



# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

24 Duff Street;  
Arncliffe. 2205.

July 1977.

Dear Friend and Member,

The Annual Meeting of this Society will be held as follows:

Date: Friday Evening, July 15th, 1977.  
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.  
Business: Opening & Welcome.  
Apologies  
Minutes of Previous Annual Meeting.  
Annual Financial Report.  
Lydham Hall Annual Report.  
President's Annual Report.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1977-1978.

Patrons (3)  
President  
Senior Vice President  
Vice Presidents (2)  
Hon. Secretary  
Hon. Asst. Secretary  
Hon. Treasurer  
Hon. Auditors (2)  
Committee of Management: (President, Secretary, Treasurer, &  
7 Members).  
Lydham Hall Committee  
Ladies Social Committee: It has been suggested that all Ladies who  
are able - go on Roster?  
Research Officer  
Publicity Officer  
Social Secretary  
Editor (Bulletin)

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Correspondence:  
General Business:

Syllabus Item: Mr. Brenden Hyde will take us on a "Journey to the  
Roof of the World"

Members Please Note: Our August Meeting will be a "Norfolk Island Night",  
and you are invited to show 10 - 12 of your best slides on this occasion.  
(Remember your projectors).

Supper Roster: Captain - Mrs. Waddington, & Mesdames Havilah, Roots &  
Miss Heath.

Mr. D. Sinclair,  
President. 587.4555

Mrs. E. Eardley,  
Secretary. 59.8078

Mrs. E. Wright,  
Treas. & Soc. Sec. 599.4884

Mrs. B. Perkins,  
Publicity Officer. 587.9164

Mr. A. Ellis,  
Research Officer. 587.1159.

Many of our Members are on the sick list. We are sorry to hear this, and trust that you will all be well again soon.

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A limited supply of the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford Eardley (re-printed by popular request) are now available, cost \$1.00 each, postage extra:

- Book 1. "The Early History of the Wolli Creek Valley" - very limited stocks.  
Book 4. "The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tramway" - very limited stocks.  
Also available: (By the same Author)  
Book 7. "The Early History/Tempe & The Black Creek Valley"

Contact Secretary 'Phone 59.8078.

OR Miss Otton 'Phone 59.4259 (after 8 p.m.)

ALSO Smith's Florist Shop, Tramway Arcade, Rockdale.

Society Badges are available - \$1.00 each. (See Mrs. Wright).

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Miss Otton, Curator of 'Lydham Hall', is in need of Ladies and/or Gentlemen to assist with the weekend roster. Visitors come from far and wide to see this lovely old Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate inspections. Ring Miss Otton, Phone 59.4259, your call will be appreciated.

There is now a large glass display case upstairs in Lydham Hall. At present it contains a few souvenirs from the various wars. Can you help to enlarge this display by exhibiting some of the war relics which you might have? These will be greatly appreciated, and good care taken of any souvenirs which you might care to loan or perhaps donate. Ring Miss Otton 59.4259.

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NOTE TO MEMBERS ..... Please advise Secretary (phone 59.8078) of any change of address - this will save disappointment when your Bulletin is posted to you.

#### SOCIAL.

21/8/77. Bus Trip to Hawkesbury College, at Richmond, "Open Day".  
Leave Rockdale Town Hall at 9 a.m. sharp.  
Cost \$3.00 per person - pay at July meeting.

October 1st, 2nd & 3rd ... October Long Weekend.

Saturday - Bus leaves Rockdale Town Hall at 7.30 a.m. sharp.  
Ferry trip on Lake Burley Griffin.

Sunday - Braidwood & Majors Creek.  
Return Monday via Batemans Bay & South Coast.  
Cost: Dinner, Bed & Breakfast - \$60.00.  
Ferry Trip \$2.50 extra. (will take 90 minutes).

(Ring Mrs. Wright - 599.4884, for details).

Deposit - please, July Meeting.

..... Waiting List Only.

REV. WILLIAM PROBERT PHILLIPS.

- Carlton Baptist Church  
February 1912 - June 1947.

"W.P.", as he was affectionately known will be remembered by many residents of the St. George District. How many homes still have, on their bookshelves, Sunday School prizes with the familiar signature: "*W. Probert Phillips - Pastor*"?

Of all the ministers at Carlton Baptist (Mission services commenced July 16th, 1893, actual Baptist services February 17th, 1895) "W.P." exercised the longest ministry covering thirty-six years and is undoubtedly the best remembered.

Born 11th May, 1882, in Pyrmont, Sydney, the son of a Welsh father and an English mother, he never lost his love for Wales. Many a school child was intrigued as each Empire Day he would address the school assembly in Welsh. Educated at the Waterloo Public School, he was confirmed at St. Silas Church of England. He worked for a short time with George Hudson, Timber Merchants, then in the lithographic printing section of the Government Printing Office.

At an early age he joined the Independent Order of Rechabites and maintained an active interest in the Order right up to the time of his death, being a Chief Ruler.

In the early 1900's he came under the influence of the then young evangelical preacher, Rev. C.J. Tinsley of Stanmore Baptist Church, where he was baptised. At this time he became interested in the Christian ministry and served (as was the custom at that time) as a Home Missionary for a probationary period with the N.S.W. Baptist Union in the Wellington District for two years, from 1907 to 1909. He conducted services and visited families in Wellington and outlying areas, his mode of transport being a horse-drawn sulky. He was then accepted for training for the ministry, and as there was no Baptist Theological College in N.S.W. at that time, he spent the required three years in Melbourne as a student at the Victorian Baptist College, attending some lectures at the Melbourne University. At this time the Sydney University Junior Standard was a necessary requisite for entry to College. Here his interest in Greek was encouraged, an interest he never lost, and when the N.S.W. Theological College was established (1916) he was for many years an examiner in Greek.

Following graduation, the young minister was appointed to the Carlton Church where his ordination took place in 1912.

He took up residence in the home of Miss Chicken, at "The Rest", in Webber's Road (now Willison Road), in the company of several other gentlemen who had "board and lodging" there, and it became the custom for the Church people to gather there after the Sunday night's service for a "sing song" of hymns.

Romance began to blossom. The church organist at that time was Miss Irene Mellowes, Teacher of Piano, with a large number of pupils in the district. With her family she had moved to Carlton in 1900, at the age of 9, and was brought to the Baptist Sunday School by Louie Wales. She became organist in 1908, being baptised and received into membership following a mission conducted by Rev. C.J. Tinsley. Pastor and organist were married, 4th September, 1915, in the original weatherboard church, which faced Durham Street. The building being rather small, and there being so much interest in the wedding, church members and guests were issued with tickets to ensure a place in the tiny church.

Together they served God through the Carlton Church till retirement, thirty-two years later, in 1947. Mrs Phillips gave unstinting loyalty to her husband and his ministry, cared for their three children, Flora, Dulcie and Don, continued as organist, led the choir, presided over the ladies' organisations and many remember her keen interest in Sunday School teaching, particularly the Girls' Bible Class. Finances were never plentiful, yet no child was refused the sale, at the Manse door, of the 3d. Junior Christian Endeavour bookmarks for the Christian Endeavour Cot Fund. Her sponge cakes were famous. These were sent regularly each month over many years, to the soldiers in the old Randwick Military Hospital through the local V.A.D. (Voluntary Aid Detachment).

As the district grew, so did the congregation. Many Baptist families moved to the then semi-rural area of Carlton from Stanmore, Lewisham and Petersham. 1920 saw the erection of the present brick building on the corner of Durham Street and Willison Road. The original weatherboard building remained in use as a Sunday School Hall till the '60's, when it was demolished to make way for the Christian Education Centre.

In the early days, whilst maintaining the Carlton Church, Pastor Phillips also served on occasions as Pastor of the churches at Mortdale, Sans Souci and Kingsgrove. Later, he also gave oversight to the newly formed South Carlton, Hurstville and Beverly Hills Churches.

Whilst Pastor of Mortdale, "W.P." took the evening service, walking there and back from Carlton. The young people from Carlton would walk to meet him after their own evening service, all returning to "The Rest" for a sing-song.

Each generation has made its own fun, and in the early days a regular prank was the removal of the high wooden gates from the wooden fence around the old church building each New Year's Eve and the leaving of them at a different spot some distance away each time. One year the Pastor and some of the men, tired of carrying these heavy gates back each year, decided to lay in wait and catch the miscreants, but the culprits took off at great speed as the defenders rushed out with much noise. The gates remained intact thereafter.

"W.P." was far from parochial. His interests included all denominations. He maintained good relations with fellow ministers, particularly through the Ministers' Fraternal and Christian Endeavour Union, of which he became State President.

His own denomination honoured him -

- . 1923-24 he became President of the N.S.W. Baptist Union.
- . 1928 he was official representative of the Baptist Union of Australia, at the Baptist World Alliance Congress at Toronto, Canada.

He served State and Federal Missionary Boards and helped out in times of emergency as General Secretary of the State Union and Editor of the Australian Baptist. He was involved in the inauguration of the Baptist work in Canberra and Central Australia, as Chairman of the Australian Home Mission Board.

His preaching was deliberate; carefully chosen, unhurried words were weighted with wisdom. His authority always: "What saith the Scriptures?". Pastoral care and visitation were his forte. "W.P.'s" ministry spanned two world wars and the depression years of the '30's. Many families remember the strength and encouragement of his pastoral visits and wise counselling. He was a man of prayer, often praying with and for his people. Whatever, whenever and wherever the need - he would be there. And by foot!

During those thirty-six years he walked hundreds of miles, throughout the district. From his home in Hill Street, he visited families as far afield as Hurstville, Sans Souci, Bald Face, Allawah, Kogarah and Bexley. The St. George Cottage Hospital was visited regularly, as were the schools at Hurstville, Kogarah, Carlton and South Carlton, for scripture classes. He knew the short cuts through the bush, across the paddocks and these he traversed with his steady, measured gait, in all weathers and all seasons.

Ironically, this "walking Pastor" was knocked down and killed by a car while crossing the Pacific Highway, at Pymble, on 11th June, 1963, in his 82nd. year.

Retirement came in June 1947, when the family moved to Pymble. Over the next sixteen years "W.P." served in a number of churches as interim pastor, he visited Central Australia and Darwin and worked as Immigration Officer for the Baptist Union, meeting migrants from other countries and endeavoured to assist them with accommodation, employment and other problems. He travelled twice on migrant ships in this capacity.

"W.P.'s" life and ministry are deeply etched in the history of Carlton. His influence has been felt far beyond the bounds of the St. George District.

The length of his ministry is unique amongst the Baptist Churches of the St. George District. No other Pastor has served in this area for as long a period of time. His life long friend, Rev. C J Tinsley, also holds a unique record, having ministered at the Stanmore Church for a period of forty-four years.

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This Society is indebted to Flora Phillips for details concerning her parents and for permission to publish this article.

- *Browwyn Perkins*  
*Publicity Officer.*