

THE FIRST DECADE

A short history of the establishment of
St Lukes Anglican Church Wandal,
1900 to 1910

taken entirely from "The Anglican Gazette"
and other Diocese of Rockhampton archives.



Compiled by Canon Janne Whitehead,
16th Rector of the Parish,
in celebration of the 40th anniversary
of the laying of the foundation stone
of the third church building,
Sunday 29 August 2010.

A NEED EMERGES

The last decade of the nineteenth century was a time of growth and building in the town of Rockhampton. The Diocese itself formally came into being in 1892 with Bishop Nathaniel Dawes as the first Bishop, and soon after, quite a few new district churches were constructed in the town. The Cathedral parish had been active in worship and ministry since 1860, and by the 1890s, found it necessary to establish new worshipping communities.

The first of these new District Churches was St Barnabas' North Rockhampton, the foundation stone for which was laid by the Governor Lord Lamington on Sunday 24 January 1897. Next a building was acquired in Allentown in September 1898 to house the considerable numbers of children attending Sunday School there, and to begin worship services in the area.

It is well worth noting that St Paul's Cathedral was actually consecrated on St Lukes Day, 18 October 1886, and for many decades, the Cathedral parish held annual celebrations of the Dedication Festival and Anniversary of Consecration on the Sunday closest to St Lukes Day, often in conjunction with Confirmation and a "Parochial Tea".

St Lukes community was also part of the Cathedral parish¹, and the locality was referred to as North West Rockhampton. The first specific mention of St Lukes community to be found in available copies of the Gazette is in the edition of January 1879, when three new Sunday School teachers, Mr H. Wood, Mrs Salmon and Mrs Brockhurst were welcomed to St Lukes Sunday School staff, who were meeting for regular weekly prayer and lesson planning. Senior Sunday School classes were to study the Lord's life, beginning with the discourse with Nicodemus, and the Infants classes were to learn Psalm 23.

¹ All areas in and around Rockhampton were initially part of the Cathedral parish, including in 1900, Westood and in 1901, Duaringa, Bouldercombe and Mount Usher, and later Alton Downs, Bajool, Archer and Depot Hill.

ABUILDING BEGINS

In the Gazette of July 1900, the Rev'd Thomas Parker, Vicar of the Cathedral Parish wrote:

“Another munificent gift has been offered to the Glory of God, which has removed a load of anxiety from my mind, and enabled me to look forward with confidence to the erection of a District Church in North-west Rockhampton. In reply to a communication setting forth the needs of the district, and the homelessness of the Sunday School at present meeting in the Football Grounds², Mr T.S. Hall has promised a quarter-acre of land near Murray Street and North Street, with the option of purchasing another adjacent quarter-acre for future contingencies³.

How wonderfully God is working for us and moving the hearts of His servants to aid in the accomplishment of our designs. Praise be to God ! May these signs of His favour towards us move us to self-denying effort and lively enthusiasm !

We have a Marriott Grant of £150 I therefore appeal (more especially to the inhabitants of the north-west part of Rockhampton and parents of the Cambridge Street Sunday School) for hearty and immediate donations to meet this grant and enable us to build at least a Nave, if not the complete church. Plans will shortly be prepared and building will be begun without delay in the faith that God will move your hearts to respond to these two magnificent gifts of a Site and Building Grant. A complete church will cost approximately £450. The proposal is to begin with the Nave or Body of the Church at a cost of about £250. But I hope that we shall have the whole amount needed, and there should be no difficulty at all if we all put our shoulders to the wheel and do what we can, however little it may be, esteeming it a privilege to have a share in God's work.”

² This Sunday School was known in the parish as the Cambridge Street Sunday School.

³ The second parcel of land was purchased by the Cathedral parish in 1912.

The Gazette of the following month announced that:

“The site, nearly 1 ½ roods, had been duly surveyed, the deed of transfer had already been drafted and would shortly be signed and registered, and the building of the Nave would shortly commence. The plan (was) for a building 30 feet X 40 feet with an entrance at the west end, and another at the east end of the north side to open into a Vestry, but to be temporarily screened off. A corresponding line would be screened off on the south side, thus forming a temporary Sanctuary.”

The building contract for the Nave was signed for £202, with survey and fencing being another £33. The architect Mr L.S.Robertson, donated all his fees and expenses, and cash donations totaling £9 3s were received in those first few weeks, including £5 from a benefactor in England, £2 from the Vicar and £1 from the Sunday School Superintendent, Mr D.D.Dawson. Many parishioners added their donations, often between 1 and 10 shillings, in the following months, and very soon only a little of the required funds were to be found, plus an estimated £15 for furniture.

At the time, £1 was very large amount of money for an average person, but fundraising for the church was a honorable calling, with door to door canvassing expected and whole communities enthusiastically involved in quite imaginative ways, such as a ladies fancy dress cricket match, and selling all eggs laid on Sundays to support building funds. All donations were listed every month in the Gazette, with names of donors and amount donated.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday Schools were the hub of church communities, often their reason for existence⁴, and were a focus of the lives of many. The Cathedral Parish had four separate Sunday Schools, known by their locations: the William Street School, the Campbell Street School, the Cambridge Street School and the Allenstown School.

In 1900, the William Street branch had a Morning School with at least 4 classes, an Afternoon School with at least 12 classes, a Boys School with at least 9 classes, and an Infants School with at least 3 classes, plus the St Paul's Day School classes. The Cambridge Street School, meeting in the football grounds, had at least 6 classes, and was the instigation for the building of St Lukes church.

The annual Sunday School Picnic was a great event for the whole town. Nankin Creek was the chosen picnic destination for the four Cathedral parish Sunday Schools in the year 1900, with over 400 children and 100 adults travelling by special train to Nankin Creek Bridge, then walking half a mile to the chosen destination. Sandwiches, fruit, cordial and lollies were the day's fare, with the company consuming 130lb meat, 22lbs butter, 6lb tea and 70 lbs sugar, and using 500 paper bags. The day included games of cricket and other amusements, the rescuing of a drowning girl who fell while gathering water lilies, and the singing of "God save the Queen", before returning to Archer Park station at 5pm.

Other Sunday School outings in following years included a boat trip down the river, and a train trip to Quarry Creek, Stanwell with 476 children and 96 adults.

⁴ The Gazette of July 1900 reports the decision of a General Meeting of Parishioners of the Cathedral to build a new Sunday School room large enough for 500 children. Work had begun by the following month.

THE FIRST FOUNDATION STONE

The foundation stone for St Lukes North-west District Church was laid on Sunday 21 October 1900. The Gazette of November 1900 reports that the service was “largely” attended, the Cathedral Choir sang for the occasion, and Cathedral organist Mr Crawford “accompanied the hymns on a small organ lent for the occasion”.

The stone was laid by special guest Bishop Gilbert White, the first Bishop of Carpentaria, and the stone itself, like the foundation stone of the new Allenstown church, was designed to form the base and step of the Font. It was common in those times for the Font of a church to be the donation project of the Sunday School children, so at the time of construction, the foundation stone was laid in the Nave, awaiting the building of a Baptistery around it.



It is wonderful to know that, over a century later, this foundation stone for the very first church on this site remains at the door of the present church building, supporting a magnificent font.



At the service of the laying of the foundation stone, the dual purposes of the new church building were emphasized by the Bishop, that is, the conduct of regular worship services, eventually being services of Holy Communion as clergy were available, and the housing of the Cambridge Street Sunday School (which currently taught at least 6 classes).

The purchase of church furniture was the next task in hand for the community, and 16 seats of 9 foot each in length with reversible backs were planned at a cost of 35 shillings each. Funds only allowed for the order of 4 in the first instance.

The first Altar at St Lukes came from the Allenstown church, when that congregation was donated a new one. The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in England donated £5 for the purchase of Bibles, which arrived in Australia about 3 months later.

At the beginning of 1901, the area in which St Lukes church had been built was being called “Wandel’s Estate”, with various spelling of “Wandal”, “Wandel” and “Wandall” for some time. The church was often referred to as “St Lukes, *near* Wandel’s Estate”.



St Lukes Church circa 1920

WORSHIP COMMENCES

The first St Lukes Church was formally opened at a service of Evensong with Address by the Vicar on Sunday 3 February 1901 at 4:30pm. With the Cathedral parish only having the Vicar and one Assistant Curate on staff at the time, services at St Lukes were limited.

The starting schedule was: 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month – Holy Communion 7:30am, followed by Mattins and Sermon at 9:30am; and Evensong and Sermon at 4:30pm every Sunday. Miss Tossie Sykes was available to play a musical instrument for worship, so an appeal was made for a small harmonium. After a couple of months, sufficient funds had been donated for the purchase of an instrument at a cost of £3 5s.

In 1901, just a few weeks after the opening of the church, services were held on Good Friday at 10:30am (Mattins and Sermon) and at 4:30pm (Evensong and Sermon); and on Easter Day at 8am (Holy Communion with 15 communicants) and 4:30pm (Evensong and Sermon). By mid-year, a choir was being formed, with choir practice being every Sunday afternoon after Evensong. Christmas worship was on the first Sunday after Christmas, December 29th, with a service of Holy Communion at 7:30am.

Sunday School was held at 3pm every Sunday, and Mr Lewis, Miss Eva Broome and Miss McCulloch were joined the group of teachers, with an appeal for at least three more teachers. Annual Sunday School prizes for 1900 were distributed by his Lordship the Bishop (Dawes) on Sunday afternoon, 9th July 1901 in the new church, with the list of recipients printed in the Gazette:

one Sunday afternoon
children of the Sunday School
hymns.

The following is a list of the prize winners for the year ended 31st December, 1900:—

Girls.—1st Class: Teacher, Miss Sykes, 1st prize, Winnie Farmer, 495 marks; 2nd prize, Martha Thiel, 382 marks; 2nd Class: Teacher, Miss A. G. Dawson, 1st prize, Minnie Fock, 468 marks; 2nd prize, Dorris Farmer, 459 marks; 3rd prize, Cissy Elkins, 360 marks; 3rd Class: Miss Huet, Teacher, 1st prize, Emma Fock, 498 marks; 2nd prize, Lily Saunders, 441 marks; 3rd prize, Berrill Fairweather, 398 marks; 4th prize, Flossie Daw and Alice Weel equal, 341 marks; 4th Class: Teacher, Miss Fock, 1st prize, Edith Hatfield, 263 marks; 2nd prize, Tottie Thiel, 256 marks; 3rd prize, Selina Hatfield, 229 marks.

Boys.—1st Class: Teacher, Mr. D. D. Dawson, 1st prize, Frank Langstone, 426 marks; 2nd prize, John Dawson, 418 marks; 2nd Class: Teacher, Mr. A. Weel, 1st prize, Frank Fairweather, 428 marks; 2nd prize, Patrick Doyle, 420 marks; 3rd Class: Teacher, Miss A. Wyer, 1st prize, Fred. White, 464 marks; 2nd prize, Lionel Saunders, 363 marks; 3rd prize, Julius Fock, 330 marks; 4th prize, Charles Elkins, 324 marks.

* * *

⁵ Marks received included marks for Sunday School attendance as well as various examinations.

“FUN”-RAISING

Fund raising events were creative, and provided social times for the townsfolk. The Gazette of August 1902 gave details of a six-week Ping-pong Tournament for ladies and gents, culminating in an evening of ping-pong finals⁶, a program of music and an exhibition of Physical Drill with Arms by a team from “A” Company 5th Regiment Q.D.F.

Prizes included trophies, a silver-mounted match box stand, a racquet, shoes, silver plated whisky flask and scent. The evening had an admission charge of one shilling, with refreshments and sweets available for purchase, and £10 7s was raised towards final payment of the church furnishings debt.

⁶ Ping pong tables were borrowed from the Wesleyan Ping Pong Club for the finals night.

THE DECADE FULFILLED

By 1904, the community of St Lukes had begun to mature. The regular congregation had increased from an average of 7 or 8 to between 20 and 30, and by winter the following year, to 35. Offerings were enough to pay current expenses, including a contribution towards the Assistant Curate's Fund. A lectern had been added to the church, and lamps had been purchased from Mount Morgan, giving sufficient light for services of Evensong to be held at 7:30pm instead of 4:30pm. Holy Communion services continued on Sunday mornings once or twice a month, but the service of Mattins had been discontinued.

1904		Date	Day	Hour	Service	Communi- cants	Officiant	Preacher	Text or Subject
July	17 th	7 th after Trinity	7-30 a	Evensong			J.B.B.	J.B.B.	Heaven
	24	8 th after Trinity	7-30	Holy Communion	7		J.G.		
			7-30	Evensong			G.D.H.		S. Matt. xii. See the light
	31	9 th "	7-30	Evensong			J.B.B.	J.B.B.	
Aug	7	10 th S. of Trinity	7-30	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	"Saved by Hope" Rom.
"	14	11 th "	7-30	Evensong			J.B.B.		
"	21	12 th S. of Trinity	7-30	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	Parable of Pharisee & Publican
"	28	13 th S. of Trinity	7-30 a	Holy Communion	7		J.G.		
			7-30	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	"The greatest of these is charity"
Sept	4	14 th S. after Trinity	7-30	Evensong			G.D.H.		Casting the crown
"	11	15 th "	7-30	Evensong			J.B.B.		
"	18	16 th "	7-30	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	I believe in God
"	25	17 th "	7-30 a	Holy Communion	5		J.G.		
			7-30	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	"The Father"
Oct.	2	18 th "	7-30 p	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	Love for God the first com
"	9	19 th "	7-30 p	Evensong			G.D.H.		I come from Babylon
"	16	20 th "	7-30	Evensong			J.G.	J.G.	"But in Jesus Christ"

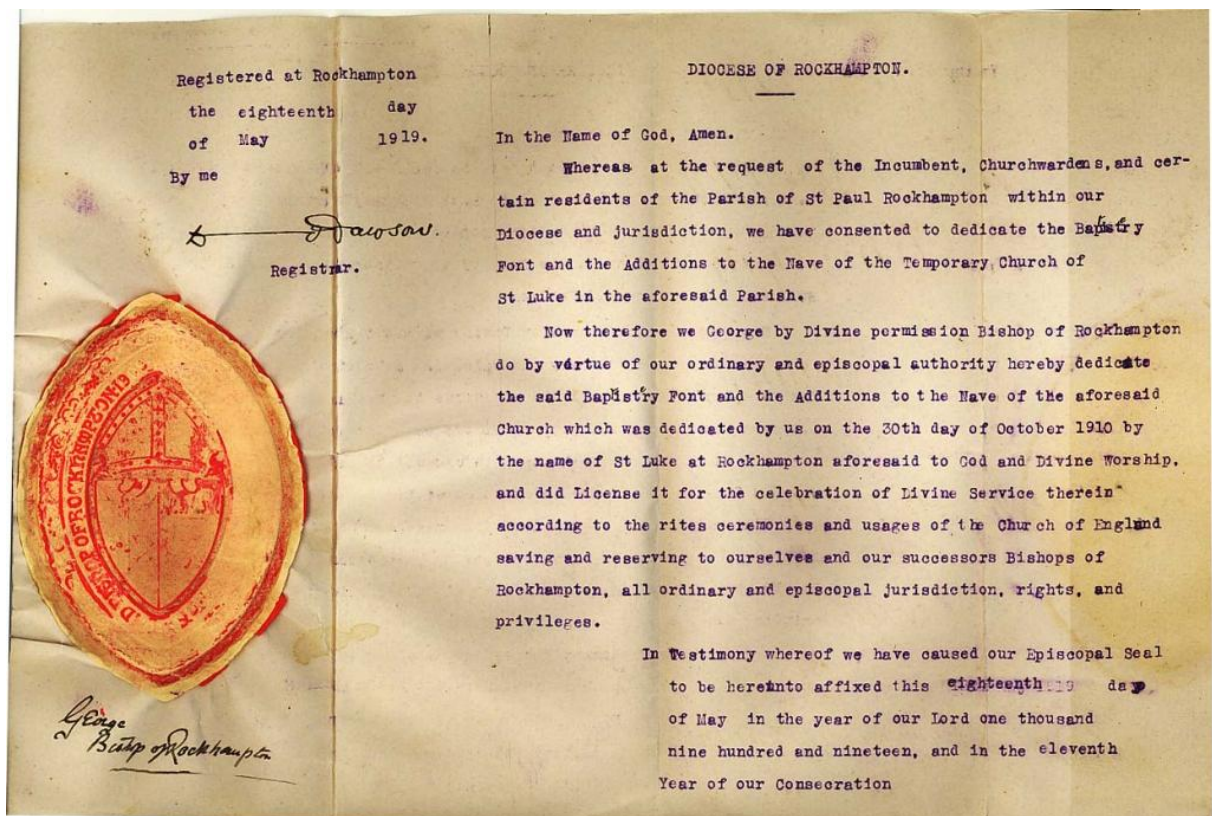
In 1905 the loss of three Sunday School teachers was reported with great regret, with one teacher moving to another part of the town and hence unable to get to St Lukes, and another having significant duties at the hospital. Sunday School continued at 3pm every Sunday, except during December and January. The Sunday School children were contributing each week to the support and education of a child in the "New Guinea Mission", and gave a total of £5 in 1908.

⁷ A section of the Service Register for "St Lukes Provisional District Church", July, August, September & October 1904

In 1906, Wandal Estate was described as a poor district, but the average attendance at Sunday Evensong services, conducted for a period by Lay Readers, was over 30, and offerings finally enabled full payment of the loan for “the survey and transfer of the land on which with Church stands”.

It is interesting to read that in 1906, the General Purposes Committee of the Municipal Council recommended a street lamp be installed at the church corner, but this was rejected by the Gas Company, also thereby dashing the hopes of installation of gas within the Church building to improve its lighting. But although lighting eluded the community for a while, by the end of 1909, the modern era could be said to have begun, with the listing of the parish telephone number in the Gazette: “St Pauls Rectory No.273”.

The scope of this paper concludes with the image below of the Faculty granted by Bishop George Halford for the dedication of “the Baptistry Font and certain additions to the Nave” on 30 October 1910, a fitting end to the decade of establishment of the church, and a tangible connection with the time of writing, 100 years later.



A PEEK AT THE FUTURE

In October 1911, the Cathedral parish took a step into the future by purchasing the “piece of land and parsonage adjoining St Lukes church” for an amount of £1,000.

The Gazette of 1912 records that Clyde Edward Smith had been baptized at St Lukes on January 28th and on January 10th Patrick Scully and Annie Peterson had been married at St Lukes. It is not known whether these were the first such services, or simply the first recorded in the Gazette.

St Lukes remained part of the huge Cathedral parish until Palm Sunday 1925, when it became a separate parish. The first church building detailed in this paper was replaced in 1923 with a larger wooden building, which served as the parish church until 1971. The photograph below, from the early 1930s, shows the second Church building in the centre, the Rectory to the right and Hall to the left.



8

The foundation stone of the current brick building was laid on Saturday 29 August 1970 by Bishop Donald Shearman, and the church was dedicated on Sunday 1 August 1971 by Bishop John Grindrod. It was built next to the second wooden church, which then served as a parish hall until 1993, when it was demolished to make way for the current brick church hall.

⁸ Photograph includes in the left foreground Mr (later the Rev'd) Henry and Mrs Gus Lawrence; supplied by their daughter Yvonne Llewellyn.

APPENDIX: THE WIDER COMMUNITY 1906

Taken from "Snapshot 1906" compiled for The Diocese of Rockhampton
by Canon Janne Whitehead 2006

The population of Australia in 1906 was 4 million, with just over half a million people in the whole of Queensland. One quarter of the state's population lived in Brisbane, over one third of the state's population were involved in primary industry, and others worked in the coal mining industry, at sites including Callide, Clermont, Tambo and Winton. The national unemployment rate was 6.7%. Population figures from the 1911 census for some towns in the Diocese are : Rockhampton 15,451, North Rockhampton 2,683, Gladstone 1,294, Yeppoon 639, Emu Park 534, Springsure (Total District) 4,204, Emerald 909, Capella 317, Clermont 1,164, Rolleston 157, Longreach 2,511.

The average age of the population was 22 years, with children under 15 years making up over one third of the population, and those over 60 yrs comprising one twentieth. Life expectancy was 55 years for males, 58 years for females, with an average of 5 people per household. Infant mortality was high, and the most common cause of death across all ages (one quarter) was infectious diseases. An outbreak of scarlet fever in Winton in 1904 closed the school, and houses under quarantine were required to fly a red flag. Outbreaks of dengue fever in Springsure in 1905 and 1906 affected almost every home and brought the town to almost a standstill. Occasional cases of typhoid fever across the diocese were serious threats to life, and malaria was a continuing problem.

As school attendance was not compulsory, a significant number of children did not go to school, and attendance at high school was considered a great privilege. There were only four universities in the whole of Australia, none in Queensland. Women were given the right to vote in Queensland in 1906, and postal voting was available for the first time. Radio transmission was still not possible.

The seven year "Federation Drought" had just broken, after sheep and cattle numbers had been halved, rivers dried up and the wheat crop of the entire country lost. The government had declared a "Day of Humiliation and Prayer to Almighty God for Rain and Relief of the Present Distress" at the height of the drought in 1902.

Federation was quite recent, and England was still spoken and written of as “home” and “the Old Country”. Public holidays included Empire Day in May, The Victoria Day in June and the King’s birthday in November each year, and were often taken by arrangement with local traders, rather than on a set day. Sunday School “pic-nics” were normally held on these holidays.

Although state aid to religious institutions and denominational schools had long since been abolished, there were strong links between the State and the Church, with children given leave from school to attend church services during the day on Ascension Day (Thursday). When the new Governor of Queensland, Lord Chelmsford arrived from England, a letter of welcome and blessing was immediately sent from the Diocese, and the Governor replied with a donation of £7 to the Diocese.

The Bureau of Statistics states that £1 at the beginning of the twentieth century is approximately equivalent to \$100 at the beginning of the twenty-first century. At the time of Federation, the average adult weekly wage was £2 for a 50 hour working work.

Basic household costs included a loaf of bread for 2 ½ pence, one dozen eggs for 1 shilling, rump steak 6 pence a pound, a pint of milk for 1 penny, a pound of potatoes cost a halfpenny, a pound of butter 1/3d, one pound of flour was 1 penny, a pound of sugar 5 pence, a pound of bacon 1 shilling, a newspaper a halfpenny, a man’s cotton business shirt 8 shillings, a pair of ladies shoes cost 14 shillings, and a new bicycle £15. Within the church, £50 was considered a large debt and £25 a generous donation.