FREE CHURCH (WAUCHOPE)

1854 Rev. Allan McIntyre was at the Manning River and also preached at Alexander Bain's farm at "Letterewe"
1865 Rev. Allan McIntyre - first communion
1871 A church was built at "Letterewe"
1876 Rev. John Davis was at Bombala
1877 " " to Hastings & Macleay Rivers
October 17,1877 to Hastings Charge)
1909 Rev I.L.Graham was the first students to go to Scotland from the Hastings - also Rev Campbell Robinson (Manning River)
(See the hisotircal booklet prepared for 1979.)
Rev. Campbell Andrews was converted by Rev M.C.Ramsay at Wauchope.
1930. The text: Matthew 3-17. "This is my Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased."
Campbell returned from Scotland (many years of study)
1941 .....
1946 Ordained as a Missionary to South Africa
Students together : Joe Harman, Dudley Trotter, Campbell A.
In early days rode on horseback or horsedrawn vehicles in all weathers. Campbell was married at"Lilybank" (his parents home at Wauchope) by Rev. J.Harman (DATE?) 5 -1941
Elders were: Duncan and "Sandy" Bain and Lauch Campbell
Jock Graham, H.D.Andrews, Jim Bain and Warwick of Comboyne.
Families attending church included: Bain, Graham, Campbell, Steel, McKay, Trotter Bosanquet etc. (see history book)
1947: Communion at Wauchope - Rev. Alvin McIntosh (preacher)
"never seen so many people concerned" said Rev Harman -
Two sisters of Campbell Andrews were saved and 18 new member at that time.
"Thank God and Take Courage" - Psalm 115, v.8.

Source: Hazel Suters

CENTENARY 1877-1977
THE EARLY YEARS

HASTINGS - MACLEAY CONGREGATION
of
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
EASTERN AUSTRALIA

THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS was given by the Session Clerk, Mr. J.E.Huckett at a luncheon following a special Centenary Service in the Davis Memorial Church on Sat. 19th. Nov. 1977.

If we are to appreciate fully what we owe to the Free Church men and women of this district of a hundred years and more ago, we will need to recall the unsettled state of Presbyterianism in N .S.W. at that time.

The Disruption in Scotland 1843 was still quite recent. Three years later on Oct. 10th. 1846, Rev. William McIntyre, Rev. John Tait, Rev. Colin Stewart and Mr. Samuel Martin, in order to maintain Presbyterian principles in their purity, constituted themselves as a Court of Christ's Church, and adopted the title, Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. The amazing growth and progress of this church in the following years (20 years) can be studied in Rev. J.C. Robinson's History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Also, the disappointing crisis which arose in 1864 - 5, when the majority of the Synod entered into a union with other Presbyterian Churches, and left sadly depleted ranks to carry on the work and witness of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

It is against such a background that we must judge the actions of the Presbyterians of this district of a hundred years ago, and we should be thankful to God that there were so many with discernment, faith and loyalty to Scriptural principles, to cast in their lot with the Synod of Eastern Australia.

Their difficulties and discouragements were enormous. Communications of every kind were poor. They had no places of worship and no regular ministerial supply. They could have taken the easy way out by uniting with the larger bodies, but this would have meant forsaking principles which they were not prepared to give up.

A great debt is owed to the Rev. Allan McIntyre. Rev. Peter McPherson has left it on record, that while on a visit to the Hastings in 1876, he was told that, had it not been for the labours of Rev. Allan McIntyre, the whole of the Hastings district would have been lost to Presbyterianism. He took up his ministry on the Manning on Dec. 18th.,1854, but was not inducted to the charge until Jan. 7th. 1858. He made periodic visits to the Hastings, and services were held in Mr. Alexander Bain's barn at Letterewe. Services were in Gaelic and English, and although the first service commenced at 10-00am, it was usually near sundown when proceedings ended for the day.

Though records of the early years are scanty, it is known that Rev. Allan McIntyre held a communion service on the Hastings as early as 1865. The first Free Church place of worship built on the Hastings, was at Letterewe, the official opening taking place on July 16th. 1871 with Rev. W.S. Donald presiding, of Clarencetown.

Mr. Hugh Livingstone supplied for a time and must have travelled extensively, for he was the agent for "The Witness",(a weekly paper edited by Rev. George Sutherland of Sydney) on the Hastings, Wilson, Macleay, Nambucca and Bellinger Rivers. Mr. Livingstone was ordained by the Presbytery of Sydney on Nov. 3rd. 1875, and went to labour at Parkes in Western N.S.W.

Other ministers known to have visited the Hastings and Macleay in those early years were for instance, Rev. W.S.Donald who in February 1876, preached at Letterewe, Huntingdon and Catharbuc. Catharbuc on the Upper Hastings was then owned by Mr. Angus Kennedy who had become one of the early elders of the congregation, and was almost certainly the venue of the first Free Church service on the upper river. There were 30 present at the service. The school at Huntingdon was crowded for the service there.

Rev. Peter McPherson reported that in 1876, he had conducted services at Catharbuc, Huntingdon and Letterewe on the Hastings; at Wallaby Hill and Rollands Plains on the Wilson, and Australeden on the Macleay. The round trip of over 500 miles was made on horseback. The journeys of both these ministers would make a story in itself, touching on such incidents as riding through a thunderstorm on the ranges coming from the Barrington, and the arduous journey from the upper Hastings to the Manning.

In October of the same year, the Presbytery had a letter from Mr. Duncan Bain of the Hastings, referring to a memorial from the Free Church people on the Hastings, Wilson and Macleay Rivers. This contained 99 signatures of adults who expressed agreement with the principles and position of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, and also a petition that an ordained missionary might be appointed to labour in the area.

MR. JOHN DAVIS had been licensed to preach the gospel on March 6th.1876, and was sent to supply at Bombala on the South Coast. But on the 6th.June 1877, he was ordained to labour as a missionary in the extensive Hastings and Macleay districts. The work prospered so well and showed such promise, that the Hastings and Macleay was sanctioned as a regular charge on Nov.17th.1877.

This is the milestone that we commemorate today, and as we survey the past hundred years or more, we might well say,"What hath God wrought!" (Numbers 23:23)

When Mr. Davis was sent to Bombala, the Union Party locked the doors of the church against him forcing him to hold his services in the Court House, though the church still held its legal connection with the Synod of Eastern Australia. The mission to Bombala was a failure. Mr. Davis was then appointed to the Hastings-Macleay, and instead of locked doors, the people called him to be their minister. And we should be profoundly thankful to God that there were such men and women with a love of, and a loyalty to, scriptural principles. The fruits of their work and witness are still with us a hundred years later.

We are now two days into the second hundred years, and ours is the opportunity the challenge and solemn responsibility to so live and work, that in a hundred years time, those who comprise the church here, may be able to note with thanksgiving, our faithfulness and loyalty, just as we today remember the people of the past.

As we glance over the past there is so much to instruct and encourage us. We might think of the faith of those families on the lower river and adjacent areas, who in 1871, before they ever had a settled minister, built a place of worship at Letterewe And again when it became desirable to remove to the growing town of Wauchope, they built the Davis Memorial Church, though they had been without a settled minister for 20 years, and had no immediate prospects of getting one.

Then we see how the church has extended. Through the efforts of Mr. Angus Kennedy, services were extended up the river to Cathabuc and eventually on to the Forbes River where we still have a preaching centre. About 70 years ago, Mr. Neil Mc Kinnon with his wife and growing family settled at Kindee, the first Free Church family to do so. This eventually led to the opening up of a preaching centre with its own place of worship. And the settlement of several Free Church families on Comboyne led

to regular services there. All of these families referred to on the Hastings had to go long periods in their early years without regular services from their own church.

Rev. John Sinclair of Geelong, who visited the Macleay in 1908 tells of a good example of how blessing attends faithful home training, even when cut off from the ministrations of their own church. He referred to the family of Mr. John Ramsay of the Macleay which had only one day's ministration from their own church in 15 years. This family circle of 10 adults and some children, maintained monthly meetings for their own edification. The result was that this family gave three sons to the ministry of our church. 1 In later years Rev. M.C. Ramsay spoke of the influence of good literature in their home on the Macleay. This happy result should encourage others, especially those cut off from the ministry of their church, not to neglect the church that is in their house, and to see that good literature is available and that all are encouraged to use it well.

The happy story related by Rev. Sinclair does not end there. Not only did the three Ramsy sons serve in the ministry, but two grandsons are now ministers of our church, and a grand daughter is a medical missionary in India.

While on the subject of the ministry, it is interesting to note the number given to the ministry by the Hastings-Macleay congregation. In the order in which they were received, they were Revs. J.D.Ramsay about 1905, H.W.Ramsay 1909, I.L.Graham 1909, M.C.Ramsay 1912, J.A.Harman 1921, J.C.Andrews and D.G.C.Trotter 1930, and A.M.Harman in 1953. It is interesting to note that 5 men offered for the ministry during the long vacancy following the death of Mr. Davis.

Looking back, we may feel some rebuke as we compare ourselves with those of a hundred years ago. Some today, complain if the services seem a little longer than usual. But some communion services of a hundred years ago lasted four hours. And people traveled on horseback and in horse-drawn vehicles from the upper river and Rollands Plains. One mother carried her 3months old baby 24 miles on horseback to be present. We can readily see today that the stand taken a century ago was fully justified.

The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia has not died out as many predicted, and as some had even hoped it would. One unsympathetic minister visiting the distrist in those early years said, the sooner our church died out the better. He failed to recognize that while ever a church remains faithful to the Bible as the Word of God, that church will never die. The Synod of Eastern Australia has greatly expanded in the past 25 years. In 1953, a Union was effected with like-minded brethren in Victoria, and the church has extended inter-state to Tasmania and Queensland. We now have a minister at Armidale, the first settled minister on the Tablelands since the disastrous Union of 1865. Like the Apostle Paul, we should thank God and take courage. Many descendants of those early families are in our congregations today, and two thirds of our present office-bearers are descended from those early Free Church pioneers.

11/8/1960

THE HASTINGS SHIRE GAZETTE

Anglican Church News

VISIT OF MISSIONARIES FROM BORNEO

Visiting the parish of Upper Hastings next weekend, will be two teachers from Borneo. They are Mr. and Mrs. Jim Power and are stationed at the St. Patrick's School, Tawau, on the east coast of British North Borneo. Both have been engaged in teaching at this Anglican Mission for several years and are at present on furlough.

Their visit to Wauchope commences a fortnight's deputation tour of the southern part of the Diocese. Mr. Power will speak at the Eucharist and at Evensong on Sunday and both will be present at the Youth Tea which commences at 5.30 pm.

COMMISSIONING OF CHURCH OFFICERS

The commissioning of the Churchwardens of the parish and the members of the Parochial Council, elected and appointed at the recently held annual meeting of the parish, will be held on Tuesday night next, commencing at 7.30 pm. This service will precede the first monthly meeting of the new Parochial Council.

EDUCATION SUNDAY

Education Sunday was marked in the parish Church of St. Matthew last Sunday when special intention for the work of education and for the schools of the parish was made at the Eucharist.

At Evensong the Rector speaking on the subject of education called upon the congregation to realise that education which was the process of "bringing up" a child began at the font when parents and Godparents undertook to teach, to set an example of Christian living and which would lead to the child taking his place in the community as a good citizen.

Speaking on the sixth verse of the 22nd chapter of the Book of Proverbs, "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." The Rector pointed out that the dictionary definition of "to train" was "to bring to a desired state or standard by instruction and practise." Thus the "four R's" were necessary, religion being the fourth "R". All education, he said, had its ultimate aim in service to God and the community.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

The quarterly conference of Sunday School teachers from the parishes of Upper Hastings, Kendall and Port Macquarie was held at Wauchope on Saturday last with an attendance of 32. The subject for the conference was "Evangelism in the Sunday School" and was introduced by Mr. Dick Kernebone of Port Macquarie. The opportunity of fellowship was again possible by the provision of the eevning meal by the members of the St. Matthew's Women's Guild.

ANGLICAN CHURCH NEWS

St. Matthew's Festival: To mark the Patronal Festival of the parish Church of St. Matthew, the Reverend W. H. Svans, formerly rector in 1925-27, celebrated Holy Communion yesterday, St. Matthew's Day.

From: The Hastings Shire Gazette 22/09/1960

Next Sunday which will be observed as Thanksgiving Sunday the preacher at Evensong will be the Very Reverend A. E. Warr, Dean of Grafton and formerly rector of this parish in 1934-38. It was during the Dean's incumbency that the present Rectory was built.

Commissioning of Missionaries: The Lord Bishop of Grafton during Synod Evensong last week in the Cathedral Church commissioned six to serve in the Mission field. Each of these offered as members of this Diocese and will serve either in the north of Australia or in New Glinea. Two others were not able to be present as one, Lyle Williams from the Eureka-Clunes parish is already at the Mitchell River Mission, having been commissioned for the task some weeks ago. The other Miss Joscelyn Thomas, a teacher, is undergoing a course of study at Deaconess House, Sydney.

Those who were commissioned were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Diacon of this parish and formerly of Ellenborough where Mr. Diacon was the teacher. They will go to Agenehambo, in New Guinea to serve at the Martyrs' School

The Reverend Tom Lawrence formerly rector of Dunoon and one time assistant-curate at Port Macquarie is to serve at the Edward River Mission in North Queensland.

Mr. and Mrs. Brian Fitzgerald go to the Mitchell River Mission in North Queensland, and were formerly at Kookaburra Flat in the Bellbrook parish where Mr. Fitzgerald was the teacher.

Miss Margaret Yalden a teacher from the South Grafton parish will serve in New Guinea.

The Home Secretary of the Australian Board of Missions, the Reverend Ban It Chui, was the preacher at Evensong.

ANGLICAN CHURCH NEWS

During Evensong next Sunday in St. Matthew's, the Rector will screen Kodachrome slides of the work of the Church in the Eroro and Embi Mission areas in Papua, New Guinea. Taken by Allan (Strawb) Miller, they show the activities of these two Mission stations especially in the ministry of healing.

From: The Hastings Shire Gazette 20/10/1960.

Many slides show the process of the erection of the new 300 bed TB hospital at Embi part of which has been finished, dedicated by the Bishop and already in use.

Together with Clifton Fowler, Strawb left this parish last December for this work and the steady progress of the construction of St. Luke's hospital Embi will eventually take care of the majority of the Papuans in the Anglican area who suffer from TB.

The Youth Tea will be held next Sunday commencing at 5.30 p.m. to which all Anglican youth of the age of 15 and upwards are invited to attend.

The annual Flower Show organised by the St. Matthew's Women's Guild will be held on Friday of next week, the 14th. Councillor Bill Green, Deputy Shire President will officially open the function.

Indications show that this year's Flower Show has attracted a large number of entries in exhibits of flowers and cooking section. Schedules are available from the Rector, Mrs. Evrall or Miss Dawes.

ANGLICAN CHURCH NEWS

LENT 1960 : Wednesday of next week begins the penitential Season of Lent. Ash Wednesday, as it is traditionally called, begins the period of the Christian year in which observance is made of the 40 days preparation by Jesus Christ prior to the beginning of His earthly ministry.

In the parish Church of St. Matthew, as well as the Sunday services, there will be services on Wednesday (Holy Communion) at 7.30 a.m. and Thursday (Lenten Devotions) at 8 p.m. Each Sunday morning the Rector will give a series of addresses on the theme "The Parish Eucharist," and each night at Evensong another series under the title of "Ancient Highways." At the Thursday Lenten Devotions, the Rector will also speak on a further theme "What St. Paul Said." The now well established Children's Service after school will be held on Tuesdays at 4 p.m.

A FAREWELL to Mrs. Swan and Dr. and Mrs. Skinner was given after Evensong last Sunday when at a gathering in the Church Hall a small gift was made to them as a token of appreciation.

The Rector, speaking briefly, expressed appreciation on behalf of the Parochial Council for the quiet behind-the-scenes work Mrs. Swan had done, and for the contribution made by Dr. Skinner as a member of the Council.

Both responded and expressed appreciation at the gesture made when Mrs. Willmott made the presentations on behalf of the Parochial Council.

RADIO BROADCASTS : Each Tuesday at 8.30 p.m. over Station 2KM (Kempsey) the Anglican Session may be heard. Also through the National Radio Stations network, news of the Diocese is broadcast from time to time.

From: The Hastings Shire Gazette. 25/02/1960

28 JULY 1960

THE HASTINGS SHIRE GAZETTE

ANGLICAN CHURCH NEWS

The Lord Bishop of Grafton, the Right Reverand Kenneth John Clements, will visit the parish of Upper Hastings on Sunday next, 31st July, to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. This service will be held in the parish Church of St. Matthew commencing at 7.30 p.m. Following the service there will be the opportunity, in the Church Hall over a cup of tea, of welcoming the Bishop again to the parish and in sharing in fellowship together. All are invited to share in supper.

This will give all, particularly the newly confirmed, the opportunity of speaking with the Bishop, for when a Bishop visits a parish, it is to the whole parish that he comes, although he may be limited to visiting one section only of it. The Bishop, as the Chief Shepherd of souls within the Diocese, comes to his people within the parish on such visits as for confirmation.

The next quarterly conference of the Hastings-Manning Sunday School Teachers' Conference will be held at St. Matthew's on Saturday week 6th August, when the subject "Evangelism in the Sunday School" will be in the charge of Mr. Dick Kernebone of Port Macquarie parish.

St. Matthew's Women's Guild will again entertain the visitors as well as teachers of our local Sunday Schools to afternoon tea and the evening meal.

Anglican Church News

BISHOP CONFIRMS IN PARISH CHURCH

The now inadequately small sixty years old parish Church of St. Matthew, Wauchope, was crowded to overflowing on Sunday night last when the Lord Bishop of Grafton, the Right Reverend Kenneth John Clements, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to thirty persons. Parishioners from several outcentre Churches were also present swelling the congregation to 170, many having to sit outside and join in the Service through the windows and doors.

In his address to the candidates and with special word to the parents and Godparents, His Lordship touched on the problems of community life and the constant need for individual discipline in the setting of an example of Christian living to young people.

He called on the adults to set a standard of living that was Christ-like, for he said, "young people are influenced by us older folk more than you may realise, for good or for evil." He quoted on old Spanish proverb "a pound of parent is worth a ton of priest" when speaking of the influence of home life for good in the training and influencing of the young.

At the welcome to the Bishop during supper in the hall after the Service, the Rector drew the attention of all to the now very urgent need of the new parish Church being erected as soon as possible. He said that there were over 400 Anglican families in the town itself while the present building accomodated normally 95 persons. Extra seating for the Service had permitted the "squeezing in" of 140, but the new St. Matthew's would seat 320 persons.

In his reply the Bishop congratulated the parish on the achievements during the Rector's ministry. He said "you are now sending out your own people as Missionaries and the parish has come alive. I hope it will be this year that the [illegible] menced to provide a beautiful and more adequate Church."

Those who received the Laying on of Hands in Confirmation were : William Thomas Boland, Barry Clark, Adrian Kenneth Coombes, Brian Lex Coombes, Neil Thomas Duck, Ian John Hollis, Allyn James Hunt, John Paine, Alfred George Roods, Daniel Junior White, Beverley Gaye Boland, Margaret Fay Boyle, Alma Joan Clark, Lesley Anne Day, Beryl Duck, Marie Elizabeth Duck, Trudy Gilbert, Ella Margaret Gosbell, Valerie Joan Hamilton, Heather Glency Hollis, Anne Lindsay Hollis, Leila Alice Hunt, Alice Fay Lyon, Jannette Mumford, Suzanne Maree Olney, Joy Paine, Susan Louise Riding, [illegible] Taylor and Betty Florence Young.

EDUCATION SUNDAY

To mark the commencement of Education Week, special reference will be made to the Week during the Holy Communion on Sunday next in St. Matthew's and at Evensong an Education Week Service will be supplementary to the Service to observe this important function. Anglican children are asked to be present at these Services and to wear their school blazers. All school students who are Communicants should be present with special intention at the a.m. Holy Communion Service.

From: The Hastings Shire Gazette 8/8/1960

13th April 1960.

THE HASTINGS SHIRE GAZETTE

Anglican Church News

The close of the solemn Season of Holy Week, and the opening of the Easter Festival, will be observed in St. Matthews, Wauchope, with services as follows :

Tonight at 8 p.m., being Maundy Thursday, the occasion in which Christians recall the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament of Holy Communion, the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, a Service of Devotions will be held during which a study will be made of chapter 15 of the first epistle to the Corinthians : this is a study of the doctrine of the Resurrection.

Good Friday, the most solemn day in the Christian calendar, will begin with a service at 9 a.m. during which the Litany will be said and a devotional study made of "the Seven Words from the Cross." These are the utterances of the Saviour during the six hours of His agony and crucifixion.

In the afternoon, commencing at 1.30 o'clock, the children's service will be held during which film strips of our Lord's Passion will be screened. At 7.30 p.m. the final act of the day will be a Service of Devotions with film strips of our Lord's Passion and Crucifixion.

Easter Even (Saturday) the first Easter Evensong will be said at 7.30 p.m. and preparation made for the Holy Eucharist of Easter Day.

The great Festival of Easter will be observed with services of Holy Communion at 6.30 a.m. and 8 a.m., a children's service (Sunday School) at 9.30 a.m. and at 7.30 p.m. Festal Evensong.

Last Sunday the monthly Youth Tea was held at which Mr. Vic Higgins screened many beautiful coloured slides of many places of interest, especially of the western areas of the State. These views were much appreciated by the youth who saw them.

Arrival in time for the Parish Night were the blazers of the members of the Young Anglicans, maroon in colour with the Y.A.F. badge pocket. They are smart in appearance and when worn in full uniform with grey trousers or skirts, white shirts or blouses, maroon tie and grey beret for girls, present an attractive turnout of our YA members.

Welcome to Rev. W. Thomson...

Induction Service at Wauchope Methodist Church

The Wauchope Methodist Church was packed to capacity on Tuesday, February 2nd, when the Rev. W. Thomson was inducted to the Port Macquarie Circuit, in succession to Rev. E. Bate. Rev. George White (Kempsey), Chairman of the District, conducted the service, assisted by Rev. Lester James (assistant at Kempsey).

Mrs. H. E. Dean, of Townsville (sister of Miss C. Secombe, of Johnstone Street, Wauchope), presided at the organ, and hearty singing was a feature of the service.

The address and charge to the incoming Minister, given by the Rev. White, was most impressive and enjoyed by all.

At the close of the service in the Church, the large congregation moved to the school hall for the official welcome and social fellowship, with the usual cup of tea.

Mr. Ivan Meldrum, Senior Lay Officer of the Circuit, occupied the chair and kept things moving in his usual capable and breezy manner.

After extending a welcome to the guests, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson and family, visiting ministers, other representatives, and all friends, the Chairman called on Miss Ann Paul who rendered a brace of solos to a very appreciative audience, Mrs. Murray being the accompanist.

Rev. George White opened the welcome to the guests in very happy strain, followed by the Mayor of Port Macquarie. Messrs. E. M. Trotter, K. D. Searl, H. Thompson, Wilbur Trotter, C. B. Tompkins, Rev. J. A. Harman (Free Presbyterian), Lt. Stewart (Salvation Army), Rev. J. J. Goodman (C. of E.), Rev. S. F. Eldred (Presbyterian), Rev. Tompkins, Rev. Thomas, Rev. James, Mr. Nunn (of the Baptist Fellowship), Mrs. Geof Smith and Miss Bessie Nicholls.

Rev. Thomson thanked one and all for the warm and kindly welcome, and trusted that the same happy feeling would continue during their stay here. Rev. Thomson said the welcome was a heart-warming experience, coming from such a large gathering, and especially from the Ministers of sister churches.

What talents ministers had should be available to the church, bearing in mind the charge delivered by the Chairman. Rev. White, in the church.

The newly inducted Minister said his concern would be for the people within and without the church.

Thanks to all associated with the arrangements, for floral decorations, and to Miss Ann Paul and Mrs. Murray, concluded a most uplifting and enjoyable evening, the Benediction being offered by Rev. Thomson.

From: The Hastings Shire Gazette 11/02/60

Anglican Church News

From: The Hastings Shire Gazette, 28/01/1960 p 14.

Visiting Preacher at St. Matthew's : At both services in St. Matthew's next Sunday, the preacher will be the Rev. J. R. Roper, organising secretary in Queensland for the Church Missionary Society. Ordained by the late Archbishop Mowll, Mr. Roper for some years now has been engaged in special work in Queensland on behalf of the C.M.S., which is a Missionary Society within the Church of England, and which operates in Africa, India, Borneo, Pakistan, Malaya and North Australia.

Ellenborough Farewell to Diacon Family : During the service at St. Cuthbert's last Sunday, the congregation bade farewell and the Rector blessed Mr. and Mrs. Frank Diacon, who, with their two daughters Margaret and Penny, left on Monday night for Sydney in preparation for their departure to the Mission field.

Mr. Diacon had been the school teacher at Ellenborough for the past two years and in August next will be posted to a Mission station as a teacher.

Mrs. Diacon will share with her husband in his work, and both will undertake the required preparatory course in tropical hygiene, dialectics, methods of approach to teaching natives and other aspects of teaching the Faith in the Mission field.

YA Resume Tonight: The St. Matthew's YA Branch will meet tonight, resuming after the end of year break. Three JA's will shortly be received into the YA's, having reached the age of 15 years. They are Ellen Denning, Lyn Willmott and Pam Olney.

Rev. Warren Arkell : The news that the Rev. Warren Arkell, assistant priest at Port Macquarie, has accepted the parish of Aberdeen in the Diocese of Newcastle, will bring expressions of congratulations and good wishes to him and his wife. His concluding service at Port Macquarie will be Evensong on the 14th February, after which a farewell will be tendered him.

Opening of Davis Memorial Church.

P.M. News 7.9.1918

THURSDAY, 29th August, was a memorable day for the Free Presbyterian Church people of the Hastings district, being the day on which their new church at Wauchope (a brick building of pleasing appearance and capable of seating comfortably about 150 persons) was opened. Since the death of the Rev. John Davis, in whose saintly memory the church was named, these people have been without a pastor. Their light, though turned down, had never been extinguished, but had been kept burning by the periodical visits of the Rev. S. P. Stewart, of Tinonee, whose self-sacrificing services had been greatly appreciated and borne much fruit, and whose eloquent addresses had always drawn large congregations. For some considerable time services had been held in the Methodist Church, and whilst appreciating the Christian courtesy of their Methodist brethren, the Free Church people felt they would like to have a church of their own. When at a congregational meeting held in March, 1916, the Rev. I. L. Graham suggested that an effort should be made to build a church in Wauchope, £425 was subscribed in the room, and from that time on subscriptions came in freely, with the result that this church was opened free of debt, and with a credit balance.

There was a large representative gathering present, the chair being occupied by the Interim Moderator, Rev. S. P. Stewart, and on the platform were the Revs. I. L. Graham (of Hamilton, Victoria), G. E. Morris, J. Davies, and A. E. Putland, also representing Elders from the Clarence and Manning. Among the visitors was Mrs. Davis, widow of the late Rev. John Davis, and Mr. Cameron, from the Richmond. The Macleay, Manning, and Rollands Plains were also represented. The meeting opened with devotional exercises, after which an apology was read from the Rev. H. P. Lomas (Church of England), Port Macquarie, and congratulatory messages from the Rev. John Sinclair, of Geelong, Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church Assembly; Rev. Herbert Ramsay, Grafton; the congregation of Hamilton, Victoria; Rev. I. McLean and the congregation at Maclean, the latter accompanied by a donation of £3.5.

Mr. Stewart, after a few well-chosen words, in which he referred to the principles for which the church stood, and their system of church government, which he believed to be founded on New and Old Testament models, declared the Davis Memorial Church opened for public worship, after which he referred most feelingly to the life and work of the late Rev. John Davis.

Mr. A. B. Campbell, Secretary of the Building Committee, then read his report, showing the steps that had been taken to accomplish the happy event they were that day celebrating.

Mr. D. Graham, who has acted as treasurer since the removal of his son Ewan to Kempsey, gave in his report. This showed that the Church was not only free from debt, but that there was a credit balance at that time of £7 14s 9d. During the communion season this favourable balance was augmented by contributions other than the collections to the extent of £55 17s 3d, thus making a total credit of £63 2s.

The Rev. I. L. Graham, addressing the gathering, said he would have been pleased to attend this opening under any circumstances, but was doubly pleased because the church was opened free from debt, and because it was associated with the name of the late Rev. J. Davis, who by his life and work had done so much for the Free Church cause in the district.

The people on having a spiritual home of their own, and wished for God's blessing on the congregation who worshipped there.

The Rev. J. Davies (Presbyterian Minister, Port Macquarie), said that he had not expected to speak, but had come expecting to hear a sermon from the Rev. S. P. Stewart. After congratulating the congregation upon opening their church free of debt, he reminded them that after all it was only a means to an end, viz., to build men up in Christian character and virtue, in which work they would have his sympathy and co-operation.

The Rev. A. E. Putland (Methodist) said it gave him pleasure to add the congratulations of himself and the Methodists of the district. The Free Presbyterians had been very welcome to the use of the Methodist Church, still he could understand them wishing for one of their own. Experience taught that the best way to break down denominational distinctions was by association with each other. They learned to magnify the things that agree, and minimise things that disagreed.

Mr. MacLachlan, senior visiting Elder from Maclean, was the next speaker. He said they had a church but no settled minister; and related what their church had done under similar circumstances, advising them to keep together and hold as many meetings as possible until they got a minister.

Mr. J. Robinson, an Elder from the Manning River, congratulated the congregation on opening the church free of debt. He had been present at the meeting in March when the building was first spoken of, and was much impressed with the enthusiasm with which that meeting was carried out, and had looked forward with pleasure to this opening ceremony, and prayed for God's blessing on the work in this district.

Mr. Ross, from the Clarence River, said he was very pleased to be with the Hastings people on that day, and congratulated them on their zeal. They had done something that was of great assistance to the Church at large, and gave encouragement to many. God had blessed them in making it possible for them to build this church, and he prayed that His blessing might still be with them.

Mr. Anderson, another Clarence River Elder, said the influence of a good man was invaluable, and he thought the fact that this church and people were there to-day was largely due to the work done there by the late Rev. J. Davis, whom to know was to love.

Mr. Cameron, from the Richmond River, who had come 215 miles to be present, said they were spoken of by some as being old-fashioned, but he didn't consider it old-fashioned to stand by their Church principles. He hoped that souls might be born within that church.

Mr. Duncan Bain then moved a comprehensive vote of thanks to all who had collected and assisted to build the church, to Mr. A. W. S. Mackay (builder), and also for the gift of the pulpit, to the Ministers and Elders who had travelled so far to assist them, and to the ladies for providing the church furnishings.

The meeting then closed with prayer, after which the visiting Ministers were entertained at dinner in the home of Mr. J. Graham, and the Elders by Mr. A. Bain.

Services have been continued in the church during the week, and on the Sabbath morning a most impressive service was held, at which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed. The Baptismal Sacrament was administered at the evening service, and the church was overcrowded on both occasions.

The Free Church people were looking forward to the time when they would have a settled minister, and regular services.

From: Port Macquarie News 7/9/1918

Some recollections of Rev S. Ramsay 6- 8 May 2002

On Monday 6th May Mr. Ramsay joined the car journey from Wauchope to Maclean in New South Wales, in order to attend the annual PCEA Synod. He traveled in the company of Douglas and Ian Hamilton, also on their way to attend that meeting. On the journey to Maclean he talked freely- often the conversation related to church practice and pastoral experiences. He had many rich and wise experiences. He also spoke of the countryside- in particular of his youth and earlier times spent in Grafton area.

On the Tuesday of Synod, Mr. Ramsay actively spoke and participated n the Assembly. As a retired Senior minister he was very much respected in this role. It was remarked upon that some Synod delegates commenced their addresses to Synod with opening words, "Moderator, fathers and brethren". On the final day of the synod it was noted that Mr. Ramsay was indeed one of the "fathers" of the church.

Little was noticed of Mr. Ramsay's sudden illness until Wednesday morning the 8th May. At the breakfast table he indicated his illness the previous night and agreed that he would need to visit a doctor. He was taken to the Maclean Hospital where his condition rapidly deteriorated. It was a shock to the assembled Synod that morning to be told of his imminent passing. Synod immediately paused its proceedings and was led in prayer- it was a time of great emotion in the room.

In the following days of Synod there were a number of conversations relating to our departed brother.

We gave thanks to God for the great strength and faculties he retained until his last hours on earth and for the love he held for his Saviour and Church. His example will be loved and treasured.

By Mr Jack Hamilton.
Jac..

THE JUBILEE OF THE WAUCHOPE DAVIS MEMORIAL CHURCH

Compiled by Edward Huckett

1918 - 1968

Thursday March 1917 is an historic date in the life of the Free Church in Wauchope. On that day it was decided that a church would be built in the developing town of Wauchope The wooden church and Manse at Letterewe had fallen into disrepair following the death of Rev. John Davis in November 1897

At the annual synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia held in 1906 it was pointed out that Mr Duncan Bain had expressed his willingness to take the land, church and Manse at Letterewe at valuation. Synod agreed to accept Mr Bain's generous offer, and the Clerk was instructed to convey to him the thanks of the Synod. It is worthy of record that Mr Bain also donated land to the other Protestant denominations for places of worship in Wauchope

Following the death of Rev John Davis, the charge remained vacant for 24 years and relied largely on quarterly visits by the Interim Moderator Rev S. P Stewart to give supply. Therefore it was with much enthusiasm that the loyal Free Church gathered on that day, the **first of March 1917 in the Temperance Hall under the chairmanship of Rev. S.P._Stewart to give consideration to the building of a church in Wauchope**

For much of this information we are indebted to the late Rev I.L. Graham who was present at the meeting as well as the opening, and wrote an account of both, for publication in The Australian Free Presbyterian" Mr Graham wrote "After devotional exercises the Moderator explained the object of the meeting and called for definite proposals. ***On the*** **motion of Messrs Duncan Bain and Robert Mackay elders, it was unanimously decided to erect a church in Wauchope**

All the gentleman present spoke in favour of the proposal, A very pleasing feature of the meeting was the interest of the young men, most of whom have just begun to form homes of their own, stand up and, one after the other and declare ,that, in their opinion a Free Church should be built in Wauchope. They concluded little speeches by saying "And I will do all that I can" and when the opportunity was given a little later, for making contributions, the young men implemented their promises - they did what they could,

The zeal for building the House of God was not, however confined to the young. The more aged were also anxious that something should be built in Wauchope The zeal for building the House of the Lord was not however, confined to the young. The more aged wee also anxious that something should be done One of these remarked that it would be a source of very great satisfaction to him to see a Free Church in Wauchope ere he should go the way of all the earth, which he felt could not now be long, and when the lists were opened his name was down for £50. Three others the fathers of large and much respected families in the district also gave £50 each. From another, a donation of £25 and from two young men, a donation of £25 there was a donation of £30 to be paid in yearly instalments of £10 another of £20 and eleven others amounting in all to over £100. Thus a total sum of £425 was promised in the room.
None of the people are wealthy and the fact that this large amount was raised in the meeting could go to show how devoted the Hastings people are to the Free Church cause. Surely here is a

field rich with promise, if only the church can step in and work it with energy and with labourers whose motto is;" First the Kingdom"

It is the desire of the congregation if possible to erect a good substantial building of brick so that it may have a place of worship for many years to come.

Following upon the decision to build a church, it was agreed, again unanimously to request the Synod of Eastern Australia to appoint Mr. J. C. Robinson, who was completing his studies in Edinburgh to the Hastings for a period of three months on his return to Australia. The building was completed the following year, and the opening ceremony took the form of a public meeting which began at 11 0'clock on Thursday forenoon August 29 1918.

The Interim Moderator , Rev. S.P. Stewart occupied the chair. On the platform with him were the local clergymen, Mr Morris, Church of England, Mr Davies, Presbyterian, Mr Putland, Methodist and Mr Graham, who came all the way from Hamilton in Victoria to be present.

In the very large audience which quite filled the church, were Messrs McLauchlan, Anderson and Rose, three Elders from MacLean, Mr John Robinson, and elder from the Manning and the father of J.C. Robinson, Mrs Davis and Miss Linda Davis widow and daughter of the late Revs. John Davis, from Sydney. Mrs McLennan of Upper Hastings whose husband by generous contributions was largely instrumental in starting the Students Fund in connection with the synod of Eastern Australia,

After devotional exercises the moderator referred to the happy occasion which had brought them together. The new church in which they met had been built in connection with the Free Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. That was a denomination which stood for Purity of Worship and Doctrine. A scriptural form of Church Government and above all, for the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Free Presbyterian Church stood for conservative Presbyterianism, and he was convinced that as a denomination, they had all that was good and grand in Presbyterianism at their back. He hoped that from within these walls, these truths would be clearly enunciated and earnestly contended for, and that the new church might be the spiritual birthplace of many souls, with these remarks, he had great pleasure in declaring the Davis Memorial church Open as a place of public worship.

Mr. Duncan Graham Treasurer gave the financial statement. This conveyed the gratifying information, that, without going beyond the bounds of the congregation, except in one or two cases, the church was that day being opened free of debt and with a credit balance of £7/14/9.The total cost of the building was £740/11/4½ This includes the sum of £33/7/0½ donated by the ladies and expended on the furnishings, **other than the seats and pulpit, the last of these being donated by the contractor, Mr A.W.S. Mackay when the Treasurer, had given his report, the 100th psalm was heartily sung by the congregation.**

Messages of congratulations were received from the Rev. J. Sinclair, Geelong, the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, from the Hamilton congregation, Victoria, from Rev. H. W. Ramsay of Grafton.
Also from the Rev. T. MacLean and the congregation of Maclean. The message from Maclean was accompanied by a cheque for £35 towards the building fund. This, along with the other contributions received during the Communion season, not counting the collections which amounted to £22/3/0 swelled the Treasurer's credit balance to £63/2/0 Rev. S. P. Stewart conveyed the congratulations of his own congregation.

Visiting and local clergymen then addressed the meeting, all, expressing their pleasure that the Free Church people now had a spiritual home of their own. The visiting elders also briefly addressed the meeting. Mr Duncan Bain, an Elder, moved a comprehensive vote of thanks to all who had assisted in any way. But especially mentioning the name of the contractor, Mr A.W. S. McKay. This was seconded by Mr R. McKay, the other Elder of the congregation. A special vote of thanks was given to the Methodists for the use of their building while the congregation had none of its own. The meeting then closed with the singing of Psalm 133 and the benediction.

Communion Season

The services in connection with the Communion season began on Thursday evening and again the building was filled. Other services were on Friday afternoon, Saturday, two on Sabbath and the Thanksgiving service on Monday All were well attended but Sabbath was the great day. Both morning and evening the church was overcrowded, and in the evening, a few were able to gain admission. Rev. S. P Stewart preached the action sermon from the text "Is Christ divided?" 1 Cor.1-13

From the Session records we have a list of those who sat at the Lord's Table where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered for the first time in the new building; they are as follows; - Mrs Campbell senior, Mr Duncan Graham, Mr and Mrs W, Campbell, with Mr Robert McKay and Mr Duncan Bain, Elders. Visitors at the Table were Messrs D. McLachlan, J. Ross, A. Anderson, Cameron and Parsons. Also Mrs Ainsworth, Mrs A. McKay, Mr and Mrs Robinson, Mr A. McLennan, Mrs Davis and Mrs McLennan.

There were five new communicants and at the close of the evening service four young men of the congregation had the sacrament of Baptism administered to their children, and thus, both sacraments were celebrated within the new church on that first Communion Sabbath.

Although the congregation now had their own building, they were to remain without a settled minister for a further three years. Rev. J.C. Robinson supplied for some months during the following year. At the Annual Congregational Meeting held on January 6 1920, the following items of interest were reported; - The work for the year 1920 showed that a regular weekly Prayer Meeting had been started in Wauchope and an undenominational one at Beechwood. About a dozen young men engaged in public prayer. Three Sabbath Schools had been started, a congregational one in Wauchope and an undenominational one at Upper Rolland's Plains and Kindee. Regular weekly visitations to Wauchope and Beechwood Public Schools brought systematic religious instruction to about 160 children. A Ladies Missionary Association and prayer meeting was formed at which prayer was offered, the work of missions studied and sewing done for those in need.

Services were held at Comboyne, Bulli, and Llanthony, Kendall, Herons Creek, Kempsey, and Kindee. Eleven new communicants were added to the roll of members for the year.
In 1920, the Session was strengthened by the ordination of Messrs Alexander Bain Junior and Mr John Graham Junior.

Eleven new communicants had been added to the roll of members for the year and in 1920 the Session was strengthened by the ordination of Messrs Alexander Bain Junior and John Graham Junior.

Rev. I. L. Graham Convenor of Church Extension committee, made a strong plea on behalf of the vacant Hastings charge, at the General Assembly held on February 17 1921. Mr Graham claimed a special interest in the Hastings and commented on how the congregation had held together in spite of a vacancy of more than 20 years. They had built a church costing over £700 and were prepared; it seemed, to build a Manse if a settlement could be obtained. Already they had over £500 in hand for that purpose, the congregation also had a session consisting of four elders, one of whom was always present at the Assembly.

Quite a number of young familles were connected with the congregation, several of which were noted for regularity in family worship conducted by the young man at their head. One young man, almost single- handed carried on two Sabbath schools in a needy part of the district. Through the week he met with one or two other young men in a private residence for Bible study and prayer. This young man referred to by Mr Graham was Mr J. A. Harman of Long Flat and the Sabbath schools were at Ellenborough and Kindee At the same General Assembly Mr J A Harman applied to be, and was, received as a student for the Ministry. Thus, in the same year as the Rev. M.C Ramsay was inducted into the charge of the Hastings, the man who was to eventually succeed him was beginning his studies for the Ministry. Another point of interest concerning Mr Ramsay and Mr Harman was that both had expressed a desire to serve overseas; Mr Ramsay to engage in evangelistic In neither case did the church see its way clear to accede to their wishes.

Rev. M.C.Ramsay was ordained and inducted into the charge of the Hastings on September 8 1921. The Manse was completed the following year. In 1923, Mr John Graham began the Psalmody class which was to have such beneficial effects on the congregational singing at Wauchope.

Time does not permit a detailed account of the ministry of the men who were settled on the Hastings, sufficient to say that Mr Ramsay laboured for over 16 years with characteristic diligence until he accepted a call to the Manning where he was inducted on June 2 1937. A Deacon's Court was formed in 1935 with the ordination of nine men, and about this time, steps were taken to erect a church at Kindee, but for various reasons, this building was not officially opened until June 23 1939. In recognition of his place in initiating this project, Mr Ramsay was invited back to preach at the official opening

After a short vacancy of only a few months, Rev. J.A. Harman was inducted to the charge on February 8 1938 His ministry included the difficult years of World War 11, and ended when ill health forced his retirement on May 3 1967, after serving the congregation for a period of 29 years. It was during his ministry that the Hastings Fellowship was formed, with branches at Huntingdon, Wauchope and Kindee during the year 1939. It was largely due to his initiative that the Alexander Bain Memorial Hall was built and opened in May 1955.

Some nine months after Mr Harman's retirement the Hastings charge was once again filled when Rev. A. L Tripovitch was ordained and inducted as colleague and successor to Mr Harman on February 23 1968

Among those who have been associated with the Davis Memorial Church the following have served in either the ministry or the mission field, Messrs J.C. Andrews and D.G. Trotter began their training for the ministry in the 1930's. The former served 17 years as a medical missionary in South Africa and is at MacLean until he resigned. Dr Helen Ramsay is at present serving as a

medical missionary in India and Mr Hugh Varnes is working with the mission in Peru, while Rev. A.M. Harman is now Professor of Old Testament at the Free Church College Edinburgh

Time and space does not permit any record here of those who have rendered devoted service as Elders, Deacons, Sabbath School teachers and of others who have helped in establishing the Kingdom of God within the Church.

Looking back over the 50 years, we may surely say with the Psalmist

"THE LORD OF US HATH MINDFUL BEEN
AND HE WILL BLESS US STILL (pS.115-12

Typed by Hazel Suters
22-9-05

CHURCH HISTORY IN THE HASTINGS

Only brief mention is made of the churches in volume 1 issued in 2001. The early settlers in the region brought with them deep rooted religious backgrounds and a great debt is owed to them for establishing churches as soon as possible. In the early days travel by horse or walking was necessary, as there were few roads and few bridges across the rivers. Fairly large distances separated worship centres.

PRESBYTERIAN

The earliest Presbyterian ministry on the Hastings was that of William Purves (1811-1870) of the Church of Scotland. On January 28 1841, a meeting was held in Port Macquarie for the purpose to provide a place of worship and a manse for him. Those present included William McKenzie of Wilson River, Captain R.A.Wauch of Wauchope House King's Creek, Alexander Thomson, Peter Sime, J.R.Middleton of Rolland's Plains, Donald McPhee, Dr McIntyre, Robert Ackroyd, Dr Fattorini, John Dillon, Daniel McInnes, Maxwell Thomson and Mr Irving. The buildings were completed in February 1843 on a site bounded by William, Murray and Munster Streets in Port Macquarie.

1. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA (Free Presbyterian)

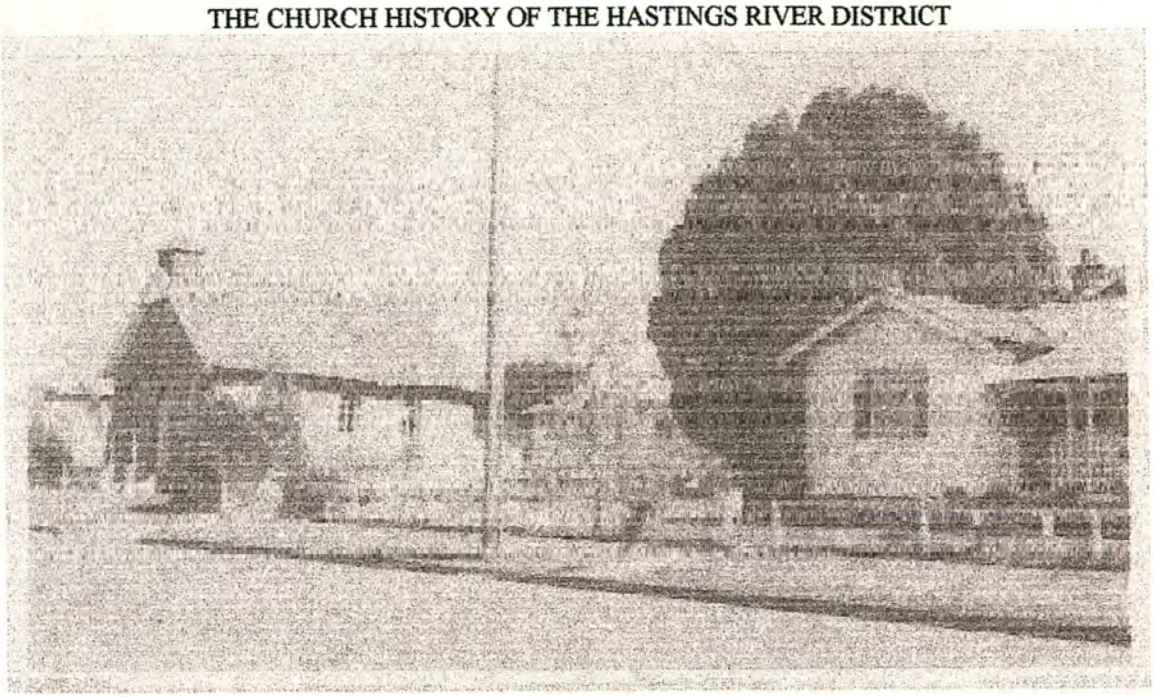
The work of the PCEA on the Hastings arose in the early 1850's. Alexander Bain (1810-1892) and his family moved to the Hastings in 1852. He and a friend Donald Cameron purchased 'Crosslands' estate of about 1960 acres and divided it. Alexander Bain took the flats, which were covered with bush, and bordered onto the river. The main property of Alexander's, which included part of the later town of Wauchope, was called 'Letterewe'.

When Alexander Bain arrived on the Hastings there were only a few other white families. He maintained family worship in his home and open air services were under the giant fig tree from about 1862. Services were also held in Alexander Bain's new barn. The Lindsay family came in 1860 and purchased the 'Huntingdon' estate of 1552 acres. A third prominent family arrived in 1963. This was the Andrews family from Northern Ireland. There were three sons: Joseph (purchased Wauchope House), Isaac (settled on 'Coleraine'), and Samuel (settled on 'Lilybank').

The first Presbyterian building on the Hastings (excluding Port Macquarie) was the PCEA building erected at 'Letterewe' in 1871. It was opened on July 16 1871, and a manse was built in 1879. A photograph of the manse and church exists which was taken in 1885. Rev John Davis (1854-1897) had been inducted as the first minister on February 3 1879 and was accidentally killed at the rear of the manse by a falling tree branch on November 25 1897 at age 43.

Alexander Bain exchanged the land at 'Letterewe' for 3 acres in the growing town of Wauchope and there the 'Davis Memorial Church' was erected and opened on August 29 1918, in Campbell Street. All (except the Presbyterian) protestant churches in Wauchope received their land as gifts from the Bain family. Rev Malcolm C Ramsay (1890-1973) was inducted as the second minister in the new church on September 8 1921, which ended a long vacancy. A new manse was constructed beside the new church in 1922. Joseph Andrews gave the original land for the Presbyterian Church opposite the post office.

A preaching centre was early established at Kindee, in the home of Henry Huckett, and 2.5 years after the opening of the Kindee Bridge a church was opened at Kindee on June 23 1939.



The Wauchope church, hall and manse taken after 1955 [in the 1970's].

The 'Letterewe' manse and church (behind to right) taken in 1885.
From L to R: Mrs. Allen (Bob's mother), Mrs. Davis nursing Bill (?), Catherine & Linda on steps, Rev. John Davis in buggy, Duncan Bain standing near buggy.

Rev Joseph A Harman (1899-1976), a resident of the district, became the third minister inducted on February 10 1938. A hall was erected at the rear of the Wauchope church in 1955, and a Youth Centre hall was built at Port Macquarie in 1963 (Table Street) which is used for services.

Rev Alan L Tripovich became the fourth minister inducted on 23 February 1968. The history is well documented in the centenary booklet issued in 1979, together with extensive articles and photographs held by the Wauchope District Historical Society. The church inside Timbertown was the previous Huntingdon Free Church.

List of Elders: Alexander Bain (1869-1892), David Lindsay (1879-1885), Angus Kennedy (1880-1906), Duncan Bain (1880-1925), Robert Mackay (1909-1929), Alexander Bain (1920-1931), John [Jock] Graham (1920-1937), Lachlan Campbell (1922-1943), John Warwick (1928-1949), Harold D Andrews (1931-1975), D L McLeod (1936-1983), A M McKinnon (1937-1964), D S Harman (1937-1977), J E Huckett (1944-1987), W J McKinnon (1950-1958), Grant Harman (1956-1970), G W Lindsay (1960-1969), James Bain (1960-1973), A L Bosanquet (1974-1984), Paul Bearup (1977-1980), David Caughey (1989-1988), Stewart N Ramsay (1989-), James E Bain (1993-), Douglas Hamilton (1993-), Maxwell D Hutchins (1993-).

The Wauchope church taken about 1921 and before the manse was built.

CHURCH HISTORY IN THE HASTINGS

Only brief mention is made of the churches in volume 1 issued in 2000.

The early settlers in the region brought with them deep rooted religious backgrounds and a great debt is owed to them for establishing churches as soon as possible. In the early days travel by horse or walking was necessary, as there were few roads and few bridges across the rivers. Fairly large distances separated worship centres.

A. PRESBYTERIAN

The earliest Presbyterian ministry on the Hastings was that of William Purves (1811-1870) of the Church of Scotland. On January 28 1841, a meeting was held in Port Macquarie for the purpose to provide a place of worship and a manse for him. Those present included William McKenzie of Wilson River, Captain R.A.Wauch of Wauchope House King's Creek, Alexander Thomson, Peter Sime, J.R.Middleton of Rolland's Plains, Donald McPhee, Dr McIntyre, Robert Ackroyd, Dr Fattorini, John Dillon, Daniel McInnes, Maxwell Thomson and Mr Irving. The buildings were completed in February 1843 on a site bounded by William, Murray and Munster Streets in Port Macquarie.

1. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA (Free Presbyterian)

The work of the PCEA on the Hastings arose in the early 1850's. Alexander Bain (1810-1892) and his family moved to the Hastings in 1852. He and a friend Donald Cameron purchased 'Crosslands' estate of about 1960 acres and divided it. Alexander Bain took the flats, which were covered with bush, and bordered onto the river. The main property of Alexander's, which included part of the later town of Wauchope, was called 'Letterewe'.

When Alexander Bain arrived on the Hastings there were only a few other white families. He maintained family worship in his home and open air services were under the giant fig tree from about 1862. Services were also held in Alexander Bain's new barn. The Lindsay family came in 1860 and purchased the 'Huntingdon' estate of 1552 acres. A third prominent family arrived in 1963. This was the Andrews family from Northern Ireland. There were three sons: Joseph (purchased Wauchope House), Isaac (settled on 'Coleraine'), and Samuel (settled on 'Lilybank').

The first Presbyterian building on the Hastings (excluding Port Macquarie) was the PCEA building erected at 'Letterewe' in 1871. It was opened on July 16 1871, and a manse was built in 1879. A photograph of the manse and church exists which was taken in 1885. Rev John Davis (1854-1897) had been inducted as the first minister on February 3 1879 and was accidentally killed at the rear of the manse by a falling tree branch on November 25 1897 at age 43.

Alexander Bain exchanged the land at 'Letterewe' for 3 acres in the growing town of Wauchope and there the 'Davis Memorial Church' was erected and opened on August 29 1918, in Campbell Street. All (except the Presbyterian) protestant churches in Wauchope received their land as gifts from the Bain family. Rev Malcolm C Ramsay (1890-1973) was inducted as the second minister in the new church on September 8 1921, which ended a long vacancy. A new manse was constructed beside the new church in 1922. Joseph Andrews gave the original land for the Presbyterian Church opposite the post office.

A preaching centre was early established at Kindee, in the home of Henry Huckett, and 2.5 years after the opening of the Kindee Bridge a church was opened at Kindee on June 23 1939.

Rev Joseph A Harman (1899-1976), a resident of the district, became the third minister inducted on February 10 1938. A hall was erected at the rear of the Wauchope church in 1955, and a Youth Centre hall was built at Port Macquarie in 1963 (Table Street) which is used for services.

Rev Alan L Tripovich became the fourth minister inducted on 23 February 1968. The history is well documented in the centenary booklet issued in 1979, together with extensive articles and photographs held by the Wauchope District Historical Society. The church inside Timbertown was the previous Huntingdon Free Church.

CHURCH HISTORY IN THE HASTINGS

Only brief mention is made of the churches in volume 1 issued in 2000.

The early settlers in the region brought with them deep rooted religious backgrounds and a great debt is owed to them for establishing churches as soon as possible. In the early days travel by horse or walking was necessary, as there were few roads and few bridges across the rivers. Fairly large distances separated worship centres.

A. PRESBYTERIAN

The earliest Presbyterian ministry on the Hastings was that of William Purves (1811-1870) of the Church of Scotland. On January 28 1841, a meeting was held in Port Macquarie for the purpose to provide a place of worship and a manse for him. Those present included William McKenzie of Wilson River, Captain R.A.Wauch of Wauchope House King's Creek, Alexander Thomson, Peter Sime, J.R.Middleton of Rolland's Plains, Donald McPhee, Dr McIntyre, Robert Ackroyd, Dr Fattorini, John Dillon, Daniel McInnes, Maxwell Thomson and Mr Irving. The buildings were completed in February 1843 on a site bounded by William, Murray and Munster Streets in Port Macquarie.

1. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA (Free Presbyterian)

The work of the PCEA on the Hastings arose in the early 1850's. Alexander Bain (1810-1892) and his family moved to the Hastings in 1852. He and a friend Donald Cameron purchased 'Crosslands' estate of about 1960 acres and divided it. Alexander Bain took the flats, which were covered with bush, and bordered onto the river. The main property of Alexander's, which included part of the later town of Wauchope, was called 'Letterewe'.

When Alexander Bain arrived on the Hastings there were only a few other white families. He maintained family worship in his home and open air services were under the giant fig tree from about 1862. Services were also held in Alexander Bain's new barn. The Lindsay family came in 1860 and purchased the 'Huntingdon' estate of 1552 acres. A third prominent family arrived in 1963. This was the Andrews family from Northern Ireland. There were three sons: Joseph (purchased Wauchope House), Isaac (settled on 'Coleraine'), and Samuel (settled on 'Lilybank').

The first Presbyterian building on the Hastings (excluding Port Macquarie) was the PCEA building erected at 'Letterewe' in 1871. It was opened on July 16 1871, and a manse was built in 1879. A photograph of the manse and church exists which was taken in 1885. Rev John Davis (1854-1897) had been inducted as the first minister on February 3 1879 and was accidentally killed at the rear of the manse by a falling tree branch on November 25 1897 at age 43.

Alexander Bain exchanged the land at 'Letterewe' for 3 acres in the growing town of Wauchope and there the 'Davis Memorial Church' was erected and opened on August 29 1918, in Campbell Street. All (except the Presbyterian) protestant churches in Wauchope received their land as gifts from the Bain family. Rev Malcolm C Ramsay (1890-1973) was inducted as the second minister in the new church on September 8 1921, which ended a long vacancy. A new manse was constructed beside the new church in 1922. Joseph Andrews gave the original land for the Presbyterian Church opposite the post office.

A preaching centre was early established at Kindee, in the home of Henry Huckett, and 2.5 years after the opening of the Kindee Bridge a church was opened at Kindee on June 23 1939.

Rev Joseph A Harman (1899-1976), a resident of the district, became the third minister inducted on February 10 1938. A hall was erected at the rear of the Wauchope church in 1955, and a Youth Centre hall was built at Port Macquarie in 1963 (Table Street) which is used for services.

Rev Alan L Tripovich became the fourth minister inducted on 23 February 1968. The history is well documented in the centenary booklet issued in 1979, together with extensive articles and photographs held by the Wauchope District Historical Society. The church inside Timbertown was the previous Huntingdon Free Church.

Presbyterian Free Church.

Congregation Meeting 1st Feb 1922.

At 11 a.m. on Thursday last the minister (Rev. M. C. Ramsay, MA) presided over a well-attended meeting of the congregation in the local Free Presbyterian Church. During the course of his remarks, the Rev. gentleman pointed out that 30 Sunday-school scholars were enrolled; at present there were a superintendent and two teachers, but during the current year a new teacher will be added. In the district he had done a fair amount of visiting, and at times of sickness and bereavement he had made calls of sympathy to several families, irrespective of whatever religion they belonged to. He thanked the members of the congregation for their many acts of kindness, expressions of encouragement, and earnest prayers. He also appreciated the efforts of the elders in having the church services carried on during his recent absence from the charge. If they put their trust in God, the Rev. speaker had no fear as to the future welfare of the church.

Rev. I. L. Graham also briefly addressed the meeting.

Welcome:
In welcoming Mrs. Ramsay to Wauchope, on behalf of the congregation. Mr. Jock Graham said he trusted that that lady would find Wauchope congenial to her in every way, and that her future would be as happy as she expected in the bonnie hills of Scotland, from whence she had come. He then presented Mrs. Ramsay with a lovely silver teapot, suitably inscribed.

Rev. Ramsay, on behalf of his wife, thanked the congregation for the gift and also the kindly expressions that accompanied it. He could assure them the present would always be treasured by both of them. Prior to starting on his ministerial career, the Rev. speaker said that he never expected to make a start in this part of the globe, but in some foreign land, but wherever he went his "intended partner in life" was willing to share his lot.

Presentation of Prizes:
Prizes were presented to the Sunday-school scholars as follows:
Jack and Stewart Kennedy, Alex and Lennie Steel, Isabel and Phyllis Bain, Belle and Grace Sharkey, Anabel Ringland, Mercy and Mervyn Bennett, Allan Kennedy, Arthur Lawson, Duncan and Neil Bain, Trevelyn Bennett, Hazel, Bessie, Duncan, Allister and Eric Bain, Colin Kennedy, Kathleen, Marjorie and Jean Sharkey, Tom and Joyce Bennett, Olive Bain, Ruby Steel, Freida Workman, Ian Bain, Arthur Cameron, Florence, Dudley and Hilton Trotter, Annie, Jack, Anabel and Alex Campbell, Campbell, Leenie and Jenny Andrews, Rae and Colin Graham, Allan, Marjorie, Boyne, Jessie, Linda and Phyllis Lindsay, James, Dulcie, George, Ethel and Belle Campbell, Chrissie and Duncan Steel.

Picnic:
A basket picnic was then held in the paddock adjoining the church grounds, and after full justice had been paid the tempting and tasty edibles, the remaining hours were spent in a series of outdoor games, in which the children took a prominent part as only juveniles know how.

Mrs H. Porter

FREE KIRK.

I8 7I - I97I .

1st Service held in MR alexander Bain's barn at Letterewe.

Conducted by Rev Allan McIntyre.

Services held in both GAELIC and English. Sometimes of 3 hours.

Mr Alexander Bain instrumental in having a church built at Letterewe.

CHURCH OPENED at Wauchope by Rev. W.S. McDonald, M.A. I6th July I87

20 yrs Rev DAVIS inducted to the charge on Feb. 3rd I879.

Rev S.P. Srewart inducted on Manning on I8th July I87I.

His subjects included, History, Theology, Moral Philosophy, Church principles, Greek and Hebrew.

Duties of pioneer ministers.

It is impossible for us to imagine the hardshipa of a pioneer minister. The population was sparse and scattered over a large area. the amenities were few and the difficulties many, His work necessitated long absences from home. Roads weree almost non-existent, and nearly all the travelling was done on horseback. He was diligent in visiting the homes. One instant of the result I recall. Mr Davis sought out my elder brother who was living away from home, to help him spiritually. That youth later became a minister of our church.

* REV. J.S. Mc PHERSON M.A. assisted at the first observance of the Lord' supper in the Letterewe church. Left on record a valuable description of the services. The Communion service began at Io.30 A.M. May I8th I879. The evening one at 5.30. People came from 30 miles away. REV. DAVISs work prospered. A church was opened on the Macleay at Gladstone on March 23rd I879.

Another at Kempsey at a later date on April I6th I886. Rev. McIntyre officated at the opening/

REV. DAVIS's health began to fail and he was advised to restrict his labours. His ministry abruptly closed on Nov. 25th I879 when he was killed by a falling limb of a tree, on Letterewe property.

MISS MARY McDONALD of Kempsey became Mrs Davis. Her only brother was Lachlan, headmaster of Kempsey school. They had six children.

* ELDERS OF REV. DAVIS.

Mr Alexander Bain, no record of his induction.
David Lindsay--- inducted on Aug, 24, I879.
Angus Kennedy---- " Aug, 8th, I880.
Duncan Bain -- -- -- " - "-----8th , I880.

Taken from address by Rev.M.C. Ramsay on 50th Anniverary of Wauchope Church and printed in church paper on I6th Dec, I968.

September I4, I968, Hasting's Congregation celebrated 50th Anniversa of opening of Davis Memorial Church. Special guests--Mr Ian Davis a Miss Nan Davis.

8

Islamic leader in Wauchope

PROMINENT Islamic leader Keysar Trad will be in the Hastings on Friday at the invitation of the Wauchope Uniting Church.

Mr Trad, who helped Australia's Mufti negotiate the release of Australian hostage Douglas Wood in Iraq earlier this year, is frequently quoted in the national media and is regarded as a spokesman for mainstream Islamic thought in Australia.

A spokesman for the Wauchope Uniting Church, the Reverend John Queripel, said Mr Trad was invited to speak because of the "urgent need to build bridges" between the Islamic community and other communities in Australia.

Paraphrasing US civil rights leader Dr Martin Luther King, Mr Queripel said "we learn to live together or we do not live at all".

"Community harmony is essential and to best arrive at that we need to deepen our understandings and get rid of some unfortunate preconceptions," Mr Queripel said.

"This will be a wonderful opportunity for people to do just that."

Mr Trad has worked tirelessly to promote a better understanding of the faith he holds.

He will speak in the Wauchope Uniting Church in Hastings St, Wauchope, from 7pm on Friday.

There will be no cost and tea and coffee will follow the talk.

❑ **Activist:** Keysar Trad will be in Wauchope on Friday.

About Keysar Trad

Keysar Trad was born in 1963 in Tripoli, Lebanon. His education was in Arabic and French. He migrated to Australia in 1976 where he finished high school. Following this he completed tertiary studies in Australia and overseas before working in the Australian public service for 14 years. Mr Trad has translated several books on Islam and attended many Islamic courses and lectures. As a writer he has translated many articles for Islamic newspapers and magazines as well as writing a number of his own articles. He joined the Lebanese Muslims Association in 1999 as a volunteer and left the association in May 2005.

He then took on the task of assisting the Mufti of Australia, the chief religious authority and spiritual leader for Australian Muslims.

For about six years he translated and delivered in English the weekly service at Australia's largest mosque.

He has also carried out representation work on behalf of refugees and also has been a strong peace advocate.

Since May 1996 Mr Trad is the volunteer chaplain with the Department of Defence giving briefings to Australian troops before they are deployed overseas.

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS
Wednesday September 21, 2005
P 15.


JOSIAH BECOMBE

Photograph
taken 2006

LSVF -
Churches - 6

METHODIST CHURCH, WAUCHOPE. NO. 2

ANGLICAN PARISH NIGHT

Enthusiastic Audience Fills Community Hall

An event which will remain as a pleasant and enjoyable experience for the 400 Anglicans gathered at the Community Hall, Wauchope, last Thursday night, was the Parish Night held in conjunction with the beginning of the second phase of the C. of E. Church Development Programme of the Parish of Upper Hastings.

A delightfully balanced programme of music and comedy provided by topline artists from Sydney, and an inspiring and challenging speech by the parish treasurer, Mr. Ion King, were the highlights of the occasion.

Compered by John MacArthur, who was also the comedian many popular songs included in the programme by the talented coloratura soprano, Nerissa Niblo, and the enchanting deep voice of the bass-bariton, Frank Lisle.

Patricia Wooldridge, a very accomplished pianist, accompanied the singers and also provided some thrilling moments with her wasterly and delicate pianoforte solos.

Throughout the programme the audience was kept in anticipation with a smoothly moving sequence of items and the simple comedy of the compere each providing an interesting and much appreciated contrast.

The enthusiasm of the artists blended with the responsiveness of their listeners, assisted in making it one of the most pleasurable musical occasions the town and district has ever experienced.

At the close of the musical programme, Mr. Ion King spoke of the purpose of the Church Development Programme, the first phase of which was drawing to a close and the second phase about to begin.

He outlined what had been done in the past two years, saying: "In May 1958 the parish was over £1000 in debt, and we were not meeting our ordinary commitments, but today we are ahead by well over £4,000 of which the greater part is in trust for the St. Matthew's Church Building Fund."

He instanced what had been done in the two years with electric light installed in the Beechwood and Ellenborough churches, St. Matthew's Church painted, proper aids provided for Sunday School work in the various schools of the parish, a substantial portion of the architect's fee paid and renovations to the Ellenborough church and the adding of the vestry to the Byabarra church as well as painting of both buildings to be done in the very near future.

"Gradually," said Mr. King, "we are achieving what we set out to do in our Development Programme.

"Our first and primary aim this time will be the wider work of the Church. We must, each of us, remember that we are the Church, for the Church is not a building nor a collection of buildings — the Church is people," he said.

"Already our own people are offering for this work. There is Allan Shephard in training for the priesthood; the Diacon family in preparation for work in the educational sphere of the Mission field; Allan Miller and Cliff Fowler went to New Guinea last November to erect a new TB hospital at Embi; and several of our youth have indicated their desire to serve in the wider work of the Church.

"Then we must not forget our two original aims, the obtaining of the services of an assistant Curate and the erection of the new St. Matthew's which we plan will take place this year."

Mr. King then went on to explain that due to the rapid growth of the Diocese and the shortage of manpower in the priesthood at the moment, the Bishop had been unable to appoint an assistant. He told his hearers that in the course of the rapid growth of the Diocese many parishes were needing and seeking an assistant, and that the parish in time would receive such an appointment. He enthusiastically referred to the model of the proposed new St. Matthew's, calling upon the parishioners to support the Development Programme so that "that very delightful building can be erected this year."

Concluding his speech, Mr. King said: "I commend to you this Church Development Programme, knowing that it will expand beyond being purely a financial programme and so embrace the wider aspects of the Church's work."

Mr. V. Higgins the director of the Programme, then spoke encouragingly on stewardship and the significance it must play in the life of every incividual Christian.

He was followed by the Rector, the Rev James J. Goodman, who first conveyed greetings and congratulations for the occasion from neighbouring clergy and parishes—the Rev. Stan Eldred, Canon Gerry, the Revs. Warren Arkell and Keith Coaldrake—and from Mr. J. H. Hanington.

The Rector then spoke briefly with a challenge to the assembly, citing the occasion of the incident when the Children of Israel were trapped at the Red Sea, with the pursuing Egyptians behind them, mountains on their right and the sea in front of them.

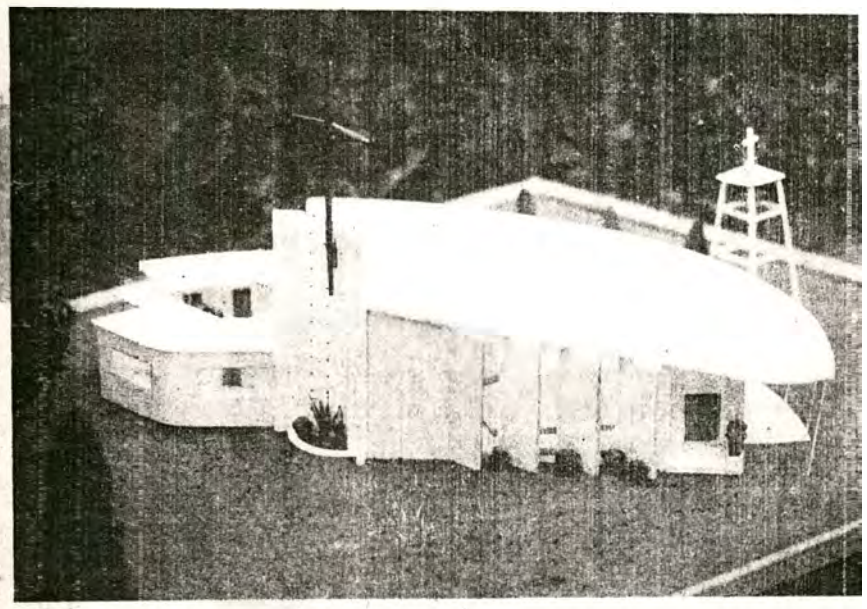
God commanded Moses: "Speak unto the Children of Israel that they go forward," and forward they went, to the promised opportunity awaiting them. "This," the Rector said, was the challenge at all times when a decision had to be made—to go forward was the only worthwhile and satisfying direction."

At this point, Nerissa Niblo and Frank Lisle sang as a duet Jude's "Consecration," following upon which the Rector called all to prayer and concluded the function with the Blessing.

A buffet supper was then partaken of by all present.

During this function, the children of those present were cared for by the members of the St. Stephen's Presbyterian Hall. Another example of co-operation so readily available in our community.

C. of E. Development Programme Aims at Unique Design for New Parish Church in Wauchope



This picture shows a model of the Parish Church proposed for the Upper Hastings Anglican Parish. It will be built on the site of the present Church in Cameron Street, Wauchope. The design is most unique, and breaks away from more conventional designs. It is hoped that the building will be commenced within the next twelve months.

Opening of War Memorial Church at Byabarra

The new War Memorial Church dedicated to Christ the King was blessed and opened on Sunday last, 11th December by His Lordship, Most Rev. P. Farrelly, D.D. Bishop of Lismore.

The ceremony of blessing commenced at 10 a.m.. Afterwards, Mass was celbrated by Father Dineen. A congregation of 150 filled the Church to capacity.

After Mass, Father Dineen welcomed the Bishop on behalf of the people of Byabarra and district. The people had waited many years to invite the Bishop to bless a Church for their use. The work of raising funds had begun many years ago, but because of the urgent need of building in other parts of the Parish, the building of Byabarra Church had to be delayed. To-day the hopes of the people were fulfilled.

Father Dineen also welcomed the visitors. Many were natives of Byabarra and some more had lived there in the past. They had returned to rejoice with the people of Byabarra to-day. One visitor, Mrs. George Hollis of Grafton, was a Queen Candidate in a competition conducted many years ago to raise funds for the Church.

Father Dineen thanked the Architects, Messrs. Fowell, Mansfield and Maclurcan for their careful planning. Simplicity and economy were the factors which guided them. He also thanked the builders, Messrs. Deegenaars Bros. of Wauchope and their sub-contractors and workmen for thoroughness and care in carrying out the work.

The Church had cost £4,478.

The Bishop then addressed the congregation. He said that this building was now a Church, dedicated during its existence to the worship of God. Within its walls the people would gather to offer to God their love and homage. They would send up to God in the Sacrifice of the Mass and Heavenly Gift and would receive in return God's love, protection and grace.

In every part of the world buildings could be found, erected of stone, brick or wood which were expressions of the people's love and loyalty to God. In Byabarra the people had the same intention in mind when they worked to raise a monument to God there.

Mr. C. W. Green, representing Mr. Harrie Bransdon and the Hastings Shire con-

to the Architect and builders. He was happy to see that all the timbers used were produced and prepared locally. Timber produced in this district was equal to any to be found anywhere.

Mr. Jim Preston, on behalf of the people of Byabarra, then thanked His Lordship the Bishop for coming so far to bless their Church. He said the Church was in the best Christian tradition; its keynote was simplicity and it was within the means of the people.

The ceremony then concluded and all moved to the Hall where the ladies had prepared elaborate refreshments.

Details of Church: Exterior Walls: Red Mahogany, stained.

Interior Walls: Polished coachwood ply.

Roof: Galvanised Iron.

Ceiling: Polished coachwood boards.

Seating: Maple.

Seating Capacity: 70.

Hastings Shire Gazette

15th December 1960

Some Memories of Seventy Years.

P.M. News 16 Sept 22

By an Old Resident.

No. 4.

A Presbyterian Church was erected in Wauchope and opened for service in 1878. The first Anglican Church erected on the river was on a site donated by the late Mr G. F. Dawes at Ennis, which was used for a number of years, but, the position not proving central, the building was disposed of, and a suitable structure erected at Rawdon Island on a site obtained from Mr. F. Wallace. Small buildings for religious purposes were also built by the Methodists at Rawdon Island, Gannon's Creek, and Haytown, which were used for several years, but changes amongst the residents diminishing the congregations, led to the disposal of the buildings. A suitable church building was erected at Blackman's Point by the Methodist denomination, and is in constant use by Methodist, Anglican, and Presbyterian ministers and preachers. In the 70's a Roman Catholic Church was erected on the property of Mr. J. McDonnough, Rawdon Villa, and was used for several years, being subsequently transferred to Rawdon Island, close to the Public School. Beechwood needs are met by Anglican and Roman Catholic Church buildings, the Presbyterian and Methodist services being held in the Protestant Hall. Huntingdon has a Presbyterian Church. Wauchope is well supplied, having Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches of timber, the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Free Presbyterian Churches being of brick. These buildings are all free of debt, and are centres of much religious interest. Another point of interest is the establishment of means for crossing the river at various centres. No ferry existed beyond Blackman's Point till about 1875, when a public ferry was established at Ennis, and proved a great convenience for many years. The next ferry to be installed was that connecting Rawdon Island with the mainland, and which has been much appreciated. But a long stretch of the river from Ennis upwards, owing to the ford at Bain's Falls having been dredged, remained to be provided for. The only ford available was that known as "Cameron's Crossing," which was not at all suitable, hence attempts were made to improve it by the formation of a weir, which it was hoped would be successful, but after the expenditure of several hundreds of pounds in cash the work proved an utter failure, so that a bridge had to be built. A low-level structure having been decided upon, the bridge known as "Bain Bridge" was erected, and in due course opened for traffic, and has proved a boon to the community. But a mistake was made in not erecting a high-level instead of a low-level structure, as the former would have cost comparatively little more than the one erected, and would have been available for traffic at all times, whereas now a comparatively slight fresh in the river overflows the present bridge and precludes its use. This bridge supplied an urgent need, but still left eight miles of the river void of the means of crossing, and Wauchope having become an active business centre, residents on the north side of the river were still at a disadvantage, hence efforts were directed to the establishment of a ferry in the vicinity of Wauchope. Unfortunately a sharp division of public opinion regarding the site of the proposed ferry hindered the establishment of the convenience for many years, but on the inauguration of local government the Hastings Shire Council decided the matter, and placed the ferry at the site known as "The Rocks," and, closing the old-time Ennis ferry, removed the punt to the new site. Another ferry was installed connecting the two Rawdon Islands, also one below Blackman's Point at Hamilton, to supply the needs of residents on the Maria River, so the needs of the travelling public are fully met.

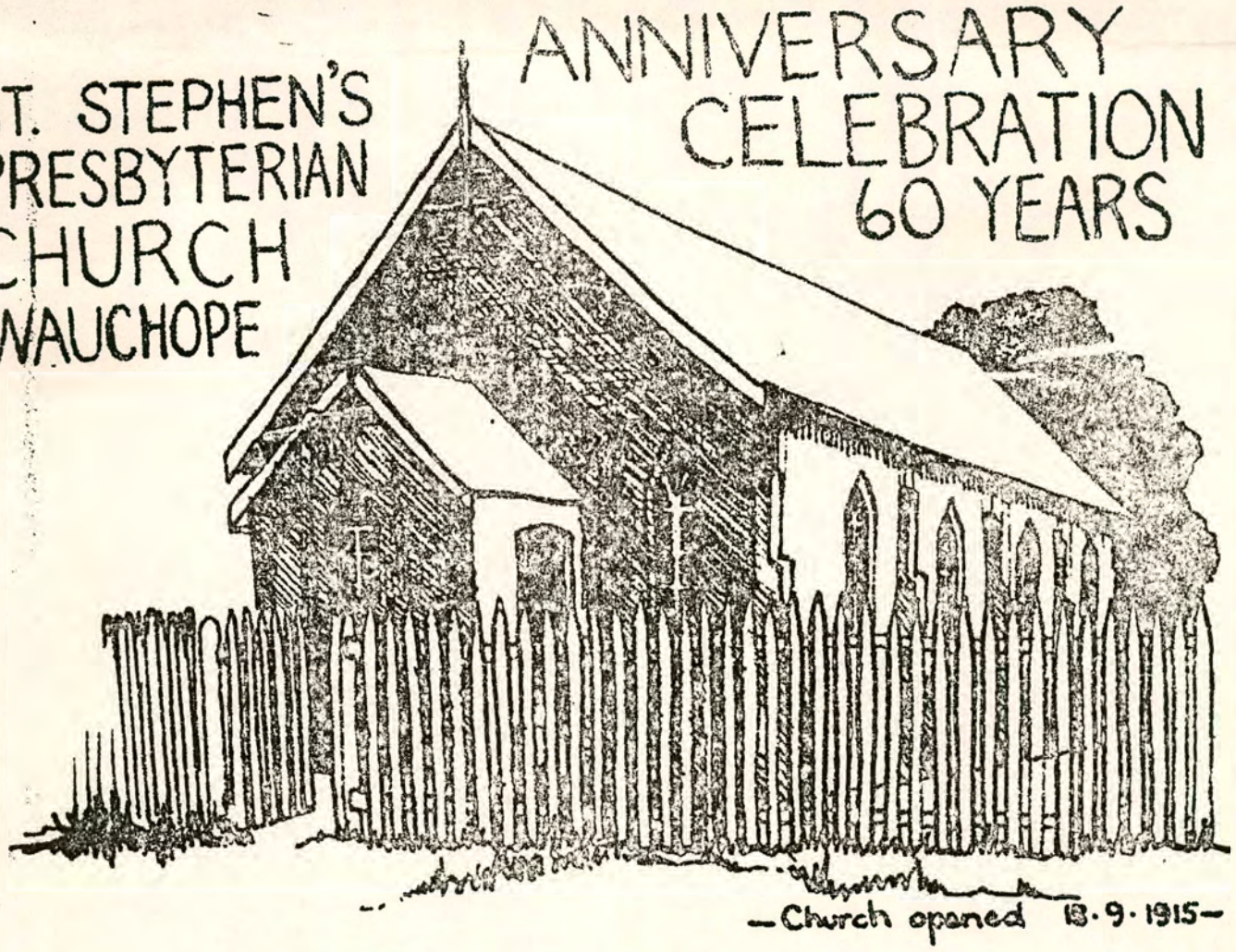
(Concluded).

Newscuttings: Hastings River District.

churches

ST. STEPHEN'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WAUCHOPE

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION 60 YEARS



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN WAUCHOPE.

From information gained from Rev. A.J. Eipper's "History of the Port Macquarie Charge of the Presbyterian Church," from Annual Reports, Minute Books, members of the Andrews, Lindsay and Campbell families, Miss Nancy Davidson (Kundabung) and snippets of recollections here and there, this history has been compiled. Appreciation is expressed to all who have assisted. May you enjoy reading it.

Although visiting ministers domiciled in Port Macquarie conducted services prior to the building of a church in Wauchope, it was in the time of Mr Hugh Hossack, a Catechist (Home Missionary) from the Isle of Wight, who began his ministry in 1873, that a move was made to build a Church here. In minutes of a meeting in September 1873, we find that Mr Hossack was required to preach at Port Macquarie, Rollands Plains, Brombin, Huntingdon, Beechwood and Wauchope. He was a 62 years old bachelor who stayed with different families, and used a grey horse called "Tom" as a means of transport. Tom was a gift from Mr Lauchlan Lindsay of Huntingdon. After much faithful service on behalf of the Church, Tom was retired to his birthplace at Huntingdon.

During Mr Hossack's ministry three churches were built - at Huntingdon, Wauchope and Rollands Plains.

Records show that the Church at Huntingdon was opened in July, 1879. It could be that then Mr Hossack concentrated on a church for Wauchope. A large block of land at the corner of what is now Randall Street and Carrington Lane was cleared of timber and prepared as a site for the church. Transport was on horseback and in horse-drawn vehicles so that tethering space had to be provided for the horses during services.

A simple wooden structure was erected facing what is now the Golden Fleece Service Station. There wasn't a porch, but there was a long seat along the eastern side of the Church where the young ladies sat and chatted whilst waiting for the service to commence.

It is recorded that the Church at Rollands Plains was completed in 1883 but the building of Wauchope's Church is not mentioned. Since Rollands Plains was the third Church built, Wauchope must fit in somewhere between 1879 and 1883.

Mr Hossack was about to return to England. The suggestion was made for a Tea Meeting to be held at Wauchope Church, when a presentation could be made. An account of the farewell in the Port Macquarie News says, "On 19th March, 1883, a Soiree was held at Wauchope. It was one of the largest assemblies that ever gathered on the Hastings. Three hundred and fifty people of all sects sat down to tea to testify to the esteem in which Mr Hossack was held in the various localities which had been the scene of his labours for the past nine years."

On 4th December, 1883, the Huntingdon-Wauchope Committee met and agreed to include Camden Haven in the charge. By 1884 the Charge could again afford to pay an ordained Minister and Rev. Robert Davidson, recently arrived from Scotland, was called.

In November 1885, Rev. Davidson reported, "The work here is encouraging in so far as there is always a good attendance of hearers at my various preaching places (10). We have lately received three organs or harmoniums to assist in our praise, which shows a marked improvement." It is worthy of note that often Rev. Davidson's congregation would attend his service at Huntingdon and then come to Wauchope to listen to him again. It was always a different sermon if they did this.

One of the three organs referred to by Mr Davidson was for the Wauchope Church. Huntingdon always retained a precentor. The organ remained in Wauchope Church until 1912 when we read from the Annual Report, "During the year a new organ was placed in the Wauchope Church, being purchased by voluntary subscriptions." This organ was selected by a member of the congregation, Mr Lutton, and is still in use in St.Stephens, 64 years later. The harmonium was purchased by Mr Lutton who played and had a fine singing voice. This instrument is a much prized adornment in the home of Mr & Mrs W.H. Jones in River Street to this day.

On 12th June, 1896, a picnic and social were held at Wauchope to raise funds for the improvement of the Church. "Mr Joseph Andrews presided and addresses were given by Rev. John Taylor of Kempsey, Rev. J.H. Terras,

of Wingham and Rev. Charles Crane, of Taree. This was a new departure having three visiting Ministers at a Social function." Apparently these improvements were made because in 1907 the condition of the Church was reported as "good", but in 1910 and 1911 the condition was only "passable."

The Annual Report of 1910 states: "The Wauchope Church has undergone some improvements by the installation of adjustable pulpit lamps, church door lamp, matting for aisle, repairs to organ, re-varnishing of pulpit and furniture and repair to window lights. It is hoped ere long that a more commodious and suitable building will be erected at this important centre. At times the congregations tax the present place's power to accommodate."

In 1911 the Annual Report says: "The Wauchope congregation considered the matter of change of site, but decided that whilst a change might soon become necessary, the time for it was hardly ripe. It is strongly felt that the building of a new Church must shortly be considered, and then the question of a site will be gone into again."

The Annual Report of 1912 refers to the new organ and goes on to say: "The Wauchope congregation has decided to proceed with the building of a new church, and with this in view have invited donations towards that end. Already the sum of £240 has been promised - well on the way towards the objective of £600. We hope to hold our next Annual Meeting in the new building."

Meanwhile a block of land became available. It was paid for by Mr N.J. Lindsay and held until the congregation was ready to pay for it.

The 1913 Annual Report states: "The Wauchope congregation has purchased a block of land opposite the Port Office as a site for the new Church and propose selling the present site, the proceeds to go towards erecting the new edifice. A building committee has been appointed to attend to all the details of the new Church, and they expect to have the foundation block laid in the near future. Our friends at Kendall are also proceeding with the erection of a Church of their own."

Annual Reports after 1913 are not available. However, we find that at a congregational meeting on 20th January, 1914, it was agreed to ask permission from the Presbytery and Assembly to sell the old site. A letter from the Church Property Committee dated 16th October, 1914, indicates that there was a delay in building proceedings because the deed for the new site had not been received.in Sydney. The letter concludes, "We have since got the document down here and the matter is now in order."

On 23rd March, 1915, Presbytery minutes record: "The plans and specifications of the proposed new Church at Wauchope were laid on the table. The Presbytery agreed to the erection of the Church in accordance with these."

Now there was action. With Bourne Brothers of Port Macquarie as builders, and bricks made locally by Mr William Jones, the foundation stone was laid by Mr J.R. Andrews on 8th May, 1915. Rapid progress was made. On 13th September, 1915, Rev. R. Scott West, Moderator of the State Assembly of N.S.W., officially opened the Church.

The Moderator arrived by train on 12th September, was a guest in the home of Mr & Mrs W.J. Andrews and family at "Coleraine," and performed the opening in the afternoon of 13th using as his text Luke 13:29. After the evening service he accompanied the Minister, Rev. G.M. Torbett to Port Macquarie. Next day the Moderator wrote in Miss Nancy Davidson's autograph book:

Know well, my soul, God's hand control
Whatever thou fearest
Round him in calmest music rolls
Whate're thou hearest. (Whittier)

14th September, 1915. R.Scott West.

From the Messenger of November,12th, 1915 the following is taken.

"New Church at Wauchope.
Opening by Moderator.

The new church at Wauchope was dedicated to the worship of God by the Rt.Rev.R. Scott West, Moderator.

A large congregation assembled in the afternoon, when the Moderator conducted the service. Before the sermon

he officially dedicated the church. In the evening another large congregation met, and the minister, the Rev.G.M. Torbett, conducted the service. On Monday evening a social concert was ehld in the church to celebrate the event. Mr N.J. Lindsay, as treasurer of the Building Committee, said he was glad to state the new church had been opened, free of debt. The Moderator said he felt proud of this fact, that the Presbyterians had offered their church free of debt to the worship of God.

The Rev. G.E. Morris (Anglican) and Rev. A.E. Putland (Methodist), also complimented the congregation. Mr R. Davidson, at one time pastor, said he was pleased to see the same spiritual life today as there was 30 years ago when he was pastor. Songs and recitations were rendered. Refreshments were partaken of and the proceedings were closed with the singing of the National Anthem."

Actually the Church was opened free of debt because the treasurer, Mr Lindsay, volunteered to donate £50 if four others would do the same. Messrs W.J. Andrews, S.R. Andrews, A. Wade and Robert Andrews accepted the challenge.

Lighting for the new Church was by carbide gas. On 11th March, 1924, Mr Wade moved that the action of the secretary and treasurer in ordering the installation of the electric light in the Church be endorsed. Mr W.J. Andrews moved and it was agreed that the disposal of the gas plant in the Church was to be left in the hands of Mr Wallace and Mr A. Wade, to be sold for a minimum of £2. The plant was sold to Mr C. Gilbert for £2, presumably to light his produce store in Cameron Street. Electricity was supplied to the Church from the Upper Hastings Co-operative Dairy Society, free of charge, until 1936. Since then Mr Quast, and later the Oxley County Council have supplied the power.

The old Church was demolished and rebuilt as a shop by Mr Robert Andrews, approximately where the entrance to the Commercial Bank is now. Firstly it was used as a hat shop by Miss Florence Wade, and later as a music shop by Roland and Norman French. Mr & Mrs Norm French added to it and lived there until they built their home in Avondale Street.

On 4th March, 1948, it was moved by P. Garrow/P.S.Nicoll that this meeting recommend that better lighting be install-

ed at a satisfactory price." This recommendation led to the congregation making a big effort to improve the interior of the Church. The organ and all furniture was removed to the Sunday School Hall and for about 3 weeks services were held there. Meantime a transformation took place within the Church. It was completely painted by D. Harrison and R. Roberts, the floor sanded and polished, and the new lights installed. Various people and the P.F.A. donated the lights.

Until 1949 the Church had not been named. Suggestions had been made for St.Andrews and St.Stephens. At a meeting on 9th May, 1949, it was moved by Mrs D. Harrison and seconded by Mrs C. Bailie that the name of this Church be St. Stephens. It was agreed to and this controversy was settled.

Various gifts have been donated to the Church from time to time. In 1908 Miss Bella Moore, of Huntingdon presented the Session with "an individual Communion outfit, in memory of her grandfather and grandmother, the late Mr and Mrs Lindsay. It so happened that the outfit was used for the first time at Huntingdon." This set is now used at Ellenborough.

A Bible was presented in 1915 when the Church was opened. It is still in the Church but not used, being replaced by the P.F.A. in October, 1953, to mark 21 years of activity. In 1932 the Guild was thanked for Hymn Books and a carpet runner. The old carpet was sold to Mrs Gordon (Manse) for ten shillings. This carpet has since been replaced by the present one in memory of Mr D.H. Nicoll in 1960.

Dr and Mrs Begg presented a Baptismal Font in 1935 in memory of their young son. The Wade family remembered their parents with a cedar Communion Table and three chairs. Two more cedar chairs were presented in memory of Mr D.H. Bean.

Other memorial gifts have been a Pulpit light for Mr and Mrs W.J. Pead, a Communion set (Mr and Mrs H. Suters), A Communion Cup and Paten (Mr Leo J.Lee) and a portable Communion Set (Mr P.M. Garrow).

Apparently getting members to Congregational Meetings has never been an easy matter. In 1908 we find a meeting advertised for the afternoon at 2.30 followed by a "Social in the evening, at which there will be refreshments, music and addresses. A cordial invitation is given to all our people, and all friends. No charge for admission." Again in 1910 the congregation was enticed with a "Basket Social." All of these meetings were held at 2.30 p.m. at Wauchope because of its central position.

Collections were retiring ones at the door. In 1904 that at Bulli (Byabarra) was 7/3 and Haytown (Hibbard) 1/9. Since sustentation was not collected from either place both eventually closed as preaching centres.

Rev.James Davies was called to the Charge in 1917. Horse transport was used in the beginning of his ministry but later a car was provided. This car was replaced in 1923 by a Universal Ford for Rev.J.D. Walker.

The very early Ministers were sometimes provided with assistants. The earliest of these assistants was J.A. Scott (1906), C. Meade (1909), C.J. McAlpine (1910), A.M. Ferrie (1912) and Mr Hogg (1913).

Local assistance was given by Mr Jenner (Comboyne) and Mr H.A. Brigden (Postmaster at Wauchope). Assistants were subsidised from Sydney when congregations could not find the necessary money.

There were ups and downs in finance in the early days just as there are today. These struggles call for sacrificial giving, are ultimately character building and bind congregations together. Port Macquarie charge was never a wealthy one.

The first wedding to be celebrated in the new Church was in 1923 when Miss Christina Cameron married Mr Stephen Neate Dark. Miss Edna Lindsay was the bridesmaid, and Mr Hugh Cameron, best man.

The Women's Guild was formed on 15th August, 1923. First office bearers were President, Mrs A. Wade, Secretary, Mrs A.B. Campbell, Treasurer, Mrs R.N. Shaw.

On 1st May, 1930, approval was given by the Committee of Management, for the Guild to build a Sunday School Hall. The hall was built by Mr D. Olsen and opened by Rev. John Colvin on 26th October, 1939. The cost of the building was £495 which left a debt of £100. At a Congregational Meeting in 1942 Mrs Campbell reported that "the debt on the Sunday School Hall had been liquidated and much praise was due to Miss McAndrew for work accomplished in collection and sale of gifts." The Guild, now the Presbyterian Women's Association, has continued to function with enthusiasm over the years and remains a very vital part of the life of the Church. On 15th August, 1973, a 50th Anniversary Birthday Party was held. Two foundation members were present - Mrs W. Goodacre from Sydney and our own Mrs S.A. Pead. With current members, and the daughters of deceased former members of the early years, it was a grand re-union and celebration. Mrs G. Wass was president at this time, Mrs Garrow, secretary and Mrs L.J. Lee, treasurer. In 1969 the Evening P.W.A. was formed, and this young group has given valuable service. Mrs J. Duce was the first president, assisted by Mrs W.H. Jones as secretary and Mrs E. Starr, treasurer.

A Girls Auxiliary was formed in 1932 but faded out after two years of missionary work.

The Presbyterian Fellowship Association began under the direction of Rev. R.W. Wannan but did not become a recognised organisation until it affiliated with the Fellowship Union in 1932. Rev. G.A. Gordon was responsible for this. Mr J.M. Glass became the first leader. The P.F.A. continued without a break until 1970. At one time membership was 48, all denominations taking part. Leaders, who filled the position for long periods, have been Mr J. Wallace, Miss G. Suters, Norm and Colin Secombe.

A Mens' League was formed in 1968 by Rev.E.C. Dean and continues to meet monthly for an evening meal and meeting.

Before her marriage Mrs Dark (as Miss Cameron) was an organist. After an absence of some years, when she lived at Byabarra, Mrs Dark returned to Wauchope and to the organist's position which she filled until the time of her death in 1973. Providing Church music was a labour of love which continued for about 40 years. When pumping the organ was becoming difficult for Mrs Dark and it feared she would be forced to retire, Mr. Garrow reversed a vacuum cleaner so that it blew instead of sucking, and attached it to the organ as a blower. This solved the problem. Others to give service as organists in this Church have been Miss Hilda Andrews (Mrs Everingham), Miss Beryl Andrews (Mrs Wilson), Miss Joan Wallace (Mrs W. Trotter), Miss Isobel Dark (Mrs Jones) and currently Mrs Easdown and Mrs Wass.

The first Sunday School Superintendent was Mr J.R. Andrews (1906-13), Mr N.J. Lindsay 1913-15, Mr W.J. Andrews (1915-25), Mr J. Wallace 1925 - 1950, Mrs Garrow (1950-76). The Uniting Sunday School (Presbyterian and Methodist) commenced on 1st February, 1976, with Mrs B. Everingham in charge. Many teachers have given dedicated service over the years. Most devoted of all has been Mrs Colin Andrews who taught from 1933 to 1971 in the Kindergarten. She has been a much loved "Auntie Eiley" to so many.

The Charge of Upper Hastings, centred at Wauchope, with preaching centres at Beechwood, Ellenborough and Birdwood, was separated from Port Macquarie Charge on 1st February, 1967. The inaugural meeting of the new Charge was held on 13th February, 1967. Mr Leo J. Lee was elected Session Clerk. On his departure for Narrabri, Mr S. Colin Andrews succeeded him.

The first minister, Rev. E.C. Dean, was inducted on 10th January, 1968. Temporary accommodation was provided until the new Manse was completed and officially opened on 5th May, 1968, by Rev. P.E. Lucock. Rev.E.C. and Mrs Dean remained until 25th December, 1972.

An exit-student, Rev. E.M. Main took up duties in February, 1973, was ordained and inducted on 18th April, 1973, and is still our highly esteemed minister. His

artistic and co-operative wife is also actively engaged in the life of the Parish.

Elders from the Upper Hastings area to serve the Port Macquarie Charge have been:-

Mr W. Samson Lindsay	1894
Mr George Lindsay	1905
Mr J.R. Andrews	1906
Mr W.J. Andrews	1917
Mr S.R. Andrews	1933
Mr J. Wallace	1933
Mr S.C. Andrews	1951
Mr G.L. Trotter	
Mr P.M. Garrow	1954
Mr L.D. Trotter	1954
Mr S.R. Stewart	1960
Mr D.H. Bean	1960
Mr L.J. Lee	1961
Mr E.B. Murray	4/12/1966

Since the formation of Upper Hastings Charge, elders inducted are:-

Mr R.R. Dark	8/9/1968
Mrs G.N. Garrow	7/6/70
Mrs G. Lee	7/3/1971
Mrs E.R. Coombes	21/11/1971
Mr C. Secombe	7/4/1974
Mrs H. Wass	27/7/1975
Mrs L. Smith	27/7/1975

Ministers of the Port Macquarie Charge who have preached in the Churches at Wauchope have been -

Mr Hugh Hossack (Catechist)	1873-1883
Rev.R. Davidson	1884-1893
Rev. H.S. Buntine	1893-1901

Rev. G.M. Torbett	1903-1916
Rev. J. Davies	1917-1922
Rev. J.D. Walker	1922-1926
Rev. R.W. Wannan	1927-1930
Rev. G.A. Gordon	1931-1937
Rev. J. Colvin	1937-1940
Rev. M. Walker (Retired Methodist)	1940-1941
Rev. J.D. Walker	1942-1945
Rev. A.J. Eipper	1946-1948
Rev. J.P. Mortimore	1948-1956
Rev. S.F. Eldred	1957-1961
Rev. B.E.G. Napper	1962-1966

Ministers of the Upper Hastings Charge.

Rev. E.C. Dean	1968-1972
Rev. E.M. Main	1973-1977

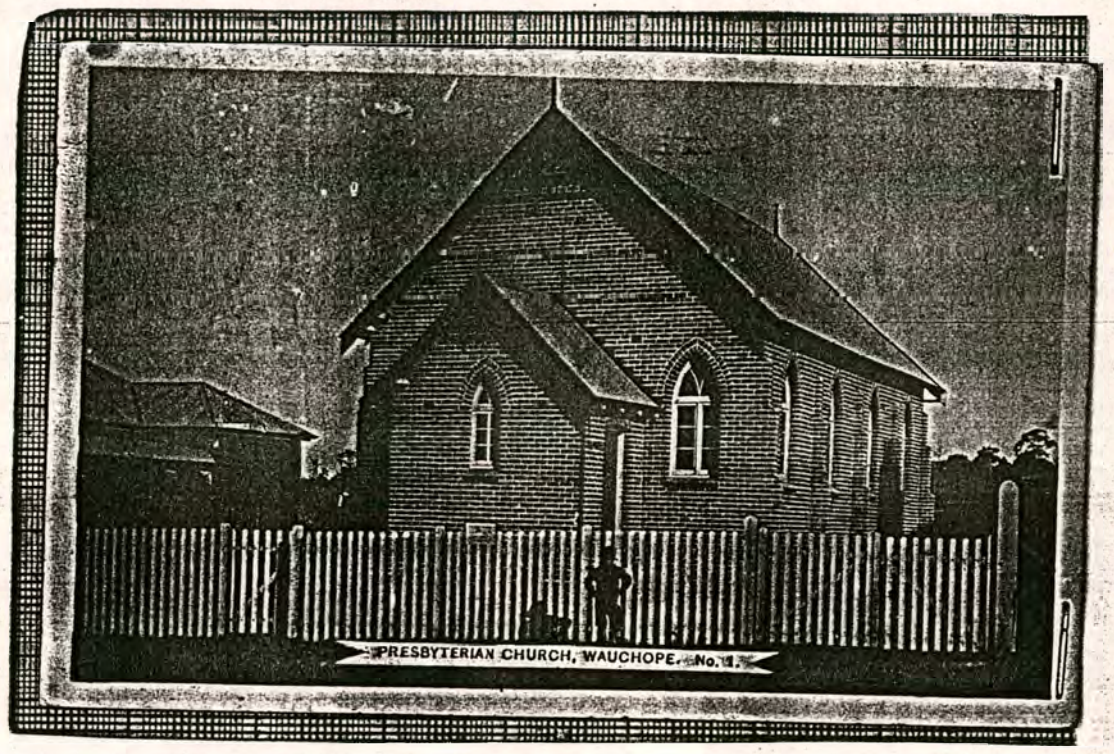
To — THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
WAUCHOPE & DISTRICT PARISH
JUNE 1977 - SEPTEMBER 1980

This information was compiled by Mrs Gwen Garrow, 16 Avondale St. Wauchope. 2446 Telephone 575
Any further information on this subject would be gratefully received.

THE
HASTINGS DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wauchope Chapter

PRESIDENT: SECRETARY:



From Gwen Hayward No 42

Presbyterian Church

5 6

Some Memories of Seventy Years.

P.M. News 16.9.1922

By an Old Resident.

No. 4.

A Presbyterian Church was erected in Wauchope and opened for service in 1878. The first Anglican Church erected on the river was on a site donated by the late Mr G. F. Dawes at Ennis, which was used for a number of years, but, the position not proving central, the building was disposed of, and a suitable structure erected at Rawdon Island on a site obtained from Mr. F. Wallace. Small buildings for religious purposes were also built by the Methodists at Rawdon Island, Gannon's Creek, and Haytown, which were used for several years, but changes amongst the residents diminishing the congregations, led to the disposal of the buildings. A suitable church building was erected at Blackman's Point by the Methodist denomination, and is in constant use by Methodist, Anglican, and Presbyterian ministers and preachers. In the 70's a Roman Catholic Church was erected on the property of Mr. J. McDonnough, Rawdon Villa, and was used for several years, being subsequently transferred to Rawdon Island, close to the Public School. Beechwood needs are met by Anglican and Roman Catholic Church buildings, the Presbyterian and Methodist services being held in the Protestant Hall. Huntingdon has a Presbyterian Church. Wauchope is well supplied, having Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches of timber, the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Free Presbyterian Churches being of brick. These buildings are all free of debt, and are centres of much religious interest. Another point of interest is the establishment of means for crossing the river at various centres. No ferry existed beyond Blackman's Point till about 1875, when a public ferry was established at Ennis, and proved a great convenience for many years. The next ferry to be installed was that connecting Rawdon Island with the mainland, and which has been much appreciated. But a long stretch of the river from Ennis upwards, owing to the ford at Bain's Falls having been dredged, remained to be provided for. The only ford available was that known as "Cameron's Crossing," which was not at all suitable, hence attempts were made to improve it by the formation of a weir, which it was hoped would be successful, but after the expenditure of several hundreds of pounds in cash the work proved an utter failure, so that a bridge had to be built. A low-level structure having been decided upon, the bridge known as "Bain Bridge" was erected, and in due course opened for traffic, and has proved a boon to the community. But a mistake was made in not erecting a high-level instead of a low-level structure, as the former would have cost comparatively little more than the one erected, and would have been available for traffic at all times, whereas now a comparatively slight fresh in the river overflows the present bridge and precludes its use. This bridge supplied an urgent need, but still left eight miles of the river void of the means of crossing, and Wauchope having become an active business centre, residents on the north side of the river were still at a disadvantage, hence efforts were directed to the establishment of a ferry in the vicinity of Wauchope. Unfortunately a sharp division of public opinion regarding the site of the proposed ferry hindered the establishment of the convenience for many years, but on the inauguration of local government the Hastings Shire Council decided the matter, and placed the ferry at the site known as "The Rocks," and, closing the old-time Ennis ferry, removed the punt to the new site. Another ferry was installed connecting the two Rawdon Islands, also one below Blackman's Point at Hamilton, to supply the needs of residents on the Maria River, so the needs of the travelling public are fully met.

(Concluded).

Presbyterian Church

3

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE HASTINGS

(By WINIFRED GODFREY, continued from last issue)

Mr. Hossack was responsible for the building of quite a few churches n this district. The Protestant Church at Rollands Plains owes its xistence largely to his efforts, and was finished in the last year of his ninistry. The first church at Wauchope was also due to Mr. Hossack's fforts It stood on the Port Macquarie side of the Railway line at the ntrance to "Wauchope Lane."

The following story is told with regard to ne building of the Wauchope Church.

Mr. Hossack was condered somewhat careess about his personal ppearance, and a good dy of Wauchope, noting the worn condion of his waistcoat, resented him with a ew one.

Mr. Hossack, passing e site of the church, d noticing that some aring needed doing, ghted and started work soon he felt hot and moved his waistcoat.

Some days after, it was nd adorning a stump.

Towards the end of 78, a move was made build a church at ntingdon. The secrecy and moving spirit pears to have been Mr. S. Lindsay.

The collection list indes Mr. Lauch Lind- $30, Mr. K. McKen- $30, Mr. W. S. Lind- $30, and Mr. Hugh ssack $20.

Then came Sam Jones, muel Glyde, William rwick and Donald Mcnnon, each $10.

Other names are Willn Bransdon, James mpbell, John Edwards, mes Wallace, G. Hally, Robert Campbell, arles Blythe, George el, D. Graham, S. Anws, Isaac Andrews, J. ombe, F. Martin, J. C. ff, Mrs. Neville, R. he, F. Marchment, A. E. Colvin, Alexander ore, J. Martin, Veitch rray, John Summere, James McPherson, mas Edwards, D. meron, Miss E. Dawes, nes Warrell and John ville.

Altogether, $251.28 was lected.

The timber was bought m Hibbard & Haines $50, Francis Walsh cted the building for $90, the value of the work done gratuitously was reckoned at $40.

The church was built, furnished and painted at a cost of $290 and the opening ceremony performed by the Rev. J. S. Laing in July 1879.

Dr. Laing had been known to the Huntingdon folk when he was Minister of the Manning from 1865 to 1874.

In 1926, this church was removed from its original position on what is now Oxley Highway, to the present site near Huntingdon House.

†

Having served on the Hastings for nearly ten years, and having reached the age of 72 years, Mr. Hossack's thoughts turned to his Homeland.

A presentation night was arranged, so important that it took the name of a "soiree." Over 350 people of all sects attended, showing to what esteem Mr. Hossack was held.

He was presented with a cheque for $140 by Mr. James Butler, and Mr. Lindsay, on behalf of the Ellenborough district, offered a purse containing $14, thus showing proof that Mr. Hossack's labours had not been in vain, and his preaching, however homely, and his teaching, however plain, were universally appreciated.

He sailed for England on 4th May, 1883, and passed away in August 1885.

His old grey horse, "Tom," was let loose at Huntingdon to the end of his days.

†

After Mr. Hossack's departure, there was for a time no services held.

Later, a Rev. John Miller Ross arrived in August 1883. He found the Church closed and the congregation (102 souls) scattered.

After many meetings and organising, the Rev. Robert Davidson, from Scotland, took up the ministry in Port Macquarie from 1884 to 1893.

He was a widely read and a good preacher; however, he was not a robust man and organisation was not his strong point.

Some innovations came with him. It was decided instead of a collection plate at the door, the plate would be passed around.

Two years after his arrival, Rev. Davidson preached in 10 centres.

Three organs or harmoniums were received to assist in the church praise. This was a great help; the singing had hitherto been led by the precenters, of greater or lesser ability.

Probably the introduction of instruments gave rise to some opposition, but they came to stay.

†

The decrease in funds was to continue for some years and finances were to be precarious in the churches of the North Coast, till certain disabilities could be overcome.

The years from 1886 onwards for five or six years were marked by much rain and devastating floods, and great hardship was caused to the people of the rivers.

With regard to the forecasted improvement in farming conditions, few men have so large a share in the task of bringing about that improvement as Rev. Robert Davidson.

When he arrived, the chief industry was maize growing on the river and creek flats, for the fattening of pigs. The ever possible floods could destroy the whole prospect of income for the year.

Dairying was the solution, and Rev. Davidson, as Minister of the Presbyterian Church for nine years, later editor of the Port Macquarie "News" for nine years, and later still a Member of the Legislative Assembly also for nine years, he laboured mightily to establish and make profitable this now stable industry of the North Coast.

He imported Ayrshire cattle from New Zealand and bred them and exhibited at shows. He was also helpful in introducing grasses suitable for the district.

Paspalum dilitatum was his find, and right heartily did he advocate its introduction.

He also advocated and was largely instrumental in having the North Coast Railway built.

The coming of this great Scot to the Coast certainly marked an epoch in its history.

and the congregation left with a debt which was not liquidated for many years and a church which was far from satisfactory.

†

The next Minister was Rev. H. S. Buntine, a native of Victoria, who had in 1884 been received from the Synod of Eastern Australia (the Free Church) together with his congregation at Boggabri, into the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales.

He was inducted into the pastoral charge of Port Macquarie on 24th Nov. 1893, and served until 1901.

Mr. Buntine was a man of great energy and decisiveness of character; and being of robust constitution, was able to throw himself into his work with wholehearted abandon.

He first lived at Port Macquarie, and then, to be more centrally situated, moved to Ennis, and later to Ruthven Hill. He rode on horseback tremendous distances in the execution of his duties.

Mr. Buntine was an ardent Mason, and became Master of the Port Macquarie Lodge. It is reported that on 26th September 1895, he conducted an impressive Masonic service to a capacity church.

The Minister was winning his way with young and old, and one record tells of a function, held at Huntingdon, when Sarah Lindsay (the late Mrs. Arthur Trotter) presented Mr. Buntine with a silver teapot and sugar basin from the Sabbath School.

In 1901, Mr. Buntine presented a volume of the Psalms and Paraphrases to be used in the pulpit of the Huntingdon Church.

So, after eight years under his ministry, Rev. Buntine left the Charge a much more prosperous one than when he had come. He passed away in 1932.

†

For the next two years the Charge was vacant.

Rev. J. Faulds Henderson was supply in October 1901. In 1902, Rev. A. D. Reid, from America, supplied for 3 months.

Other supplies at that time were Rev. A. McDougall, W. F. Craigie, A. D. Robertson, E. S. Henderson, James Muir and J. Vance.

(To be continued)

HUNTINGDON PILGRIMAGE

Just before the Huntingdon Church was built, Mrs. Graham and Mrs. McGregor, of like mind, used to ride and walk all the way over to the Manning, a distance of 50-odd miles, to attend the Communion services there, which usually were seasons of great refreshing. They only had one horse between them and one would ride several miles, dismount, tie the horse to a tree and proceed to walk until the other, on reaching the horse, mounted it and overtook the walker to ride on ahead to repeat the process.

HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON THE HASTINGS

(By WINIFRED GODFREY — conclusion)

The next Minister to take the Charge was the Rev. George Montgomery Torbett, M.A., and he was inducted in September 1903. Another Scot, he was born in 1869 at Ervie, Kircolm, Scotland. Comboyne was just being opened up, and it fell to him to pioneer the Church work there.

On January 5th, 1905, he secured a valuable helper in his ministry, when he married Miss Mary Davidson, the eldest daughter of Rev. Robert and Mrs. Davidson.

During his thirteen years, the Charge prospered greatly under his leadership.

Two new centres had been opened up: Comboyne and Hamilton.

Wauchope Church had been repained and improvements made to the Port Macquarie Church.

In 1907, Rev. S. W. R. Richardson was assistant. The Wauchope Sunday School was flourishing under the superintendance of Mr. J. R. Andrews, who was assisted by four teachers.

†

The Church at Laurieton was built in 1908, and Rev. G. M. Torbett laid on the table plans and specifications for anoth church at Yarras. It was to be of weatherboard, lined and with a vestry.

Other assistants were Mr. C. Meade in 1909, Mr. Claude J. A. McAlpine in 1910, and for some time Mr. H. A. Brigden, Postmaster at Wauchope, came to the Minister's aid. The stipend had risen to $470 and $120 for the assistant.

In 1913, Rev. Torbett had nine months leave of absence, to visit his parents in Scotland, and Rev. A. J. Palmer occupied his pulpit.

†

For many years the Kendall people had been gathering funds for a church; and by the time Rev. Torbett returned, plans were under way for a church there. It was opened in 1915.

That same year a new church was to be built in Wauchope. The foundation stone was laid by Mr. J. R. Andrews on the 8th May, 1915. The church was opened in 1916 free of debt.

Rev. Torbett went to the Kiama Charge from here in 1916, and remained there till 1941. He died in 1944.

†

After a brief vacancy, Rev. James Davies took the Charge. For a time he did his work with horse-drawn vehicles but later obtained a motor car, which Mrs. Davies usually drove.

Most of the centres now had churches, but need was felt for one at Telegraph Point, where services had been held in the old Union Hall. A church was built in 1919, and the Methodists co-operated.

It was understood that when a church was built at Beechwood it was to be a Methodist Church, with the Presbyterians co-operating.

Later, the church at Telegraph Point was closed.

During this time, the Women's Missionary Associations at Port Macquarie, Wauchope and Huntingdon were organised.

The Rev. James Davies demissed the Charge in 1922.

†

The next Minister to take over the Charge was Rev. John Walker.

He had the distinction of being the first product of our own Theological Hall to fill the position.

He served two terms, from 1922 to 1926, and again from 1942 to 1945.

The Women's Guild at Wauchope owes its incep- n to Rev. John Walker. Guild was formed, with Mrs. Andrew Wade as first president, and a capable energetic secretary was found in the person of Mrs. A. B. Campbell.

Mrs. Wade continued until her death, when she was succeeded by Mrs. N. J. Lindsay as president. Miss Florence Wade took over after this, and after Mrs. Campbell had held her position as secretary for over 20 years it went into the capable hands of Miss Monnie Wade.

In 1926 to 1930, the Charge was held by Rev. R. W. Wannan, and the Fellowship Association in Wauchope was started by Mr. Wannan.

Before the end of 1930, Port Macquarie had a new Minister in the person of Rev. George Acheson Gordon, B.A.

About this time, Mrs. J. Lindsay presented a noticeboard to the Port-Macquarie Church, and the Wauchope Church decided to have one, too. In 1935, Wauchope Church received a gift of a baptismal font from Dr. and Mrs. Begg.

Rev. Gordon is remembered with great affection. He passed away at Gosford in 1942.

†

After a vacancy of six months, Rev. John Colvin took the Charge in 1937. Mr. Colvin proved to be an eloquent preacher and drew people from other congregations to hear him.

He was a great gardener, and perhaps never since the days of Mr. Ayling had the Manse grounds such an attractive appearance.

The work of the Wauchope Women's Guild was bearing fruit, and in 1939 the Sunday School Hall was opened by Rev. John Colvin.

After Rev. Colvin left the Charge, the services of a retired Methodist Minister, Rev. Matthew Walker, were obtained. Then from 1942 to 1945 Rev. J. D. Walker, followed by Rev. Eipper 1946 to 1948, Rev. J. P. Mortimore 1948 to 1956, Rev. S. Eldred 1957 to 1961, Rev. B. E. G. Napper 1962 to 1966, up to the present day when still another Scot, Rev. R. J. Allen, looks after the Charge at the Port Macquarie end.

†

In 1967 the Parish was divided, and the Parish of Upper Hastings was created.

January 1968 saw the induction of the Rev. E. C. Dean into the Parish of Upper Hastings. He demissed the Charge in July 1972, and on the 18th April 1973, the Rev. E. McD. Main was ordained and inducted to the Upper Hastings.

†

Most of my story deals with the long ago, but the Port Macquarie Charge now has a new and up-to-date Church.

Most of the others are still the first churches to be built for worship in those areas.

So when you see a little church on a hill, you can think that it really stood for something in the lives of those early settlers and their families.

Presbyterian Church 4