literal text was the means God has ordained for saving those who believe. He never preached better than when he was preaching on prayer.

Chapter 6

Clifford, Aldridge and McLean

The Dream Realized

Between the ministries of Tuck and his successor, the Rev. Ern W. Brainwood served a much-appreciated interim ministry for six months. For some years he had a Gospel van in the north of Queensland, and worked amongst sugar cane farmers, cane-cutters, tourists and neglected whites. He conducted lively open-air meetings in Cairns, in neighbouring towns and on farms. It was his habit to intersperse his numerous evangelistic missions throughout Australia with interim ministries.

In his book, "Golden Harvest" he tells a number of stories of his time in Ulverstone. "One windy afternoon an attack of hay fever came upon me," he relates, "My nose was moist and red; my eyes bloodshot. Also, unknown to me, my hat was turned up at the front. I went into a shop to purchase something and saw a young lady who had attended the Sunday night gospel meeting. I greeted her and asked if she were buying something, but she looked me up and down very sternly, then turned and walked away. 'The silly old thing, he's drunk,' she said to a friend. Suddenly she realised her mistake and exclaimed, 'Oh! It's the Pastor!' Then I caught sight of my reflection in the shop window. I really did look as if I had imbibed too much." From Ulverstone, Brainwood moved to Sandy Bay for another interim ministry.

Rev. Rex A. Clifford

Clifford began at Ulverstone in February 1956. He was the eldest son of Hobart Church members, Arthur E. Clifford and his wife Elsie. In his Hobart days he had proved to be an excellent goalie in the Baptist hockey team. Upon discharge from the RAAF in 1945, Rex responded to the call to the ministry by entering Sydney Bible Training Institute where he studied for three years. Upon completion of his studies he married Esther Randall, also a student at SBTI. Rex and Esther returned to Tasmania and entered the Baptist ministry beginning in the Bracknell Home Mission district in 1948. In 1951 they moved to the Latrobe church where Rex, who had successfully completed his theological studies through the Extra Mural Course, was ordained in early 1954. The Cliffords continued a very successful ministry at Latrobe until January 1956 when they moved to Ulverstone

Shortly after his arrival at Ulverstone Clifford suggested that instead of moving the old church back for a hall, that a new brick hall be constructed and that the old church be sold for removal and the church worship in the new hall until the new church was built. This was agreed to and brick making commenced in earnest, 60,000 bricks being made in that very year. Arthur Baker, Robert Head and many other men of the church had worked hard at this task each Saturday for the first stage of the rebuilding programme.

In 1958 Baker and his wife, Jean, joined the staff of the WEC missionary training college (now “Worldview” College) at St. Leonards. They had been converted to Christ through the ministry of the Ambassadors for Christ.

The New Hall

Before Clifford’s arrival there had been 1,600 pounds in the building fund with the cost of the building being estimated at 5,000 pounds. It was agreed that there needed to be 3,000 pounds in the fund before work commenced. By 1956 the fund had grown to 2,000 pounds and the estimated cost of the building increasing to 7,000 pounds. Again it was agreed that there needed to be 4,000 pounds in the funds before work commenced.

In July 1956, the Vice President of the Union, Stan Edward Joyce, laid the foundation stone of the new church hall. Services commenced in the completed building in July the following year.

The building fund increased more rapidly and it was decided to push ahead with the construction of the new Church. The old wooden church was sold, dismantled and removed.

July 1958 cash of 2,650 pounds had been raised for the new building fund, 1,050 pounds in interest free loans, 50 pounds per month in promises.

The Dream Realised

Clifford, then President of the Union, laid the foundation stone of the new church in August 1958. The church was erected by voluntary labour and sub-contracts. Alf Hingston, a church member and the main builder, donated his services free. The building, strategically situated just off one end of the town’s main business thoroughfare, was opened on 4 June 1960. Five hundred people attended the official opening, which was performed as agreed years earlier by the Rev. Albert F. Roberts.

Celebrations extended over two Sundays. Pastor Lloyd of Montello addressed the Youth Night. Burnie and Devonport choirs provided programmes for two Pleasant Sunday Afternoons. The Superintendent of the Baptist Union, the Rev. Ernest E. Watson spoke. So did the Rev. Alec. Fraser. The celebrations reached a climax with the baptism of six candidates by Clifford. Offerings received over the period totaled 600 pounds, in addition to an amount of 400 pounds in interest free loans.

With the opening of the new sanctuary the assets of the Church, as expressed in buildings and equipment, had increased from a value of 3,000 to 25,000 pounds in a period of five years. 862 pounds was given one Sunday. 3,094 pounds was given in the year 1958/59. With savings effected by means of a considerable amount of voluntary labour over the period, the actual expenditure had been something over 15,000 pounds, and the debt now remaining was only about 3,000 pounds.

The timing for building was so right. By 1960 Tasmania was experiencing an economic boom. Tasmanians were living in an era of prosperity and expansion without precedent in the state. Watson called on Baptists “for big thinking and bold planning, and a readiness to pay the price involved.” “Starting new churches and

adding new members are not sufficient in themselves,” he said. “We must be concerned for the quality and real strength of our work. We must seek to plan more boldly and build more strongly in this day of challenge and opportunity.”

Land at West Ulverstone was purchased by August 1958 with the help of a loan from the Home Mission. It was agreed to proceed with the erection of a hall there at a cost of approximately 4,000 pounds in late 1962 for conducting Sunday school and Sunday evening services.

In 1962 the manse in Mason Street was disposed of. From 1958 it had been half used as Sunday school accommodation. A new manse was purchased in 1964.

In good Baptist practice, missionaries continued to visit the church. Early in 1963 the Rev. Bryce Hartin, with a Maori soloist and Graham Morley on the Hammond organ, conducted two-week evangelistic crusade. The pair returned in May 1964.

Robert Head

Robert Head departed for MBI in early 1958. Rob grew up in the Sunday school and became a church youth leader and lay preacher. At eighteen he heard a visiting Bible translator from the Philippines speak and decided that Bible translation was God’s work for him. In August 1962, following the completion of a linguistics course and only two months after their wedding, Rob and his wife June departed for the Papua New Guinea “Jungle Camp”. In PNG they began with the Usarufa people, teaching them to read and write.

From 1969 they moved to commenced translation work on the Umbu-Ungu language, the three dialects of which are Kala, No-Penge and Andelale. Dedication service for the Kala and No-Penge New Testaments were held in 1995 and in 1999 the Andelale translation was also dedicated. Rob and June then switched to the translation of Bo-Ung New Testament which was dedicated in 2004. Their work has not been without its setbacks. For eight years June was very ill and often in pain with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME). Yet in her bed June continued her translation work. Rob too has had bouts of sickness. They have two married children, a son Peter and daughter Nola. Rob and June have been in service with Wycliffe Bible Translators for forty-three years. They continue their translation work but their time is divided between PNG and Australia.

Clifford as Honorary Pastor

To take a load off the church finances, Clifford resigned in March 1960, found secular employment and continued as honorary pastor. This arrangement was extended in mid 1961. Clifford stayed until April 1964. Next he pastored the fledgling Montello Church (1966-1970), then Latrobe-Sassafras part time (1970–73). Clifford, a modest and saintly man who loved his people, died on 30 October 1978. Following Clifford’s death, his widow, Esther, was appointed the church catering supervisor and for many years arranged and headed up many catering functions. All the proceeds contributed greatly to the construction of the Cluan Crescent manse and the new Ulverstone Church hall and office complex being opened debt free.

At the Annual Assembly of the Baptist Churches in 1959, bravely smiling Ruby Tate, missionary to India, intimated that after fifteen years services in Bengal, ill health has forbidden her to return to her beloved work. Tate had gone out from the Ulverstone Church.

Rev. David Aldridge

Aldridge B.A., L.Th., commenced on 2 May 1965 transferring from Newstead. He had been accepted for ministerial training in 1948 and completed his training at the Baptist College of Victoria. He had grown up in a family which had attended first the Methodist and then the Presbyterian Church. After War World II, Aldridge accepted a position in the engineering department of Associated Pulp and Paper Mill at Burnie and he began attending the Burnie Baptist Church. There he met Ruth, the younger daughter of Stanley and Olive Joyce. Ruth too commenced studies at the Victorian Baptist Training Institute. Aldridge was ordained in 1952, following their marriage. They both had become Tasmanian Baptist missionary candidates two years earlier, having felt led to the new work in PNG. But prior to the commencement of his missionary work, Aldridge attended to the Home Mission Montello Church, commencing 1950.

The Aldridges, the first Tasmanians to serve with the ABMS in PNG, sailed for New Guinea on 10 December 1952. They were appointed to the newly opened station of Telefomin in the mountains of the Western Highlands near the border of Irian Jaya. There the Aldridges conducted a primary school for thirty village and station children and ran a thriving trade store selling tinned foods, basic tools and implements to the indigenous people. From there they continued to serve in the Central Highlands, but this time among the Enga tribes which comprised one of the largest language groups in the region. Stationed at Lumis on the plateau to the south of Baiyer, Aldridge trained local preacher-teachers and commissioned them into leadership positions. He was also involved in the administration of the village primary schools. Further he worked in linguistics, both in recording the Enga language and in translation. At the same time he took undergraduate studies with the University of Queensland and later graduated with a Bachelor of Arts.

Their second term was spent at the Baiyer River station. Early in this time Aldridge prepared the way for the formation of the church in the Baiyer Valley. This eventuated in 1957. Once the church was formed, David's main task lay in conducting a pastors' training school. He also worked with others on a translation of the Gospel of Mark into the Enga language. In 1958, at the end of their second term, a call came from the Newstead Church. During 1965-66 Aldridge held the position of President of the Baptist Union of Tasmania.

Mid 1967 the Rev. Neil Adcock conducted a crusade at Ulverstone.

During the Ulverstone pastorate Ruth became ill. Subsequently, after a long illness, she died. Aldridge stayed until 26 May 1968.

With the sole responsibility for his young family, it became necessary for Aldridge to limit his pastoral ministry to part-time appointments, while accepting a teaching post in the secondary school system on the North-West Coast.

In the years after Ulverstone, Aldridge as the sole parent of his young family restricted his church work to part-time ministries to churches of the Northwest beginning with Penguin (1970-76), then a return to Montello (1976-1986). Aldridge accepted posts as an English teacher in High Schools on the North-West Coast. In 1982, he married teacher Margaret Packham. In 1988 Aldridge took charge of the Burnie Church. In 1990 he pastored the Somerset Church, retiring in 1992.

Mrs G.V. Yaxley

On 5 May 1966 Yaxley's long years of service as a deaconess was recognized with her appointment as a life deaconess. She had served the Lord faithfully through the Ulverstone Baptist Church for many years. She was very active in the wider community life of Ulverstone.

Rev. Ron J. McLean

McLean transferred from the Reed Memorial Baptist Church in Launceston and commenced at Ulverstone on 9 January 1969. He was born in Australia on 18 June 1927, fifth child born to George and Elizabeth McLean who migrated from Lancashire, England. His father, a coal miner, was a dedicated Christian and the only organist in a small mining town called Coledale on the South coast of New South Wales. Consequently he was in demand to play for both Protestant churches in the town, Anglican and Methodist.

"Four years of unemployment in the Great Depression meant that we were very poor in the material sense," explains McLean, "but rich in godly heritage, and though my mother tended to be very dogmatic and over strict, she left a heritage of strong evangelical faith."

The 1939-45 war devastated the family. His father lost his mother and only sister in an air raid in England. McLean's two brothers were both killed in action in 1943. Subsequently he hid his grief in teenage delinquent rebellion until July 1948 when, under the preaching of an American evangelist, Dr. Hyman Appleman, he came to a deep conviction of his need of Christ. Baptism followed in 1949 at the Thurroul Baptist Church N.S.W. and marriage later that year to June. He joined the Open Air Campaigners in 1955 and served in Victoria and Tasmania as an itinerant evangelist.

He matriculated working at nights. He prepared for his evangelism work with the Australian Institute of Evangelism and with the O.A.C. and as a correspondent with New Zealand Bible Institute. McLean conducted a two-week mission at the Ulverstone Baptist Church in late 1959.

In September 1961 he was called to pastor the Montello church and studied with the Baptist Union of Australia's extra-mural course. They had four children by this time, Peter, Philip, Graeme and Heather.

The Memorial Church called him in 1963. During their six years there daughters Robyn and Joanne were born. He was ordained 13 March 1968.

Ulverstone became McLean's third Tasmania love. "Our family enjoyed the open space and the beach as well as growing up in a church where there were a lot of active young people," he records. "Ulverstone church family opened their hearts to us and gave us many encouragements in ministry. These were busy

years for me. Enrolled in Union Committee work and even though student days were behind, I continued to study in the area of Pastoral Care especially, and I became very involved in the study of the Holy Spirit and the Renewal processes of the Spirit in the life of the church. Evangelism and mission were constant areas of commitment for us.” McLean was Secretary of the Committee for Evangelism. He also took part in the radio programme, “Gateway to Glory” on 7AD.

The church experienced a steady growth over the period of McLean’s ministry, especially in his last year. In December 1973 the McLeans transferred to Lakemba, N.S.W. His son, Peter, trained for the Christian ministry and was Assistant Pastor of the Hobart Tabernacle from the day of his ordination, 2 February 1979, until June 1980 when he became senior pastor of the Church. Peter had transferred from Mount Druitt, Sydney, to work along with the Rev. Rex Glasby.

Chapter 7

Smith, Willicome

A Sending Out

Rev. Garry Billing

In March 1969, just some months after his marriage to Wendy Sharpe of Bumie, Billing, B.A., L.Th., Dip.R.E, was ordained in the Ulverstone Church. Garry was born in Melbourne in 1945 and moved to Tasmania at an early age. His education took place mainly in Hobart. He was converted under the ministry of visiting Irish-born American evangelist and Christian teacher, the Rev. J. Edwin Orr in 1958 and baptised at Sandy Bay Baptist Church. It was not until he moved to Smithton with his parents in the early sixties that he began to sense the call to pastoral ministry. Previously his intention had been to continue his studies in violin and proceed to a conservatorium with a musical career in mind. When the Ministerial Training Committee accepted his application in 1962, he was still too young to enter theological college, so Billing developed his gifts as a lay preacher in the Smithton-Togari area and subsequently along the North West Coast, where he became a member of the Ulverstone Church. He also broadened his experience through farming, clerical and factory work before being appointed to a pre-college pastorate at Montello in 1964. From 1965 to 1968 Billing pursued theological studies in Adelaide on behalf of the Tasmanian Union, serving several S.A. churches in that period. He was Home Mission Pastor of the Kings Meadows-Summerhill Churches (1969-1972) and editor of the Tasmanian Baptist "Advance". In 1972 Billing accepted a call to become Associate Minister at Flinders Street Church, Adelaide, where he worked for almost five years with the Rev. Neil Adcock, and became Secretary of Burleigh College. In 1975 he visited Australian Baptist Mission work in Bangladesh and adopted an infant daughter, Lee-Anne Mai, from Ubon, Thailand.

From 1976 Billing pastored the Avalon Church in N.S.W. before returning to Tasmania as senior pastor of the Devonport Church early in 1983. Billing and Wendy also have two sons, **Andrew and ????**. Over the years Billing's Baptist Union involvement has included service on Union Council, Evangelism Committee, Pastoral Committee and Karingal Board of Management. On 1 October 2000 he was inducted into the office of Superintendent of the Baptist Union. He had been senior pastor of the Devonport Church for the previous eighteen years, and President of the Baptist Union in 1986/7.

Stephen Head

Sensing the call of God upon his life, Stephen Head, Robert's brother, took up studies at MBI in 1971. Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) accepted him in 1978 and subsequently he served for six years in Papua New Guinea, as well as several years' home service with WBT in Victoria, NSW and New Zealand. Head

grew up in the Ulverstone church. He held leadership roles in the Boy's Brigade, Youth work as well as serving as a deacon and organist. His present ministry, based in Christchurch N Z, is with Heartstream Resources which involves counselling, seminars and ministry to missionaries on furlough.

Head married Jocelyn in 1973. Jocelyn contributed greatly to the Girls' Brigade being the first Tasmanian State Commissioner. Head well remembers that it was Alice Turnbull, who played the old pedal organ in the old church, who encouraged him to sing solos. Other people, like Reg Gillam who persevered with a teenager testing the limits, are remembered with gratefulness for their hanging in so faithfully. Ray Munroe, the church secretary at the time, was instrumental in getting him back to church through the hockey team. The Tasmanian Gospel Campaigners Conventions led by Bill Tate played a part in his formative years, as did the many missionaries including Leah Cubit.

Late 1971 gifted Queensland evangelist Rev. Reg Jarrott, conducted a crusade and a company of Girls' Brigade commenced.

Penny Davey

Twenty-two year old Penny Davey, primary school teacher, was a member of the Church in 1970 when she heard God's call and was accepted for temporary teaching with the ABMS. She was farewelled in December 1970. Penny lived closely with the Oksapmin people at Tekin in the West Sepik Province. Penny taught the primary school children English (with a PNG curriculum) while Tekin pastors instructed them in the Oksapmin language in the Gospel. Once a week she would be confronted by her next class, this time women enthusiastic to learn Pidgin so that they could read the Christian scriptures for themselves. Work would often continue into the evening. In order for the young men to attend Bible school, they too had to sit English classes. "We taught until the lamp burned low," she recalls. Penny herself learnt to work in the saw mill, feed a premature baby, paint a house inside and out, ride a motor bike, climb mountains, trust Missionary Aviation Fellowship (M.A.F.) pilots who flew in hazardous conditions, trek for hours and find a second wind to keep going, and give weather reports on radio to pilots intending to land. She often found shared worship a good time for reflection as she sat awkwardly on a log for hours and did not understand a word.

At the end of 1973 Penny returned to Tasmania. Then she spent two years at the New South Wales Baptist Theological College. During this time of study she married fellow student Michael Petras. They, with children Julia and Tim, attend the Thornleigh Baptist Church, NSW.

Dorothy Viney

Dorothy Viney too left early 1970 for PNG. She shared the valedictory service with Penny Davey. Thirty-one year old Dorothy Viney had just become a member of the Ulverstone Baptist church, following her baptism, when she heard at a missionary weekend that her fellow church member, Penny Davey, had just been accepted for missionary work. Greatly challenged, she immediately made application to ABMS. She was well qualified in her own field having certificates in mother craft nursing, general nursing and mid-

wifery. The mission welcomed her and she was accepted for a two-year term at Baiyer River as a missionary nurse.

In December 1970 she flew to PNG. Oddly she never stepped foot in Baiyer River except on her way home two years later! Rather, her work took her to Tekin and Telefomin. “My time in PNG,” says Viney, “was interesting, frustrating, challenging and physically demanding. There were medical problems and epidemics (whooping cough, measles, flu, and the like) that I did not have to deal with at home, not to mention the ever present malnutrition among the babies and small children.” Then there was the interminable language problem. She often abraded herself for not first learning Pidgin. Coupled with these difficulties was the matter of transport. She will never forget the take offs and landings at Tekin, that is before the airstrip was upgraded. On her return Viney resumed her nursing career at the Ulverstone District Hospital. Today she is a member of the Church of Christ.

Alwyn and Harlene Fawdrey

In late 1971 Alwyn and Harlene Fawdrey responded after a weekend of meetings, to a call for missionary service. These two, both with a Methodist background, met at a youth camp and married in the Ulverstone Church, which they had made their spiritual home. They arrived in PNG in January 1972 with their young son Timothy and were placed at Baiyer River to serve with ABMS. Alwyn, a trained motor mechanic, was immediately confronted with “quite a pile of mechanical work”. Around the station Harlene assisted where she could. Her growing grasp of Pidgin enabled her to work effectively with the Enga women. After a year at Baiyer, Alwyn took charge of the Boys’ Vocational School. Following their return to Australia, Alwyn became pastor of a Full Gospel Church in Coonabarabran, N.S.W.

Following McLean’s departure, two interim ministries were conducted: first by ABMS missionary, the Rev. Albert Edwin Smith and then by the Rev. Walter Veith of Victoria.

It was in late 1972 that the manse behind the church was demolished.

Rev C. Eddie Smith

Smith transferred from the inner city East Malvern Baptist in Melbourne and began in February 1975. Born in 1941, he never knew his parents. Most of his childhood days were spent at an institution for neglected children northeast of Melbourne. There at the age of eighteen, he came to Christian faith by reading an unwanted Bible that had been posted to him.

He entered Coburg Teachers’ College for primary teaching and taught for six years before he entered Whitley College to study for the Baptist ministry. He was ordained in 1972 while serving at the West Coburg Baptist Church. He married Kerryn Hodder and there they had their first of three children. He then served at East Malvern (1973-74), combining church work, primary teaching and studying for the London Bachelor of Divinity Degree.

The Smiths have good memories of Ulverstone. The Rev Keith Smith, the Tasmanian moderator, proved to be a great encouragement to him.

During Smith's ministry the church experienced some growth, particularly when the NSW evangelist Ron Baker conducted a two-week crusade in August 1977. Baker's crusade gained a good press. Church and cottage meetings were held in and around Ulverstone. Several young people in the church responded.

Smith successfully submitted editorials to the Northwest Coast newspaper, as well as joining in with a team of evangelical pastors to conduct weekly seminars in the local High school.

Smith conducted his final service on 29 January 1978. Following a brief ministry at Swan Hill, Smith returning to teaching. In late 1997, when a voice problem threatened to end his teaching career, he became the pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, an independent work situated at Mulgrave, east of Melbourne, where he has served for the last seven years. Smith is the Australian representative for the Society For Distributing Hebrew Scriptures. He has written on Christian meditation in his book, "A Tree By A Stream". He is anticipating another book, this time on the Gospel of Mark.

Eric Arthur Smith

Eric Smith was made Life Deacon in November 1976, the fourth only being appointed. In 1930 when he was aged thirteen, the family moved to Ulverstone and purchased a farm named "Leighlands" in East Ulverstone. All of his life was spent on the family dairy farm apart from a couple of years in the army during World War II. He married Annie Ruth Gillam. When his father died, Eric and Ruth took over the family farm. Today the Christian school "Leighlands" is situated on what was his farmland. He was a member of the Ulverstone Rifle Club, the Ulverstone Bowling Club, North West Off Shore Cruising Club. He was a Justice of the Peace, Life member of the Australian Jersey Breeders Society, judge at Agricultural shows and a life member of the Ulverstone Camera Club. He was church secretary for twenty years. Smith died on 22 March 2005.

By 1978 the church was free of debt for the first time in twenty-years.

Rev. Ralph Willicome

On the 28 May 1978 Willicome, a Welshman, accepted a call to Ulverstone, coming from Hurlstone Park, Sydney. Having studied at St. Luke College in the UK, Willicome and his wife to be Sheila, left England in 1949 to serve with the China Inland Mission. However, due to the communist takeover of the country their time in China was brief. Upon returning to England, Ralph and Sheila married and then in the early 1950's sailed once more, this time for Thailand where they served with Overseas Missionary Fellowship, the new name for the China Inland Mission. Following some years in Thailand Willicome and his family returned to England for health reasons where he embarked upon pastoral ministry at Denham in the south of the country. The family migrated to Australia in 1967 where Willicome exercised pastoral ministry at several Baptist Churches in New South Wales and Western Australia.

Greatly loved, his ministry was a great blessing to many people. But he continually suffered with serious voice problems and for this reason had to resign the pastorate. Willicome was a very gifted preacher, a very clear expositor of the Word. He concluded on the 15 July 1979. The church prospered under his ministry.

Neville Viney

In 1979 Neville Viney became associated with the Ulverstone Church when he and his family returned from twenty-one years missionary service in Africa. Having grown up in the Latrobe Church, Viney went to Africa in 1958 following studies at what was then the Sydney Bible Training Institute. His wife Josie attended Sunday school at the West Kentish Baptist and studied at the MBI. Josie followed Neville to Africa in 1960 where they were married. Having served in the Republics of the Sudan, Chad and Nigeria, the Viney's repatriated in 1979 due to the educational and employment needs of their two children. Viney became the Sunday School Superintendent in 1980, a deacon in 1981 and was elected Secretary in 1991 and served continuously for the next thirteen years. He is also a lay preacher. The Vineys have also contributed to the work of Aged Care Homes on the North West Coast.

Interim Ministries

Then followed a period when eleven interim ministries were conducted. They were the Rev Fred Lloyd, the Rev. Ron Baker (for four months), the Rev. Claude H. Preston, Rev. Walter Veith (two interims), Pastor Ralph Terry, Peter Bennett, Garnett Hutchinson. The membership increased by forty-two during these three years. During Preston's interim Baker's organization, the Ron Baker Crusade, conducted its final crusade. It was attended by one of the largest crowds seen at the church for a long time. The Living Proof Crusade, led by the Rev. John Kirkpatrick of New Zealand, commenced in April 1980.

Building work began on a new \$80,000 manse at 10 Cluan Crescent in February 1982 and was officially opened on the 24 September 1983. A good part of the work was done by voluntary labour. Volunteers gave 2,085 hours to the project saving about \$30,000 in cost. It was opened free of debt.

In May 1981 the church choir was involved in the week long "Turning Point Crusade" in the Smithton-Marrawah circuit.

Chapter 8

Holowell, Winkley and Prout

In Living Memory

Rev. Albert Holowell

The church was growing. The church membership stood at 151 when the call was extended to Holowell from Auburn Baptist, Sydney. He had been the visiting evangelist for the Turning Point Crusade at Ulverstone in May 1981. Known for his preaching and musical abilities, he transferred from the Bayside Baptist Church in Queensland, commencing on the 6 May 1982.

Thirty years earlier the Victorian Baptist Home Mission had sent him from the West Coburg Church to Tasmania, where on 20 May 1951, he began at the South Hobart Baptist Church. It was only ten years earlier that Holowell, a music teacher, had come to be a Christian. He left South Hobart in 1952 to do a pioneer Baptist work in the North West of N.S.W. at Warialda. Now married to Enid, he also ministered in Bingara and Inverell.

Holowell trained at the N.S.W. College, and served in churches at Warialda-Bingara and Inverell (1955-56), Toongabbie (1956-1960), East Armidale (1960-62), Chester Hill (1962-67), Padstow (1967-74) and at Auburn (1974-1982).

People of Praise

Early in the 1980's John Preston gathered together a group of older Bible Class young people to present singing items for a Sunday School Anniversary service. This gathering was the beginning of the singing group, "People of Praise". Over the next few years youngsters, under Preston's leadership sang at many churches along the north of the state and interstate at the Mooroolbark Baptist Church in Melbourne.

Geoff Rowlands

Apart from a brief period of time, Rowlands spent his entire life in Ulverstone. He made his mark in Ulverstone where, after concluding his apprenticeship as a carpenter, he established his own business and established a reputation as a much sought after builder by members of the Ulverstone community and beyond. After many years of operating his own construction business, he was appointed by the local council as building inspector and later as the building surveyor.

Rowlands also made a great contribution to the life of the church. During his formative years he was associated with the Open Brethren and Church of Christ and following his marriage to Jean Turnbull, he commenced a long association with the Baptist work. For many years he served as a deacon, Sunday school Superintendent and youth leader. He also provided ten years of valuable service as the church

secretary. He also accepted additional responsibilities in the area of pastoral care during near three years when the church was without a pastor.

In 1981 when the church decided to construct a purpose built manse. Rowlands not only guided this construction but assumed responsibility for the construction work with the men of the church proving to be great “builders labourers”. In appreciation of his tremendous contribution, which resulted in a very large financial saving, Rowlands was invited to perform the opening ceremony at the official dedication of this magnificent home for our pastors. Rowlands died on 6 October 1995.

A neighbouring property at 64 Alexandra Road was purchased for future church expansion in 1983.

At the start of that year Chris and Leanne Aulich went to the Baptist College in Queensland, Anita McKay began at the Bible College of Victoria and Peter James started at WEC.

Chris and Leanne Aulich

The Aulichs became candidates for ABMS in 1984. They had become part of the Ulverstone Church in 1981 following their move from the local Church of Christ. Following completion of studies in Queensland, Chris became pastor of the Sheffield Baptist for three years. From Sheffield the Aulichs were accepted for overseas service with the ABMS and served in Thailand (1988-1993). This was very much a church planting work particularly amongst the slum dwellers. The following years, 1993 to 1997, saw them in pastoral ministry with the Burnie and Sassafras churches before moving north to Cairns where Chris became senior pastor of the Cairns Baptist Church as well as a Reserve Naval Chaplain. In 2003 he was appointed a full time Chaplain with the Royal Australian Navy. He served in the Middle East during the Iraq conflict.

In 1985 Eva Head received the honour of Life Deaconess, being only the second woman to receive that honour.

Early in 1986 the Rev. Neville Horn of “Back to the Bible”, conducted a teaching mission.

Eightieth Anniversary

Over the weekend of 21-22 September 1985, the Church celebrated its 80th anniversary. The guest speaker was the former pastor, the Rev. Albert Roberts, then retired in South Australia. Among the highlights of the well attended function were an 80th anniversary cake, a display of old slides and photographs, the recital of old anecdotes, the contribution of the Ulverstone Band and the compilation of a family church album and history.

Pastoral Assistant

Sandra Hatch, from Port Arthur, Texas accepted a call as pastoral assistant, with an emphasis on youth, in 1987 for two years. Sandra became known through a Texas-Tasmanian Partnership Mission. She has a Degree in Science, in Elementary Education and a minor in music. At the South-Western Baptist

Theological Seminary she gained her Masters of Arts in Religious Education, with emphasis in administration and music. She married Warren Graetz during her time at Ulverstone. They now have a son.

Karyn Page

On 24 May 1987 Karyn Page was commissioned for work with Asian Pacific Christian Mission (APCM, formerly known as the Unevangelised Field Mission). Karyn had already spent three years training at the Sydney Bible College in the areas of Bible and Youth Leadership Training. The call had come from the National Evangelical Church of Papua (ECP) for her to be involved in church work in the Balimo area for three years. Karyn's new home was in the lower Fly River area. She worked in the areas of discipling-nurture groups, Sunday school and Bible teaching and Girls' Brigade. Karyn came to Ulverstone from the Latrobe Baptist Church, where her parents were strong supporters, to work with the youth in 1984.

On 29 April 1990 the church farewelled the Holowells. The eight very happy, fruitful and special years drew to a close as they transferred to Deception Bay north of Brisbane, Queensland. In November 1994 Holowell retired. They joined the Islington Baptist Church in Newcastle. He became their Honorary Interim Senior Pastor from 1998 to 2000.

Denise and Robert Ottosson

Denise Duncan, Andrew Duncan's sister, attended Bible College of Victoria (formerly MBI) from 1990 for three years graduating with a Diploma in Missiology. She married Robert Ottosson, who has a degree in medical science. The Ottossons commenced their missionary career with Sudan Inland Mission in December 1996, working among the Fulani people in the West African country of Burkina Faso. Half of Burkinabe are Muslim, and another 40% claim indigenous religions exclusively. Their desire to work in a place often ignored by Christian missions, led them to this international mission organisation with more than 1,800 missionaries serving in more than forty-three countries on five continents and three islands in the Indian Ocean. The Ottossons with their son and three girls are still serving there today.

Associate Pastor

On 6 May 1990 Greg Templeton was inducted as Associate Pastor with particular consideration on the pastoral care of the church's large number of young people. As an eighteen year old, Greg Templeton, from the tiny farming community of Nathalia in Northern Victoria visited Tasmania and secured employment in a Launceston bank. He became a Christian while attending the Elphin Road Baptist Church. Through its basketball team, which played in the Baptist roster, he met and married Cathryn Jacobs, a qualified school teacher. They associated with the Moonah Baptist Church following their move to Hobart and Greg worked in real estate. About three years later they began studying at BCV and were assigned to Millgrove Baptist Church for youth ministry. They stayed until January 1994, departing for the Taroon Church with daughter Emily. Templeton pastored the church until December 2002. They are now based at the Sydenham Baptist Church in Victoria.

In February 1991 Peter and Lydia Bennett concluded a five-month interim pastorate. Willicome and his wife Sheila returned to live in Ulverstone in 1990 and during 1991 he conducted a much-appreciated three-month interim ministry. In retirement the Willicomes relocated to Ballarat, Victoria.

Rev James Winkley

After an almost two-year pastor-less period, the church sanctuary was well filled on 6 February 1992 for the induction of its new senior pastor, the Rev. James Winkley. His wife, Merilyn, a trained high school music teacher with two degrees, accompanied him.

Born in Sydney, Jim grew up on a farm in Cowra, a small country town. He grew up in a Christian home. He found employment as a farmer, a wool classer, a life insurance agent, a new car salesman/manager and a franchise with Tandy Electronics. Following a call to full-time ministry while helping in a little struggling country church, he undertook his training at the Baptist Theological College in Queensland with weekend evangelism uppermost in his mind. He planned to follow in the path of his grandfather, Jim Amos, who engaged in weekend evangelism. Evangelism as such was not to be. His first pastorate was the Bayside Baptist Church in Queensland with a congregation of 150 people. He was ordained there in November 1990. The Winkleys have twin daughters.

James Douglas

Eighteen-year-old James Douglas, who came through the Sunday school and youth work of the church left in 1992 to join the Covenant Players Ministry. Shortly after becoming a member of this ministry group James met Naomi. They are now proud parents of three children. After three years with the Covenant Players, they returned to Tasmania where he became Youth Pastor at the Taroon Baptist Church. Later he completed studies for a Bachelor of Ministries Degree with Tabor College, while serving as the Youth pastor at the Hobart Church of Christ. In 2005 James commenced as Youth Pastor at a Sydney Church of Christ.

Andrew Duncan

Andrew Duncan entered Bible College of NZ (BCNZ) in 1992. In his youth he came in contact with Ulverstone church. Following his conversion at the age of 17 he undertook overall leadership of the church's youth group. At NZBC he gave special attention to youth leadership. Duncan then studied at BCV. Once college years were over, he became youth pastor at the Bel Air Baptist Church in Newcastle. There he married Janelle. A time at the Brindabella Baptist in Canberra followed. Today he is the Senior Pastor at East Fremantle Baptist Church in WA. He is also a church consultant and lectures in evangelism and apologetics at the local theological college. They have two children.

Rev. David Sterrey

David Sterrey was inducted as associate pastor on 13 February 1994. He grew up in the Mentone Baptist church and was baptised when he was seventeen. After completing a Bachelor of Science at Melbourne University, he worked in the actuarial profession (financial mathematician) for several years. It was during his time at University that he sensed the call to full-time Christian service. In 1991, along with his then fiancée, Michelle, he began his studies at the Bible College of Victoria with the idea of serving overseas on the mission field. They were redirected to pastoral ministry. David completed a Bachelor of Theology Degree. He arrived at Ulverstone with a variety of ministry experiences: youth guidance counsellor/volunteer worker, youth dimension coffee shop ministries and in church planting in St. Kilda. Sterrey has also been involved in cross-cultural ministries such as the Asia Pacific Christian Mission in Port Moresby, PNG, and the Vietnamese and Cambodian new settlers in Springvale, suburban Melbourne.

After four years at Ulverstone, he was inducted as pastor of the Bumie Baptist Church. David was an Australian delegate at the Amsterdam 2000 Billy Graham International Conference on Evangelism in July 2000. Early in 2002 he led a Tasmanian Missions Awareness Youth Team to Bangladesh. His wider ministry roles included chaplaincy at the University of Tasmania and being a national board member of Global interAction. Early 2003 he became senior pastor of the Devonport Baptist Church. For 2002/2003, he was President of the Baptist union. They have three children.

Tanya McColl began studies at the Bible College of New Zealand in 1994. Tanya married Mike Ormond Birch and they now reside in Auckland, NZ.

During 1994 Lynton son of Geoff and Jean Rowlands, commenced studies with the Australian College of Theology under the "Mission to Tasmania" which the then Superintendent of the Baptist Union, Rev Norman Pell initiated. The following year Lynton, his wife Amanda and their three children moved to Bridport in a church-planting ministry.

Church's New Hall And Administration Complex

On the occasion of the church's eighty-ninth anniversary in September 1994, the church's new hall and administration complex was officially opened by the Rev. Richard Measham, the President of the Baptist Union. The total cost was \$283,000. The sketch proposals for the complex were drawn up nine years earlier. The additions comprise the hall, two offices, toilets, kitchen and store.

In March 1987, the church agreed to proceed with the complex as long as funds became available. With \$100,000 in the building fund by April 1989, construction began and monies were only spent in accordance with the resolution of the 1987 meeting. At the time of the opening, the church was still debt free. The designer and co-ordinator for the project was church member Milton Smith. Working bees were well attended. The whole project was a step of faith.

In February 1996 a special children's seminar was held with Sue Carpenter and Carolyn Boyd from the USA based Carpenter Cross Ministries. That year the church's youth ministry involved conducting lunch-time groups at the local High School with an average of fifty or sixty teenagers, most of whom were not

from Christian families, attending for games and discussion on Christianity. That year five Americans led by the Rev Eugene Hemdon from Oklahoma, visited for a Partnership Mission. In June 1996 Martin De Haan from Radio Bible Class Ministries, U.S.A. visited.

Call to Ministry

Bronwyn Duncan left Ulverstone to attend the Bible College of South Australia in 1997 and graduated with a Bachelor of Ministry. While in Adelaide she married Greg Waldeck. Currently she is a primary teacher in a Christian school where she uses her training to co-ordinate the Christian Education program as well as writing the curriculum with the Year 6/7 team. The Waldecks now attend the Bellevue Baptist Church where she co-ordinates the children's ministry.

In July 1997 church member John Guenther commenced a part time ministry for a twelve-month period at Penguin Baptist Centre. Guenther and his wife Anne-Marie, together with their three children, returned to Tasmania in January after completing three-year courses at BCV. John completed a Diploma of Theology (Missiology) and Anne-Marie an Associate in Theology. The desire to serve God overseas as missionaries had prompted them to attend College. Today John is a private computer-training consultant with expertise in Internet web page design.

David Head, another of the Head brothers, grew up in the Ulverstone Church, and Boys' Brigade was to become a way of life for him, the first to go through all the ranks and becoming the youngest State President. In 1972 he married Suzanne and 1973 they spent twelve months with Wycliffe Bible Translators in PNG. In 1994 David was accepted by the Pacific Regional Fellowship for the position of liaison officer for Boys' Brigade in PNG. With their two children Laetitia and Roger, attended the Bible College of Queensland. Part of the time in PNG was spent with the United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands as its Assembly administrator. On return to Ulverstone he became youth minister at the Uniting Church and then became youth pastor for one year early in 1999.

Winkley's Leave

Farewell services for Winkley were held on 27 December 1998. In March 1999 he was inducted into the pastorate of the Wynyard Church. In his first six years at Wynyard the membership increased over 100 % with attendances growing from around forty to around 130 each Sunday morning. A Sunday school and a youth group commenced soon after he arrived. He continues there.

Following the conclusion of Winkley's ministry the church passed through a four-year pastorless period. Having retired from Government Service the previous year, Neville Viney then devoted his time and energies to both the administrative and pastoral needs of the church.

Stephen and Coralie Preston

The Prestons were farewelled to Spain in late 2000. They are currently working with the Basque people in San Sebastian. Stephen spent his formative years at the church and became a music teacher. They both

studied at the BCV with Stephen gaining a Bachelor of Ministries and Coralie a graduate Diploma in Christian Studies. Prior to leaving for missionary service Stephen was full time Youth Worker at the Ulverstone Church. Steve has exercised a music ministry in a number of churches apart from the Ulverstone church. Coralie grew up in the Anglican Church taking on leadership positions with children and youth. Later she became involved with Uniting and Presbyterian and finally Baptist Churches, always taking on leadership with children and youth.

Youth Pastor

Chris Taylor, son of the Rev. Reg Taylor became Youth Pastor in November 2000 for a period of three years. In 2004 Taylor commenced study at the Sydney Missionary Bible College. Chris and his wife Annie have ministry in Australia as their vision for the future. They have three children.

Early 2001 Stuart McDonald took an interim for three months. The Rev. Reg Taylor exercised three periods of interim ministry during the pastorless period.

The Baimbridge Family

In January 2001 Mike and Wendy Baimbridge and their teenage sons, Jarrod, Wesley and Adam, felt the call of God and headed off to the Bible College of Victoria for four years of theological study and life changing experiences for the whole family. Wendy had been involved in the life of the church as a Sunday School teacher for many years and also served as a deaconess, while Mike was involved as a deacon and was part of the music ministry team. Mike and Wendy graduated in 2004. The family is now involved in the Lilydale Baptist Church in Victoria. There they are in the formative stages of a church plant in the Yarra Valley.

Rev. Ross Prout

In January 2003 Prout, B.Th. become the Senior Pastor. He had been for seven years Managing Editor of the Christian Weekly "New Life". Previous to that Ross and his wife Bronwen had ministered in Melbourne Baptist churches at Armadale, Mentone and Mitcham. Late in their second year the congregation was responding well to the preaching ministry, and Bronwen's input to the women's ministry was being appreciated. What was promising to be a very fruitful time was cut short. With regret in late 2004, the church received his resignation due to poor health.

In his final sermon, Ross outlined three things beginning with the letters CH as being of importance. Focussing on Hebrews 13:8 he emphasised the centrality of Christ, the unchanging heart of the church. "The person and work of Christ do not change," he said. The second word was "change". Ross reminded the congregation of the reality that the Biblical record is a record of continual change, and that change in the way things are done is a continuing matter for exploration for all churches. The final word was challenge. "The greatest challenge for the Ulverstone Church," he said, "is to keep the passion for outreach and mission burning, in the midst of a culture that is suspicious of Christianity." "Faithfulness is God's

desire for his church. It has never been easy. But faithfulness to Jesus Christ requires openness to change and the challenge of being relevant in the prevailing circumstances,” he concluded.

Prout returned to Melbourne and found employment teaching at a Christian school.

Rev. Dr. Graeme & Mrs Maria Smith.

Early in 2005 Dr. Smith and Maria commenced a six-month interim pastorate at Ulverstone. They came from the 1000 strong Wodonga Baptist church in Victoria where they had ministered for ten years. They were familiar with the Ulverstone Church having visited on a number of times. The visits came about as Dr. Smith had spoken a number of times at the Tasmanian Keswick Convention at Camp Clayton.

Following Bible College forty-five years ago, they joined the staff of Campaigners for Christ at which Dr Smith became Director. Almost ten years at the Blackburn North Baptist followed, then again almost ten years at the Ashgrove Church in Brisbane. Their interim at the Ulverstone Baptist Church has now extended until the end of 2005.

Conclusion

If the General Superintendent of the BUT in 1960, the Rev. Ernest E. Watson, was with us today, he would possibly agree that the Ulverstone Church had risen to the very challenge which he had given in that year (a challenge which we have read of earlier), namely that Baptists are required “for big thinking and bold planning, and a readiness to pay the price involved.” To the challenge he added, “Starting new churches and adding new members are not sufficient in themselves. We must be concerned for the quality and real strength of our work. We must seek to plan more boldly and build more strongly in this day of challenge and opportunity.” In short, as the title of this book suggests, we must possess the future.

In fact from the day that the Ulverstone Baptist Church decided by God’s help to purchase the old Congregational church “near the center of town”, the Church was already doing just that and its life and witness at this very special year confirms that its continues to do that by God’s help.

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