

# The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of Baptist Heritage Queensland

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## New book - Mission to Queensland - the continuing story!



Baptist Heritage Qld is pleased to announce that another new book has been produced and is now available for purchase. It is called, *Mission to Queensland 1997-2021: Elusive Enterprise* and is an update to the history of Mission to Queensland (MTQ) originally written by Rev M C Williams and published by BHQ in 1998. (copies still available)

The new volume is shorter although it covers a longer period of time, largely because of a lack of adequate records and information and because the nature of MTQ, the church planting operation of the Baptists in Queensland, has changed. When it commenced originally, it was known as a 'faith mission' operating within Queensland and within the Baptist denomination for the planting of churches in rural and remote areas, especially the booming mining areas of Central Queensland and some of the towns along the coast. As such, it recruited 'missionaries' and worked towards the planting of churches in suitable locations. It had a considerable staff (self supporting or bi-vocational) and actively sought out locations for churches. Many Baptists throughout the state were supporters through prayer and in practical ways.

However, in later days, the nature of the operation was changed and MTQ's role was only to encourage and facilitate existing churches to plant churches. MTQ no longer had a staff or group of churches which it fostered. The new book documents the history and impact of these changes in MTQ from 1997 when they began until the present.

Copies of the book (in the print-on-demand service) are available from Baptist Heritage Qld at a cost of \$15 posted. Contact BHQ Publications at 98 Yallambee Rd, Jindalee 4074 or [kopittke@tpg.com.au](mailto:kopittke@tpg.com.au).

Other recent publications by BHQ are *The Commitment to Ministry: Baptist Camping in Queensland 1990-2020* (at \$15) and *Baptists in the 'Never Never' Baptist origins on the Darling Downs 1875-2019* (v 2) at \$10. Check the BHQ website for more details: <https://www.bhsq.org/bhq/pubs/index.html>

**BHQ Meetings 2022: Feb 26, June 18, Nov 5 (AGM) 2pm at The Baptist Archives  
All welcome - please bring a plate**

<p><b>Baptist Heritage Queensland</b> (est. 1984)</p> <p><b>Membership (2022)</b></p> <p>Individual \$10 pa Family \$15 pa Corporate \$20 pa</p> <p><b>Qld Baptist Forum</b> 3 issues pa</p> <p>Free to Members Others \$7 each posted</p> <p><b>President:</b> Mr Eric W. Kopittke 98 Yallambee Rd., Jindalee 4074 Ph 3376 4339 <a href="mailto:kopittke@tpg.com.au">kopittke@tpg.com.au</a></p> <p><b>Secretary:</b> Vacant</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://bhsq.org">bhsq.org</a></p> <p>Archives contact: <a href="mailto:archives@qb.org.au">archives@qb.org.au</a> Ph 3354 5642</p>	<p><b>CONTENTS</b></p> <p><i>Qld Baptist Forum</i> No 110 December 2021</p> <table><tbody><tr><td>News and Notes</td><td>p 1</td></tr><tr><td>Baptist Heritage Qld 2014-2021 by David Parker</td><td>p 2</td></tr><tr><td>British Baptists go Digital</td><td>p 5</td></tr><tr><td>Pulpit and Press by Rod Kirkpatrick</td><td>p 6</td></tr><tr><td>BHSQ Annual meeting News</td><td>p 8</td></tr></tbody></table>	News and Notes	p 1	Baptist Heritage Qld 2014-2021 by David Parker	p 2	British Baptists go Digital	p 5	Pulpit and Press by Rod Kirkpatrick	p 6	BHSQ Annual meeting News	p 8
News and Notes	p 1										
Baptist Heritage Qld 2014-2021 by David Parker	p 2										
British Baptists go Digital	p 5										
Pulpit and Press by Rod Kirkpatrick	p 6										
BHSQ Annual meeting News	p 8										

# Baptist Heritage Queensland - 2014-2021

By David Parker

*This is an account of the history of Baptist Heritage Qld (the Baptist Historical Society of Qld) from 2014 to 2021 which updates the previous 30-year history published in QB Forum No 97 (April 2014).*

## 30th Anniversary

The 30th anniversary of BHQ was celebrated in style with a function on 31 May 2014 at the QB Centre, featuring a panel of speakers, Archives' displays and a cake! The event was titled 'Tracks, Trends, Trophies' and the panel consisted of a range of senior Baptists sharing their reflections on various aspects of Baptist life. The speakers were Mrs Ruth Elvery, Mrs Lorraine Walker, Rev Peter Bernas and Rev Dr Stan Nickerson. The displays included a hand-corrected CH Spurgeon sermon manuscript, a copy of the first available report of the Wharf St Baptist Church and a colourful illuminated address in honour of an early pastor at Sandgate church.



Digital records and photographs also featured in the display.

Attendance was encouraging and there was some positive response from the event

resulting in increased interest in the work of BHQ which gave some momentum as the organisation moved into the next stage of its history.

## Organisational life

As the Society moved into the next phase of its life, it was led by Eric Kopitke as chair and Dr Ken Smith as secretary/treasurer, but Ken's contribution was to conclude all too soon. On the very day he was re-elected again at the annual meeting in November 2014, he was taken ill. He passed away on 4 March 2015. He had been an enthusiastic supporter of the work and had contributed in many ways to its activities. Dr Anne Klose, who had recently gained her PhD from the University of Queensland in the area of Baptist studies, was appointed secretary but relinquished the post after a year. Mr Bill Hughes, who had retired to Brisbane from Canberra a few years earlier and was a valuable member of the Archives team, took on the role. Meanwhile, the treasurer's position had been taken in February 2015 by Miss Hope Colegrove. Her dedicated and meticulous approach soon brought the financial aspects of BHQ into good shape. The funds that had been accumulated from book sales,

membership fees and other contributions were well managed and were put to good use over the years.

Another loss to the Society took place on 3 Feb 2015 with the death of Mrs Ellen Chataway. She had been an enthusiastic supporter of the work, stepping forward at a crucial time to take on the role of secretary, which she undertook with dedication and efficiency. Her late husband, Rev Vince Chataway, had been treasurer and also a keen member.

Later other losses were Mrs Mavis O'Neill on 21 Nov 2016 and Rev John Lane on 17 Jan 2019. Lance Hogg was a generous benefactor of the Society and he ended his long and useful life on 25 Oct 2016.

## Supporting the Archives

However, BHQ activities continued to develop. One of the best features was its on-going support of the Archives. This was a great encouragement to the Archivist, David Parker, who could always count on the interest of members in operations as reports were given at each meeting about recent and current enquiries and acquisitions. But there was more than moral support – BHQ contributed some useful pieces of equipment to the Archives. The first of these was a large flat-bed book scanner, costing around \$2000. This was purchased and installed in 2015 and allowed Bill Hughes to begin the major task of digitising the Archives photograph collection. Over coming years, he processed more than 1700 items, creating large digital images and indexing them in detail.

Another item purchased in 2016 was a professional copy stand so that the top-quality Canon EOS camera owned by the Archives could be used to digitise photographs and other items that were too large for the flat-bed scanner. This was an investment of around \$1000.

In 2018 these contributions were followed up by a CZUR book scanner (around \$700) that enabled the easy scanning and processing of minute books. It was an elegant piece of equipment and with fully integrated software which enabled a large number of the early Baptist Union Assembly, Executive and Council minutes to be digitised.

Finally, in 2019 an Epson flat-bed slide and film scanner was added to the line of donations (\$850). This enabled high resolution bulk scanning of the many 35 mm slides that had been deposited with the Archives, many of them from the period of the Queensland Baptist Home Mission showing church building and pastors.

The nexus between the Society and the Archives was a valuable one and was maintained strongly over the

years—the role of the Archives was focused on the collecting and managing documents while that of the Society on research, analysis and publication.

## Publications

One of the main aims of BHQ from its inception had been the publication of materials and information relating Baptist history and life in Queensland. Its slogan, dating from 1996, summed it up: ‘Preserve, Promote, Publish our Heritage’ and continued to be the guiding vision.

The prime on-going means for this was the newsletter, *QB Forum*, issued 3 times each year. It was a simple xeroxed A4 production of 4 sheets (8 pages) and contained articles as well as news about BHQ. Production quality had improved from the earliest days as computer software and photocopying technology advanced. It began to be produced and circulated digitally from about 2016 (requiring a new pricing system) but the paper version was retained for sharing with other societies and for legal deposit—although the latter went digital from 2017. From mid-2019, colour printing was possible due to the upgrading of the Archives photocopier. A total of well over 900 pages has now been published.

One particular series of *Forum* articles had the promise of contributing greatly to recording of Queensland Baptist life. It was titled, ‘All the Way’ and featured the reflections of senior and retired leading Baptists, pastors and lay-people. They were encouraged to set down their thoughts and memories on their own spiritual lives and ministry within the context of Queensland Baptist life (and wider) in papers of around 5,000 words. The series was styled on a successful practice of the NSW Baptist Historical Society which featured biographies of leading people at its regular meetings, later printed in their newsletter. However, response was disappointing, with only 6 widely diverse contributions appearing, before the series was brought to a close in 2021.

One of the ways in which *QB Forum* publication was intended to assist newer scholars was to publish the semi-annual Essay competition winner. From 2006, BHQ had cooperated with the Baptist theological college in offering a prize for the best essay produced in the course on Baptist history and principles taught at the college. As well as monetary prize (\$100) and copies of BHQ publications, the essay was to be published in *QB Forum* as a way of promoting the subject matter and given the winning student a voice. A total of 7 prizes were issued, as follows: 2006 Darren Clark, 2008 Faith Giovas, 2010 Anne Klose, 2012 Matt Littlefield and Tim Lucas (equal), 2014 Neil Parker, 2016 Dean Sandham, 2018 Greg Beaumont. After this changes were made in the way the college taught the subject and it was no longer convenient to offer an essay prize. About the same time, it was learned that the BHS of Victoria was setting up a stand-alone essay competition in that state, and BHQ gave some consideration to following the same practice, although no action was taken.

Other articles in *QB Forum* covered a wide range of topics including a number focusing on the centenary of World War I (including church honour boards), the interesting Baptist optometrist, Charles Sankey Fraser,

and in the midst of the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, an account of how Baptists in Queensland responded to the 1919 flu epidemic. A new website created in 2021 includes the full text of earlier issues of *Forum* open for general reading.

The other main avenue of publication of Baptist history was through books. The earlier high rate of book publication slowed considerably and only 2 have been issued in recent times. The first was ‘Baptists in the Never Never’ a history of the formation of Baptist witness in various places on the Darling Downs. The title was taken from a remark of Rev William Higlett when he began as pastor at Toowoomba in 1882. He reported to his friends in England that his church, only 1 of 10 in the state, was the farthest from the coast, making it ‘the vanguard of the Baptist towards the interior.’ He said that westward for over 2000 miles extends the vast ‘never, never’ country without any Baptist church. This book was published in print-on-demand format (A4 photocopied with photos) but it had taken many years to compile. There had been difficulty in obtaining information and access to documents of many of the 13 churches featured in it, and promised assistance with information often failed to appear. Some of the chapters appeared in preliminary or reduced form in *QB Forum*, but the full publication was

released in 2020 at the outset of the Covid-19 crisis, which limited its circulation greatly. It was Number 18 in the Baptist Historical Series.

The second book was a continuation of

the 2-volume history of Baptist camping in Queensland that had first been written by Mrs Joan Maxwell in the early 1990s. The following 30 years had seen many highly significant changes to Baptist camping and so it was important that the story be recorded. The camping ministry, QCCC, was very supportive of the project and paid for the printing of the 80-page professionally printed book with a full colour graphically-designed cover. It was released at the 2021 QB Convention Business Day.

Another earlier publication that could be updated was Rev Mel Williams’ study of Mission to Queensland. It was issued in 1998, but after this there were important changes to the work of that organisation. Plans were in hand to update the story. This project was near completion by the end of 2021.

Bill Hughes continued his prolific researching and writing efforts in 2015 with a biography of pioneer pastor Rev William Moore. The result of in-depth research including work with a UK-based researcher and photographs from Moore’s original church, the book titled “‘The Gardener’ Pastor William Moore 1826-1906”. it was available in an attractive hard copy



version and as an e-book. At the same time, Bill had also produced a history of the City Tabernacle organ and choir and often made valuable contributions to the pages of *QB Forum* with other articles. He was also engaged in an in-depth study of the Queensland Baptist Home Mission.

An interesting development occurred following Bill's research on Wm Moore. In 2019 he was approached by the family who were enquiring whether the Archives or BHQ would be interested in the valuable silver plate that had been presented to Moore when he concluded his (first) pastorate at Petrie Terrace in 1886. The family had retained it ever since but were now willing to offer it to the Baptists. The offer was gladly accepted and the plate was put on display in the Archives.

### **Historical Plaque Project**

Earlier plans to develop a Historical Plaque Project gained considerable traction when the first plaque was placed at Toowong, the oldest existing Baptist church building still in use, on 3 July 2017. A second was installed at the City Tabernacle on 7 May 2017. Windsor Road church was next on 13 August 2017 and finally at North-East Baptist Church on 26 Oct 2020. This last example was different from the others because it represented three different buildings—the first being the former Fortescue Street church (Spring Hill) which had been relocated to Nundah as its first building in 1889 and was still standing next door (under commercial use). Then it commemorated the Queensland Baptist (War) Memorial Church which had been erected in 1923 and used until 1999; the current church was opened on the same site in 2003, under the church's new name, North-East Baptist.

A final plaque in this series related to the site of the first Baptist church building in Brisbane, 38 Wharf Street (the original location of what is now called City Tabernacle Baptist Church). This site is now occupied by a high rise student accommodation facility. Its owners were pleased to grant permission for the placing the plaque to mark the erection of the church in 1859. The plaque was dedicated at a short ceremony on 25 May, 2021. This brought the total number of plaques organised by the Society to 7, with some other churches throughout the states also marked in some way. A special section of the BHQ website, added during 2021, is devoted to the plaque project.

The Society, or in some cases the churches concerned, provided funding for the plaques. Approaches to both the Baptist Union and to the Brisbane City Council for assistance had proved unsuccessful. There are other early church sites which could also be marked in this way, conditions pending, including Jireh in Gipps Street, South Brisbane in Vulture Street, Petrie Terrace in Judge Street, and Edward Street, opposite Central Station.

### **Promotion**

Promotion of the activities and interests of BHQ was always an important aspect of its work, but it was often difficult to carry out. The main channels were the annual assemblies of the Baptist Union where people could be contacted directly, and through the pages of the QB

magazine. Early on, the Assemblies provided good opportunities for displays of material and personal contact but that situation changed when the assemblies were shortened and reduced to a single day. The only remaining avenue was through promotional material distributed in the delegates' bags but without a large budget to produce glossy brochures, this was not so effective, and in any case, the personal touch was lost. For one or two years an encouraging number of books were sold on the official book-table, but the effort was not sustained long. However, the stock of books did gradually thin out, except for the large numbers of the *Pressing on with the Gospel* and *Something more than Gold* which were still available (as well as many copies of the 1977 history, *A Fellowship of Service*, as well!).

The QB magazine offered a page or two of space each issue, so a combined Archives and BHQ contribution was arranged. These covered news items and also featured articles on a wide range of subjects, along with attractive photographs. There was little actual response from readers, but from incidental comments, it was always very positive—"I always turn to that page first!" was common. However, this medium was lost when the publication of the print version of the magazine was suspended in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Opportunities were taken to publish material on the electronic version of the magazine and its Facebook pages, but these were not well organised and there appeared to be little public exposure.

The other main channel was the BHQ/Archives web-page which came into operation in 2014. This was hosted on a private website (of the Archivist) and was shared, with some sections covering BHQ and some featuring the Archives. There were also links to this site from the official Baptist Union website as well. There was occasional feedback from visitors to the pages which made them seem worthwhile. However, it was not totally satisfactory to have the site shared on a personal page so in 2020 it was decided to use a BHQ domain name and to host a site dedicated to just BHQ and Archives. A new position of web-master was created, ably filled by Ian McQuay.

### **BHQ Activities**

The Society was always anxious to promote and engage with churches and Baptist people on historical matters. A couple of special occasions made this possible. One was on the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Johannes Georg Schneider in Queensland, who was probably the first evangelist amongst the German Baptist people west of Ipswich. He had died suddenly in 1878 and was buried in a lonely grave in a paddock at Merryvale, south-west of Rosewood. In 1970 the local Baptists, led by Rev RJ Paulsen, had worked with the local historical society to restore the grave and place a large cross on it. Now years later it was in need of repair again and also the family had begun meeting annually. Dr David Parker was invited to lead a service of re-dedication of the restored grave at the site on 8 August 2015. It was a largely attended event of deep significance many.

Another event focused on the German Baptists was a bus-tour organised by the City Tabernacle Seniors group on 6 Sept 2017. Dr David Parker provided a commentary as the tour passed through most of the key centres of German Baptist life, stopping for meals and meeting the local people at two locations—Gatton and Boonah.

### The Future

The need for many more people to join task of recording, analysing and publishing QB history continued, and there were plenty of issues that needed attention. It is clear that BHQ will need to adapt to changing circumstances and develop more effective ways of engaging with the constituency so that those with interests and abilities may join in taking up the tasks of historical work.

Changes in the life of BHQ continued. David Parker had been involved as an active member of the Baptist World Alliance Heritage and Identity Commission since the 1990s, but relinquished his position there in 2018. He also stepped down in December 2019 as the Archivist. After some months of uncertainty about this position, the QB Board finally appointed Dr Pam Condie, OAM to the position, which she took up from 1 July 2020. A fitting farewell function was held at the QB Centre on 24 June 2020 (in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic) at which thanks to him for his almost 40 years of work were expressed by members of BHQ and the Baptist Union. Dr Condie was 'officially' installed ready to take over the work.

This development marked a slight change in the balance between the Society and the Archives—a new appointment after such a long period, coinciding roughly as it did with major changes in the structure and personnel of the Baptist Union, emphasised the fact that the Archives was officially a part of the Baptist Union, while the Society was a separate organisation. For the first time in 2021 the Archives submitted the annual report to the Baptist Union Business day. In early 2021 there were also changes to regulations governing the operation of Baplink, the Society's bankers, which also highlighted the legal status of the BHQ and the nature of its operation as a voluntary membership-based organisation, not a 'committee' of the Baptist Union. This situation is still unresolved. The changes to the BHQ and

Archives website was another indication of this changing emphasis. BHQ continued to focus on its role as fostering research and publication of Baptist historical matters.

In 2020, Bill Hughes also concluded as BHQ Secretary, being replaced on a temporary basis by Dr David Parker as acting secretary. Eric Kopittke continued his much-valued role as Chairman, as did Hope Colegrave as Treasurer. Membership was not growing with some older members ceasing to be active and others who had been only loosely connected for many years cutting their ties.

A potentially difficult period occurred in 2020 when the country was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Church life was crippled for several weeks while measures were taken to control the virus and handle those who were affected by it. The Archives also closed down, but meetings of the Society which were well spaced out continued under Covid-safe arrangements. However, with church life largely on hold, the print version of the QB magazine suspended, and the annual Assembly delayed, promotion and publicity about Society activities was limited. The effects of Covid-19 and the repercussions continued well into the following year and it was still unclear how church life would re-establish itself in the wake of the pandemic.

Another potentially serious issue arose in 2021 when Baplink advised BHQ that under current law, it could no longer hold the Society's operational account unless BHQ came under the Baptist Union. The solution offered by the QB Board for BHQ to become a 'service group' involved BHQ becoming virtually a committee of the Baptist Union which would be contrary to BHQ's long-standing nature as voluntary society, which was considered completely unsatisfactory. When this was pointed out to the QB Board, it was agreed to cancel the 'Service Group' categorisation, and to seek legal approval for 'Affiliate' instead.

The work of the Society continued as best it could under the circumstances. Dr David Parker concluded his editorship of *QB Forum* at the end of 2021. Recruitment of new members, promoting its activities, and offering its services and resources to interested people were all a greater challenge than they had been over the previous 37 years.

### British Baptists go Digital



The Baptist Union of Great Britain has taken a big step forward in digitising its records. In a recent report it was announced that a large number of files relating to ministers had been digitised.

There were about 4500 files in the batch - some relating to active ministers but others to those who had retired and others who had moved on to other activities. All these files were analysed and categorised before being professionally scanned to searchable PDF files.

These files were then uploaded to a cloud storage system, to which new additional files can be added easily over time. The system allows access by authorised users in different groups with different levels of access. The system also allows for the files to be accessed by different Baptist Association as ministers move from one Association to another, thus saving the need for files to manually move from place to place. Overall the system is efficient, secure and flexible.

## *Pulpit and press: Early Baptists became pioneering newspapermen*

By Rod Kirkpatrick

As I was setting out this year to develop a chronological snapshot of Queensland Baptist history as an aid for researchers, I began bumping into people I “knew” from the mid to late 19th century. They were men who had played an important part in the development of newspapers in Queensland. How did I know these people? I am both a newspaper historian and a new member of the volunteer team at the Queensland Baptist archives at Gaythorne. Over more than 40 years



**James Swan**

**James Swan**, who was the printer and joint proprietor of the first newspaper in Brisbane and a later mayor of the city and a parliamentarian. He and wife Christina were foundation members of the first Brisbane Baptist church formed in 1855.

**William Hitchcock Buzacott**, who launched in 1861 the first Rockhampton newspaper and played a significant part in forming the first Baptist church in the town. The first Baptist meetings were held in his home.

**Charles Hardie Buzacott**, who started five newspapers in Queensland, who managed the major Brisbane dailies for 11 years from 1883 and who introduced significant legislation into the Queensland Parliament while a member of the Legislative Assembly and later the Legislative Council.

**Thomas Blacket Stephens**, owner or part-owner of the Brisbane *Courier*, 1861-1873, an influential government minister and a significant Baptist in the emerging city. He bought the land on which the first Baptist chapel was built, selling it to the church for the purchase price, less a donation.

As a result of these men, pulpit and press were aligned at significant times in colonial Queensland. These men were able to have a strong influence on the tone of newspapers in the colonial era. Stephens used to say that he bought the *Courier* from “a desire to have in his hands the most potent agent, not only on politics, but upon the morals and social progress of the Colony”.

**James Swan (1811-1891)** was the first known Baptist in what later became Queensland. Swan was also the printer of the *Moreton Bay Courier*, which began publication on 20 June 1846. He was a joint proprietor with the editor, Arthur Sydney Lyon. Swan had emigrated from Scotland to Sydney in 1837 as a part of Dr John Dunmore Lang’s migration program. ‘With the arrival of the Swans in Moreton Bay,’ writes David Parker, ‘the known history of Queensland Baptists begins.’ Initially, there was little opportunity for Christian fellowship for the Swans, but this changed dramatically in 1849 when three of Lang’s migrant ships arrived in Moreton Bay, filled with evangelical

Protestants. The first, the *Fortitude*, arrived on 21 January 1849, carrying the Rev. Charles Stewart, a Scottish Baptist minister, as chaplain. He began conducting services in the old Court House in Queen Street from 11 February 1849. Swan was a member of this new congregation, the United Evangelical Church. Some of the Presbyterians did not join the congregation, but there were enough Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists to form a viable church. When it ceased in 1855 after the departure of Stewart, the Baptists moved to establish their first Brisbane church. The Brisbane Baptist Church began meeting at the Police Court and Supreme Court on 5 August 1855. Swan was a foundation member and deacon.

Lyon sold his interest in the *Courier* to Swan in mid-1848. Two years later, Lyon became the editor of an opposition paper, the *Moreton Bay Free Press*. The two papers competed throughout the 1850s, with the *Free Press* closing a few weeks after Separation took effect on 10 December 1859. Swan had sold his interest in the *Courier* on 1 October 1859 to another Baptist, Thomas Blacket Stephens. Swan was mayor of Brisbane, 1873-1875, and on 18 April 1878 he was appointed to the Legislative Council. Swan died in 1891. He intended that the bulk of his estate, of more than £33,000, should immediately assist the Baptist Church in the ‘support of evangelists of impeccable theological orthodoxy’. A court case, however, meant that the benefit for the Baptists was delayed until 1930 when Swan’s second wife died.



**Thomas Blacket**

**William Hitchcock Buzacott (1831-1880)**, a printer in Devonshire and London, emigrated to Sydney in 1852, with brother Charles. William worked as a compositor on the *Sydney Morning Herald* for two years and Charles learnt the printing trade on Henry Parkes's *Empire*. William started a job printing office in George Street and published a non-sectarian religious newspaper, the *Christian Pleader*.

**Charles Hardie Buzacott (1835-1918)**, attracted



**Charles Hardie Buzacott**

from Sydney to the newly separated colony of Queensland, established the *Maryborough Chronicle* in November 1860. Soon he wished that he had chosen Rockhampton, but he persuaded brother William to leave Sydney and establish the *Rockhampton Bulletin*. William published the first issue on 9 July 1861. Both newspapers later became dailies and continued in print until June 2020 when COVID-19 and the associated advertising downturn led to their transformation to digital-only publications.

There were Baptist influences in the early years of both the *Maryborough Chronicle* and the *Rockhampton Bulletin* (from 1878, the *Morning Bulletin*). Charles Buzacott was a very raw recruit to journalism when he began publishing the *Chronicle*. His forte had been printing and his only journalistic experience had been writing leading articles for the *Bridgwood News*, New South Wales. Maryborough's Baptist pastor, the Rev. Josiah Hinton, a former compositor, volunteered to supply Charles with a leading article each week, but fell ill before the *Chronicle*'s second issue was out. When Pastor Hinton regained health, he fulfilled his pledge to write a weekly leader.

In Rockhampton, William Buzacott opened his Alma Street home in February 1862 to the small number of local Baptists wanting to meet. The Rev. Benjamin Gilmore Wilson, of Brisbane, led the first meeting. Pastor Hinton, from Maryborough, formally constituted the church in Rockhampton on 25 June 1862. Of the seven original members, six had come from the Bathurst Street Church in Sydney. The seventh, George Hardie Buzacott, one of the four Buzacott brothers, had come from Wharf Street Church, Brisbane. During the next year, visits by Wilson and Hinton for preaching and baptisms led the Rockhampton fellowship to decide to erect its own building, and in September 1863 a half-acre was bought as a church site. Soon after, Josiah Hinton was called to the pastorate at Rockhampton, beginning his ministry there on 12 July 1864. William Buzacott was a member of the first diaconate, of three men, formed in September 1864.

Charles Buzacott started five newspapers in Queensland, including the *Daily Mail*, Brisbane, in 1903. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1873 as member for Rockhampton. He resigned in 1877 to become a leader writer at the *Courier* in 1878. He was returned to Parliament in 1879 and became Postmaster-General in Thomas McIlwraith's first ministry. He amalgamated the separate Post and Telegraphs departments. In December 1880 Buzacott bought Gresley Lukin's interest in the *Brisbane Courier* and retired from politics in 1883 to become managing director and partner of the Brisbane Newspaper Co. Ltd. He ran the *Courier*, *Evening Observer* and *Queenslander* newspapers until 1894. From 1894 to 1901 Charles was a member of the Legislative Council.

Although originally an Anglican, at different times Charles worshipped at Wharf Street Baptist Church and Rockhampton City Tabernacle.

In Rockhampton, William did not manage the paper successfully and had to sell it to a company while continuing as editor and a shareholder. In 1870, Charles had to come to the rescue, buying the paper.

He made it Queensland's first country daily in January 1873. William went off to Brisbane in September 1874 to work on the literary staff of both the daily *Courier* and the weekly *Queenslander*. He returned to Rockhampton in 1878 and bought back the paper there in July 1879. He died in July 1880, aged 48, leaving a widow and eight children.

**Thomas Blacket Stephens (1819-1877)**, the son of a Baptist minister in England, owned woollen mills near his hometown of Rochdale before emigrating in 1849 to Sydney where he became a wool broker. Attracted by the growth of Brisbane, he established a wool-scour and fellmongery (leatherworks) near Cleveland and later at Ebbin. Stephens' radical politics and advanced social and moral views led him to buy the *Moreton Bay Courier* in 1859 from James Swan. In May 1861, he converted it from a tri-weekly to a daily and renamed it the *Courier* (and three years later, the *Brisbane Courier*). He floated a company to run the paper in 1868, became managing director but retired because of illness in November 1873 and the paper was auctioned. A significant member of the Wharf Street and, later, South Brisbane Baptist churches, Stephens in 1862 was the second mayor of Brisbane. He represented South Brisbane in the Legislative Assembly, 1863-75, and held various portfolios at different times: Colonial Treasurer, 1867-70, Colonial Secretary, 1868-69, Postmaster-General, 1869-70, and Secretary for Lands, 1874-75.



**William Hitchcock**

## Baptist Heritage Queensland - Annual Meeting and Reports

The Annual General Meeting and the regular meeting of Baptist Heritage Queensland were held on 6 Nov 2021 at the Baptist Archives. Mr Eric Kopittke was re-elected President for a further term, but there was no appointment of the positions of Secretary or editor of *QB Forum*. Miss Hope Colegrave was re-appointed treasurer and Mr Ian McQuay reappointed as Webmaster. Dr David Parker concluded his active involvement in the Society after almost 40 years.

The meeting authorised the publication of Dr Parker's book updating the history of MTQ since 1997. This 25-page book documents the developments since the earliest stages of MTQ which had been written np by Rev M C Williams.

The Annual Report included a section on the negotiations with the Baptist Union of Queensland about the status of BHSQ in relation to the use of Baplink for its banking, a matter which is yet to be resolved.

Other sections of the Report included the following.

**Plaque Project:** The BHQ Heritage Plaque Project took another step forward on 25 May 2021 with the installation of a plaque at the site of the first Baptist church in Brisbane, 38 Wharf St, with the warm cooperation of the current owners of the site, StudentOne, and the CEO of that organisation, Tim Weston. Representatives of the City Tabernacle, BHSQ and StudentOne participated in a Covid-safe ceremony. Appreciation is extended to the City Tabernacle Baptist Church for funding the plaque and to StudentOne for facilitating arrangements. The possibility of a plaque for the South Brisbane Vulture St site has also been explored but put on hold for the time being. The same applies to the former Petrie Terrace church. In connection with the Plaques Project, responding to a member's suggestion, a section of the web-site is now devoted to an illustrated description of the project.

**QB magazine:** The print version of the QB magazine has not resumed publication again this year. In conjunction with the Baptist Church Archives, some contributions of BHQ/Archives news have been made for the on-line version. A letter to the QB Board arising from the June 2021 meeting presenting a submission for retention of the print version of the QB magazine has not received any response.

**Publications:** The book, *The Commitment to Ministry* by David Parker, updating the history of Baptist camping in Queensland from the early 1990s to the present, was completed and made available at the annual Assembly held at the Mapleton camp site in April 2021. Thanks is expressed to Andrew Grant and QCCC for fully funding its printing and facilitating its distribution freely at the Assembly. Copies of the earlier two volumes by Joan Maxwell were also available for distribution as well. Research is underway for two further publications by Bill Hughes and David Parker on church planting—the history of the Home Mission and an update to the history of Mission to Queensland respectively (the latter now being in an advanced stage). We congratulate Archives volunteer, Rod Kirkpatrick on the publication of his autobiography.

**Forum:** Our newsletter, *QB Forum* was issued 3 times during the year with articles including the following: Midbar (the Baptist retreat centre), an update to the history of the Baptist Church Archives, a biography of Mrs Marianne Slade (wife of third minister of Rockhampton) and an account of Queensland Baptist response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Membership:** Membership has held reasonably steady, but a drive for further members would be desirable due to a slow decline. Funds have held up very strongly and are well managed by the Treasurer.

**Website:** The dedicated BHQ and Archives website is an addition for the year, managed by Ian McQuay as webmaster. It has a fresh new appearance compared with the old one and contains some new material, with additions being made throughout the year. Eric Kopittke has also established a 'Friends of BHQ' Facebook page to generate interest in the work.



### Baptist church buildings on the web

One of the many resources on the BHQ/Archives website is the album of images of Baptist church buildings in Queensland, dating from 1851 to 1970. There are more than 200 images in chronological order of opening. This is an on-going project with more images to be uploaded in the future. The photographs are historical, showing as much as possible, the building as it was at the time of opening. This is an on-going project.

A few have not been able to be obtained but contributions are welcome, as are corrections to dates and places if required.

To see the pages, visit <https://www.bhsq.org/bapq/churches100years/index.html>