WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

25 YEARS ON
7-12-1970 - 7-12-1995
With the assistance of all those who have contributed articles, I have endeavoured to present an anecdotal history of the first twenty-five years of the Westminster Presbyterian Church as remembered by those involved and in their own words. For this reason there has been very little done in the way of editing and remembrances and opinions are those of the contributors, not the editor.

I wish to thank all who have contributed, and my special thanks to John Hondema who painstakingly put together the initial draft for printing and then prepared this final copy. Without his assistance it is unlikely that this idea of mine would have reached fruition.

Mark Mayhill, editor
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25 YEARS ON. 7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995
The following is an abridged report by W.A. Mahlow to W.P.M. dated 12-1-1964.
(For historical accuracy, this report, although edited, has been left as far as possible in the original wording and spelling.)

One is impressed, on arrival in Australia, with the general tone of material progress and orderliness. Many of the material blessings enjoyed in America are here, but without the overcrowding or extensive slum and backward areas found in the U.S. cities.

We were met at the Perth Airport by Miss Mary G. Jones, a dedicated, independent Presbyterian missionary working among the natives, her brother-in-law who is a loyal Presbyterian elder, and a Mr. Andrew Priddle. Mr. Priddle had been an elder preparing for the Presbyterian ministry. However, he took a courageous stand in opposing liberalism in the Australian Presbyterian Sunday school literature in his presbytery. His reward for this was his removal from the list of candidates for the ministry. He is now teaching in a teachers college.

First, as to the mission work in Perth: It centres in several towns within a hundred miles radius of Perth, at Brookton, Pingelly and other places. Miss Jones’ father had been a faithful Presbyterian pastor in Perth; he went to be with the Lord about ten years ago. His faithful preaching was a real inspiration to his family. Miss Jones has worked in various capacities with the semi-aboriginals in the Government Rehabilitation Program, as a missionary of the Presbyterian Board, and more recently independently.

These half-caste natives, many showing characteristics of the aboriginals, have at various periods been horribly neglected by the Government. They were put on reservations and on the dole, being uprooted from any tribal life and not being Christians or accepted by the whites, they have no roots and no ambition. The children are often bright and responsive until they reach an age when they realize there is no future for them. Then they become indolent and careless; drunkenness, immorality and poverty are rife among them.

More recently the Government has provided them with improved housing and ablution centers, but many still live in huts made of old tin and grass. There is some social service work among them and they are now recognized as citizens by law. However, the only benefit from this seems to be that they are allowed to go into a bar and get drunk with the white man. Some have risen above their environment and background to obtain good jobs and purchase decent housing; there are a few faithful native preachers among them, mostly Baptists.

These are needy people, and if they are not reached for Christ, they will one day present a problem to Australia as great as or greater than the American negro does to us.

Miss Jones’ work among these people is unique for the following reasons:

1. Its basis is spiritual and many have been saved and transformed. There is an Easter Convention each year attended by at least 500 for a week’s Bible Conference.

2. In each town where Miss Jones works the believers and inquirers have been encouraged to meet as a church for worship and study.

3. Kindergartens are held in several places three days a week; second-hand clothing is made available at nominal cost, and natives are encouraged to do artistic work, for which they are gifted, for sale. Also, their diet is at times supplemented with fruit and other foods.
Miss Jones loves these people. She lives in a little house near them which is reminiscent of a rundown summer cabin in the woods, and she is greatly loved and respectfully feared by them. One man in his 20's told me he still shakes in his boots when Miss Jones comes around, especially if he has done anything wrong.

I preached to the aboriginals at Brookton three times and at Pingelly once and at Perth once. Had an evangelistic service at Brookton when several indicated they were accepting Christ. One woman and her children had come to Brookton because she wanted for her family what her Christian relatives had received there. On Sunday I examined two fine young families from Brookton and found them trophies of grace, and so I baptized them and their children. Some sixty were in the service and we had the Lord's table together.

Miss Jones now has limited strength left, though she is only 59. She had about six centers of work; three she had to turn over to the Christian Reformed Church, who have a missionary there at present. But Miss Jones is Presbyterian - and Evangelical Presbyterian at heart - and strongly desires to turn over the last properties to WPM in the remaining centers, and she wishes us to send a missionary or to sponsor an Australian missionary if one can be found who meets our qualifications. Miss Jones lives very frugally; her income consists of small gifts from friends, a small subsidy from the Government for each child in kindergarten, and also some income from the sale of second-hand clothing. When visiting Perth, she lives with a spinster sister who is also a fine Christian. The emphasis on the separated life, a pure church, and Presbyterian standards which we have, appeals to her.

My other activities in the Perth area had to do with the Australian Presbyterian Church. We have mentioned Mr. Priddle's and also Miss Jones' connection with this church. There was also the Rev. Jack Hutchinson, a strong evangelical pastor in his personal beliefs, who had been a missionary to the New Hebrides but had left the islands because of a severe conflict with the liberal missionaries there. I attended his installation service at a church he has built up, but which is in the Presbyterian denomination. The messages of the men from Presbytery could have been preached in any kind of a meeting - modernist, neo-orthodox or evangelical.

My first contact, however, with the Presbyterian Church was a meeting the first day I was in Perth with the Moderator of the Assembly and his committee. I had been scheduled to meet with the entire Assembly, but they had been meeting earlier in the week and I was not there in time. So I met with about twelve or so ministers and was given fifteen minutes to tell them something about the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and to give my testimony. Outside of those who had gotten me the invitation, there was little sympathy on the part of those who listened, but I was received very graciously. The evangelicals thought, and I believe rightly so, that we should do things openly and the officials should know just why I was there. The next night at a public meeting some thirty came to hear the Scriptural basis for the E.P. Church, the history and origin of our Church, and the situation on the fields I had visited. There seems to be here in Perth a definite, genuine interest on the part of a minority in a church like the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, but with many the attitude is, "It just couldn't happen here." Mr. Hutchinson chaired the public meeting and he is very clear in acknowledging the inspiration of the Scriptures as the main point of battle between the modernists and the fundamentalists. However, an impending union of the Australian Presbyterian Church with other denominations may bring things to a head. But one wonders whether there are enough evangelicals to make much of a stand.

I found the few evangelicals I met certainly appreciative of my coming and very much in need of encouragement and help.

Recommendations:

As to recommendations, we could at least consider the following:

1. The possibility of sending a missionary for the native work in West Australia and of accepting the property that Miss Jones wishes to give us, possibly having some sort
of a group such as a holding organisation made up of a few evangelicals in Australia.

2. Also, I believe that we should encourage some of the young people to come to the

Nearly thirty years have passed, and the memories are fading with time and age. But there are some things I do remember of those early days and how they impacted on my life.

In 1962 I spent six months in the Holy Land (Jordan) doing archaeological studies while a student at Covenant Theological Seminary. I became burdened by the spiritual needs of the Arab people. Sitting in a coffee shop on the beach at Aqaba listening to a WPM missionary speak of his work, the Lord began to touch my heart for missions. Little did I realise that three and a half years later I would take his place in bringing the Gospel to Aqaba. I left for Jordan in October 1966. I remember telling friends and supporters that the Lord was calling me to the Arab world for the rest of my life. I really wanted it to be so.

Within a month, I received a few shocks that forced me to think again about God’s plan. My immediate predecessor had been forced from Jordan due in part to visa difficulties. I found that missionary strife had badly harmed the testimony of WPM in the country, and as a result I would not be sponsored for a visa to stay. I had to leave the country every few months to keep my temporary visa active. In April 1967 I contracted typhoid fever, and while recovering, the Six Day War occurred. With a large group of missionaries I was evacuated to the American Embassy in Iran. Needless to say, I was very confused, but I was now convinced that the Lord had clearly closed the door to the Middle East Missions.

What was next in my life? I was beginning to learn some lessons in the Lord’s providence and guidance.

Upon returning to the Mission office, General Secretary, Bill Mahlow, said in effect, "Warren, the Board is sorry that the Lord has closed the door to the Arabs, now we want you to work with a stalwart lady who ministers to Aborigines in Western Australia... but only for six months.” My immediate reaction was, what do I know about Aborigines?... and Australia! Its hot there and “down under”, what ever that means. I declined the invitation. I wanted to return to the pastorate in the US.

However, WPM was not going to be put off and persisted in asking me several times. I was troubled by the continuing requests and sought a fellow minister for counsel. He answered that he tried to seek advice from members of presbytery when he was seeking the Lord’s guidance. That helped me, my Presbytery at this time was the Board and it was giving me direction. Now I was on my way to a place I knew next to nothing about. Oh, I did happen to see an out of date blurry old documentary on Aboriginal people in the outback which only deepened my confusion. I was certainly not well prepared for my new assignment.

In September 1967, in utmost ignorance, and with the borrowed cardboard suitcase that I used to evacuate Jordan, I flew off to assist...
the Brookton Mission. My assignment included helping Miss Mary Jones, preaching and teaching, strengthening the newly formed committee of the Evangelical Presbyterian Mission, helping to identify and train leaders in the Brookton church, and encouraging those in Australia and New Zealand who were increasingly concerned about liberalism in the mainline Presbyterian churches. Quite a broad brief for just six months!

I was met in Sydney, NSW, by the Rev. Grahame Kerr, pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Sutherland. Grahame was deeply concerned about the control of his denomination by the liberals and modernists who challenged the authority of Scripture and the heart of Christian doctrine. At this time a seminary principal in Dunedin, NZ, Professor Lloyd Geering, was loudly and articulately denying the basic doctrines of Biblical Christianity. He gained worldwide attention and would shortly face a heresy trial in the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, where the evangelicals would lose. The Sutherland congregation had supported and sent Miss Norma Henderson to work with Miss Jones. I was most impressed by Norma’s godliness and giftedness as a missionary.

Joyce Priddle met me at the airport and took me straight to Kings Park to introduce me to Perth. What an introduction! Andrew and Joyce were gracious in their hospitality; there was always a place to stay when I went to Perth, with late night discussions about the state of the church.

I still remember my arrival in Brookton. It was very cold. I never imagined that Australia would be cold. Mrs. Bennell brought over some chicken and damper. I met Cath Yarran and loved her open smile and beautiful friendly face. I met Dick Reidy and his sons.

Miss Jones was everything that I had been hearing about. In her strong craggy face, I could see commitment, perseverance, genuine courage, sacrifice, a terrific sense of humour, and great eccentricity. That evening in front of the fire in her mud brick home, she shared her love for the people of Brookton. Her fearless-
to New Zealand at the invitation of the International Council of Christian Churches to protest the clearing of Professor Geering and the problems of doctrinal compromise. He asked me to join him. Grahame was a dramatic man in manner and speaking style, and he poured his heart out telling people in key cities in both islands that they should take a stand and leave liberalism. Along the way, I was saying, “And what are you and the folks in Sutherland going to do, Grahame?” He determined to return to Sydney and urge his congregation to take a stand for Christ and sound doctrine by leaving the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales. A few weeks later, the people decided to do this and so was formed the first congregation of the Presbyterian Reformed Church.

After two weeks of visiting churches and speaking in meetings, Grahame Kerr left for home. I was encouraged to stay on in New Zealand and contacted Robert Wardlaw, the leader of the Presbyterian laymen who had brought charges against Professor Geering. Bob invited me to tea and then to the meeting of Presbytery where the liberals told the evangelicals that they had lost and now had to accept the reality of their church. A small dispirited group of laymen went to a coffee shop to discuss the meeting. The Rev. G.I. Williamson from the Reformed Church advised them to do something. He urged them to form a separate group, meet for Bible study, and seek the Lord’s will for the future. He then suggested that I was available and could lead the study. I agreed, not really knowing what that would mean.

The next morning I turned on the national news to hear the announcement of our first church service and where it would be. Wow, that was fast! Bob Wardlaw was in advertising. Two days later, my picture was on the front page of the Auckland paper, and on Sunday 150 people attended the first service from all across the country. It was televised and on the news, even across the USA. Right away these people pledged ten percent of offerings for missions and started a mid-week service. Quickly, a leadership group was formed and within three months a solid core of sixty people took on the support of a full time pastor, a young man from the PRC in Sutherland.

I was then asked to move across the country to Napier to help organise a small group of concerned folks there. After a few weeks I received news of problems at Brookton and Norma Henderson’s serious car accident. I felt that I should go back to Brookton, but was disappointed to leave NZ.

Brookton was a sad and tense place when I returned. Norma was recovering from her accident and would soon return to Sydney. After a while, I, too, found it difficult to remain in Brookton and accomplish what WPM sent me to do. In May 1968 I started on my journey back to America.

Did you notice the title of this article? Questionable Advice. Well, when I got back to WPM I gave my report and advice: Mary Jones was a godly and very effective missionary who works best alone. WPM would be well advised to withdraw from its involvement in Brookton. The Board heard me politely and ignored my suggestions.

Perhaps, if they had listened to my advice, there would have been no Dave Cross in Perth and no Westminster Presbyterian Church today. Questionable advice? Probably.

I am glad that my advice was not heeded. I have learned some good lesson about God’s sovereign will and plan for me, my family, and our church. I am glad that He has His own plans for us, plans for His glory and our good. (Jeremiah 29:11)
About two years before David and Barbara Cross arrived in WA, a small Committee of Presbyterians was formed by Miss Jones to assist her in her work at Brookton and surrounding towns until Missionaries from the USA arrived to take over. This committee consisted of Miss Jones' brother-in-law, Bon Johnston, Andrew Priddle, Jack Higgins, myself and one or two others, and spent many Saturdays at Brookton on busy-bee work and meetings to discuss the work being done. Miss Jones did have assistance from time to time, including a fine girl from Sydney for a period.

There was much correspondence to and from the US Presbyterian Board and we had a visit from the Rev. William Mahlow, followed by one from Rev. John Cannon, which resulted in us being advised that a young couple from Columbia College, South Carolina wanted to come on completion of their studies.

After what seemed a very long time we were able to welcome David and Barbara Cross, together with their two young daughters, Shannon (about 5) and Shelley (about 2), at the Perth Airport on a very hot day in 1970 and initially they went to Miss Jones' sister's home in Wembley, and as both girls had been sick on the flight, Barbara took them to Lachlan Dunjey.

I remember that in 1970 a Church of Christ friend, Mr. Park, gave us his old house in Wembley and it was cut in half and transported to Brookton by Len Ravenscroft and re-assembled to become home for David and his family. It must have been a very discouraging sight to Barbara to see these sections of an old timber house that was to be her home. It was an awful mess but a lot of hard work transformed it into a liveable home, warmed in the winter by a heater which David bought.

David and Barbara put their hearts and souls into the work in Brookton and the surrounding districts, however, after a period they felt called to Perth to establish a fellowship that would support the work at Brookton and so relieve the Mission Board in America.

The fellowship was started with a nucleus of Presbyterians, including Andrew & Joyce Priddle, Mr. & Mrs. Slater and others, eventually becoming the first Westminster Presbyterian Church at Caversham Hall. As I was fully involved in the Belmont Mission Church at that time, I was not free to join them and was too far away to join the fellowship but we were pleased to continue to fellowship with these good folk and it was a real privilege to attend the Bible Studies that David took. As in most things, David was a very capable Bible Teacher and Preacher, and, as he discovered, God had endowed him with the ability to be a successful Church Planter. I have very happy memories of those Bible Studies at Andrew and Joyce Priddle's home.

Later, Warren Myers was called to take over the work which became the Maida Vale Church, and he was followed later still by Larry Billiter who came to assist David in Duncraig in the fellowship that David had started there and which was to become the now Kingsley Church. It was a great pleasure for me to help David and Barbara in distributing leaflets in the Duncraig area with Doug and Miriam Vickers, and later in the Bull Creek area. It is great to see that all these churches now have their own buildings in which to meet.

The Brookton Committee was now no longer needed, but it had been an interesting body and I have many memories of this time. I remember the many Aboriginal people at the Brookton...
Church Services; the barbecues on Saturday nights; the working bees; the night I fell asleep for a few moments while driving home one Saturday night, awakened by the Lord’s mercy in time to avoid hitting a big log; and the Lord’s providence in keeping David and Barbara safe as they travelled many thousands of miles along the country roads between Brookton, Beverley and Quairading.

Although not joining a Westminster Presbyterian Church, I have been so glad to see the work grow from the Brookton Mission to the flourishing denomination it is now.

To God be the Praise.

THANK YOU!

by Andrew Priddle

As one who has been associated with W.P.C. from the beginning I want to record my gratitude, first of all, to the denominations in the U.S.A. which, since 1970, have provided church planters and other workers to help us. Though we are not an “American Church” (contrary to what some of our critics have said and some friends thought), in human terms we owe our existence to the generosity of Christians in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Presbyterian Church in America, into which the RPCES entered.

Secondly, I want to record my gratitude to those who have come to Australia with their families to work, in response to appeals from W.P.C., and in particular I want to record my thanks to David and Barbara Cross who arrived here in the summer of 1970. Making special mention of David and Barbara does not imply I am any less thankful to the other U.S. pastors and their wives and families who have poured so much of their time and energy into W.P.C., (and there are several still doing this). But the Crosses were the first!

They had much to contend with — summer heat, hordes of flies, the Australian language, strange Australians, distance from home and much uncertainty about the work here. Their labour began in Brookton, then extended to the metropolitan area, but the creation of a new denomination was not on the agenda. Indeed, such a project was contrary to the wishes of the American Mission Board whose director desired that every new congregation should try to link up with an existing Australian church. David Cross and Australian elders tried to follow such a policy but as the work grew various factors led to the formation of W.P.C. as a denomination.

That growth occurred was, under God, largely because of the faith, convictions, foresight, wisdom and perseverance of David Cross and the wholehearted support given him by Barbara, who also gave unstintingly of herself to women’s and children’s ministries.

Their Christian love and concern for the people they served, both the Aboriginal folk of Brookton and the wider community in the metropolitan area, earned them the love and respect of many people, and contributed a special element to the ethos of W.P.C.
IN THE BEGINNING

Andrew Priddle, WPC Kelmscott.

Seeing that I have been with WPC from the beginning I’ve been asked to write about some of the things which come to mind about the denomination’s early years, and the present. What follows will not be a connected story but a series of reminiscences.

A determined missionary.

For some years before David and Barbara Cross arrived in W.A. from the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, in the U.S.A., Miss Mary Jones an independent missionary labouring amongst Aboriginal people in Brookton and other centres, wrote repeatedly to the American church, asking it to enter the work in which she was engaged. After a couple of fact-finding visits from the U.S.A in the mid-’60s, and more years of correspondence, David and Barbara reached Perth, and then Brookton, in January 1970. That was the beginning of the American input to WPC - though the denomination did not then exist.

Some hopeful Presbyterians.

Over the period in which Miss Jones was writing to the U.S. church a few W.A. Presbyterians, concerned about the drift from biblical doctrine in the Presbyterian Church of Australia at that time, and unable to do anything constructive about it, hoped for the development of evangelical Presbyterian churches. Their aspirations linked them with Miss Jones and with the Crosses, and before the end of 1970 David Cross had begun at Caversham the first of what were to be WPC congregations, while maintaining regular contact also with Brookton.

Small things.

On Sunday mornings, approaching the hall where the services were held was accompanied by a mixture of apprehension and hope. Three cars outside last week: would there be four this Sunday, or only two? Would the congregation number six, nine or five? It was difficult not to feel pessimistic when one family’s absence meant that a third of the congregation was missing. But gradually numbers increased.

Sunday School by convoy.

There was a housing area a few kilometres from the Caversham Hall. A small procession of cars would collect children for Sunday School, take them to the hall or to a home, then return them to their homes after the hour’s meeting. Parents were glad enough to send their children but almost all were unwilling to attend church.

Teenagers.

It was particularly difficult for this age group. Most persisted, however, and the disadvantage of low numbers did not stop a good percentage continuing within the growing church and occupying responsible positions in today’s larger church.

Portable problems.

If any of the early members had thought that by starting or moving into a new church they would leave problems behind they soon learnt otherwise. Some problems (e.g. criticism of the Bible by church officers) were left behind, but quirky personalities, critical attitudes, inability to get on with others, divergent views, harsh judgments, intolerance, were, sadly, easily transported into the new situation. There was much interpersonal conflict - just as in the New Testament - and some over-zealous elders.

Benefits.


25 YEARS ON.  7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995
A denomination which, though small, has a vision for evangelistic outreach.

**Dangers to avoid.**

Complacency. Failure to guard the church’s preaching and teaching. Superficial goals. Dis-honouring the Lord’s Day, for example, by neglecting the evening service. Confusing social enjoyment with spiritual development. Failing to seek God’s will through His Word and through prayer. Forgetting that the name “WPC” is no guarantee against spiritual laziness and a lack of discernment. Ignoring the deceitfulness of sin. These are the things to avoid if WPC is to go forward in the work of Christ.

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**A CHURCH IS BORN**

**BY**

Jack Higgins, WPC Kelmscott.

Would I like to write a brief account of some of my early experiences with WPC the man asked. Where do you start? I could write pages. Maybe we will start at the beginning.

*It has been my privilege to have been part of a few WPC “firsts.”*

Vera and I were living and working at Brookton when David and Barbara Cross first came to Australia.

*We had developed some strong friendships with the Aboriginal folk in the area, particularly those connected with the Mission church. It was not that we had any altruistic aims - they were just good people to be friendly with. Then we also had met up with Miss Mary Jones and became active supporters of her work. She was a wonderful lady who left her mark indelibly imprinted on the whole Brookton community - a bit of a warrior, but a real servant of Christ. The effect of changed hearts and lives on Aboriginal people stood out quite clearly. The local policeman (a real character in his own right) once asked how it was that people were giving up drink and gambling and going to church!*

Dick Reidy, Roy Blurton and Conway Yarran were our regular shearers on the farm, and on Saturdays in the winter time they and many others from the church played in the local football competition (they made me goal umpire for one of the teams, since I did not know too much about Aussie Rules football). There were picture shows in the local hall, and of course the Easter Conventions which drew crowds from all over the state. Quite a wide range of contacts in all, with Miss Jones and the church the hub. Many wonderful friendships were established which hold to this day, although a number of the dear folks from that time have departed from this life and are now with the Lord.

*In 1965 or thereabouts Miss Jones set up the Evangelical Presbyterian Mission Board, and invited me to be a member. She was wishing to retire, and having no confidence in the Presbyterian Church in Australia at that time, made contact with World Presbyterian Missions (WPM) in the U.S. Subsequent dealings with the likes of Rev Dan Cannon and Rev Bill Mahlow resulted in a young mission couple, David and Barbara Cross (and their two little girls) coming to work at Brookton in 1970.*

We had some great times with David and Barbara visiting us on the farm, and a lasting friendship was established. There was some subsequent sadness when the Crosses found that they were not able to work amicably with Miss Jones, and moved to Perth. However it was out of this historical event that Westminster Presbyterian Church came into being.
Then came Bull Creek.

One rural recession and several years later we found ourselves living on a property at North Dandalup, and exploring with Warren Myers and David Cross the possibility of planting a new church in the Pinjarra-Manurah region. We held a few meetings, but nothing eventuated. Then David asked us whether we would help him by being a seed family for planting a new church at Bull Creek.

So there we were, joining those intrepid souls who met in the Bull Creek Primary School for the first service in February 1976.

Bull Creek was a model in church planting and a success from the beginning. Combine a good location with a bright and hard working husband and wife team, together with a good mix of seed families, and you have a formula for success. God must have been on our side too. So much so that within four years Bull Creek became the first WPC congregation to have its own building. We had spent some time in negotiations with the Department of Lands and Surveys to obtain a grant of land (to be held in trust for the purpose of “Church Site”), subject to the payment of a survey fee of $9.50 – surely a miracle. It was tremendously exciting for a congregation of 70 or so people (about 40 members), unknown to the authorities, with no central structure to guarantee loans, to have a building in such a prime location. The whole Bull Creek development helped a great deal in raising the community profile of WPC in general.

Another First.

This brings us to another first. It was decided that a group of us would leave Bull Creek and try to plant a new church in Kelmscott. Thus the process was repeated. A somewhat apprehensive gathering of seed families meeting with Peter and Jenny Adamson for the first service of the Kelmscott congregation in the Kelmscott Senior High School in February 1980.

Kelmscott was the first church to be planted using an Australian pastor, with Peter Adamson working part time for the first couple of years. Growth at Kelmscott has been slower, and in some ways a hard slog. However, we give thanks to the Lord that we now have a congregation of wonderful, caring people who are seeking to be the body of Christ, meeting week by week in our own building.

Some reflections.

Some general reflections. It has been a privilege to have been involved in the formative years of WPC, and the church is now well established as a denomination in Australia. There has been some bumping and bruising along the way, and not all of those who came to us have stayed. But we are on the map. I pay tribute to the many wonderful people with whom I have been associated over the years, and who have worked so faithfully in building up the church. This includes our leaders, but more particularly those who have been the quiet, unobtrusive and unheralded contributors.

However, I do have some concerns. We lack strong traditions and a sense of direction. There is evidence that we are allowing ourselves to become institutionalised, comfortable and self indulgent. The marked metamorphosis that has taken place in the Australian community in these last 25 years means that we need to be constantly reviewing our stance.

Whether we can rise above being just another of the eight or nine Presbyterian and Reformed churches already operating in Australia will depend on whether we have a clear vision for the future, and whether we can relate this vision to the changing face of this land. I pray that we may capture some of the singleness of purpose of Miss Jones, and become, like her, warriors for Christ. I pray also that we can be a tolerant community where age and experience are allowed to blend with youthfulness and vigour to produce a church which reflects the true mind of Christ in all its endeavours.
WEST AUSTRALIA

Chief Involvements are evangelism and church planting among Aborigines in West Australia, training of Noongars as leaders for the church, encouragement of white Australian Christians troubled by modernism in their church.

Thanks for the David Crosses’ arrival in early 1970, results in their work with teaching Noongar leaders for eldership and serving in several places surrounding Brookton, for interest among people in Perth in Bible study.

Needs: Australian and other personnel to expand the activity in areas now occupied and to continue the work of Miss Jones who wishes to retire from Brookton in June. Missionary leadership for pressing forward in Perth, and wisdom concerning deployment of missionary personnel. Pray for the establishment of a truly evangelical Presbyterian Church and for men qualified for the eldership; for continued contact with dissatisfied people in the liberal church and faithfulness in the Bible study groups now being held; for a well-grounded, growing church among Noongars in the Reserve areas.

The Culture: The Aborigine roamed Australia, living by his skill as a hunter long before white colonization. For many years he was hunted like a kangaroo and treated like just another strange, wild creature. Only recently has the Government allowed him a legal place in society with the right of citizenship. Today the Aborigine and semi-Aborigine are caught between the old ways and a modern world.

The Geography: West Australia is a mixture of desert, timberlands, wheat fields, sheep pastures, and modern cities. The reserves for Aborigines are scattered throughout the area, with arrangements for semi-Aborigines to move out of the reserve into town and city housing as they progress.

A Brief History of the
Maida Vale W.P.C. Church

by
Clem White
(dated 4-12-1983)

In January 1970, in response to an appeal by Miss Mary Jones, an independent missionary who worked amongst the Aboriginal people for many years, the Rev. David Cross and Mrs. Cross were sent out by the World Presbyterian Missions, U.S.A. to work at Brookton.

Much to their regret things did not work out there as they had hoped, however, as one door closed, another opened. On moving to Perth the Crosses, strongly supported by Andrew and Joyce Priddle and Geoff Fraser met at the home of Frank and Dorothy Slater, and on November 24th 1970, after much prayer and discussion decided to centre their Ministry in the Perth
Metropolitan area while still supporting the work at Brookton.

The first Church Service was held at Caversham Hall on 6th December 1970. There were just three families attended, the Crosses, Slatters and Priddes for the first several months. Early in 1971 they were joined by Merv Jecks and his young family and later, in June, by the Winterfloods and the Shaws. The Westmacottts joined through the mid week Bible Study fellowship group.

With the addition of a few more families including the Whites, in January 1972, it was felt that the time had come to form a properly constituted Church. The name Westminster Presbyterian Church was chosen because we hold to the doctrines as set out in the Westminster Confession of Faith and we are Presbyterian in our form of government.

Before the Crosses went on furlough in 1973, elders Andrew Priddle, Paul Winterflood and Clem White were elected and ordained. The Rev. Warren Myers was called as our first Pastor and was fully supported by the small but zealous church. Warren commenced his ministry in September 1973.

It was during this time that we moved from Caversham Hall to Koongemia Hall, mainly because of the increasing number of church families who lived in the foothills. Consideration was then given to the need for our own building and a building fund was commenced. Another happy occasion was the marriage of our pianist, Jan Radburn, to our pastor. Sunday School and Youth work was started at Caversham and continued at Swan View, and a Senior Youth group was welcomed at the White’s home every Friday until we moved into our own building. Sunday evening Services have also continued since the first one in 1970.

The Westmacottts, who lived near the Hall, kindly opened their home for use as a creche, and a regular mid-weekly Bible study was held in the Priddle’s home. A ladies fellowship was started by Barbara Cross and has met regularly bi-weekly since.

In August 1977 Warren Myers resigned and returned to America, and Derek Jones, who at this time was an elder and assisting in the Duncraig and Brookton ministries, accepted our call to the vacant pastorate.

In October 1978 it was decided to step out in faith and look more actively for a site suitable for a building. In September 1979 the present piece of land was discussed, and purchased in early 1980. Faith in God’s leading was justified when adequate finance became available. As it became obvious that we would be relocating to Maida Vale, permission was sought and granted to hold our services in the local primary school commencing in April 1980.

During this period Roger Wilson served as an intern minister with us, his main responsibilities being in the Brookton Church which was being cared for by our Session. He was also a great help to the Building Committee as plans were drawn up and executed.

Building was commenced early in spring 1982 and completed in time to hold the first Service at Christmas of that year. Since then numerous people have been added to our number and God has been pleased to bless us in many ways.

25 YEARS ON. 7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995
An undated letter from David Cross to the Caversham Congregation regarding the problems associated with the numerical growth of the church. The start of a properly constituted church is inevitable. The first steps are to be taken now. But the Brookton work has to continue too!

88 SCANLON WAY, LOCKRIDGE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6054

Dear Members and Friends of Westminster,

There is an old fable about a man, a boy, and a donkey who were travelling down the road. As they went along one bystander said the boy should ride the donkey, another that the man should ride, etc. The man tried to do everything that was suggested to him. In the end he pleased no one and only made himself miserable.

Over the past year and a half it has been helpful to ask the opinions of people in the Church on every issue. This was practical while we were very small but with growing size the situation is becoming difficult to handle in this manner. Proper biblical structure calls for the Church to be governed by Elders. We have been trying to work on the basis of using all the men who were studying with me as “Acting Elders” but the feeling of each man is that he has no real authority and hence a tendency to not make decisions. We have put off electing Elders until we study the Westminster Confession of Faith more fully. This idea too has its merits but it means that the necessary business of the church often gets bogged down in congregational meetings which should properly be handled by the Session.

Therefore, I am suggesting that the Church recognize that we have among our members two men who because of their years of study, understand the Reformed Faith and the Westminster Confession of Faith to a large degree, and that the congregation appoint these men viz. Andrew Priddle and Paul Winterflood, to work as Elders giving them all the honour and authority due to that office. The final election of Elders and Deacons may be deferred until we have made a more thorough study of the Westminster Confession and resolve the questions relating to the possible union with the PRC. Returning to the lesson of the fable again you all can appreciate the division I feel over the involvement with Brookton as well as Westminster. It may help us to remember that I am under the direction of World Presbyterian Missions and its West Australian mission, EPM. My responsibility, as the only ordained teaching elder in the mission, is for the whole work of EPM. We often slip into thinking of EPM as responsible for Brookton and Westminster as entirely separate. It would be more correct to think of EPM as responsible for the establishment of both Brookton and Westminster until they are fully organized and functioning on their own. If we think this way the following decision will make more sense.

I have decided to divide my time for the remaining time from now until Christmas between Perth and Brookton. The schedule will be shown on enclosed sheet.

Paul Winterflood has agreed to lead the Sunday evening Bible Study and I will take the Adult program on Sunday morning.

I trust that these decisions and suggestions will be met with your understanding for the pressures of the present time and the needs of the moment. Most of all I beg your prayers as we launch the heaviest program we have yet undertaken.

In Christian love

Sincerely,

David L. Cross
MARY JONES
THE SMALL WOMAN OF BROOKTON
by
Janet Johnston

I thank you for your invitation to be included in this magazine as the sister of Mary Jones.

Mary was known to a group of workers as the “small woman of Brookton” because of her likeness to Gladys Aylward of China. Thus I have titled this.

It is unfortunate that David and Barbara Cross in their memories of their involvement of the Church at Brookton did not give more recognition of the foundation work in that locality of Mary Jones.

It seems to me that the light hearted accounts of some incidents which involved Mary portrayed her in a way which ignored the many years of service for her Lord to our aboriginal brethren. This work she carried out in very frugal circumstances and with very limited resources. Hers was truly a faith mission.

From the age of eight she decided to be a missionary and at eighteen she left a position of secretary to go in to the faith mission where she worked, loved and served the aboriginals until her home call at the age of seventy.

Her funeral service planned to be aboriginal was most impressive with Karrakatta crowded with beautiful, loving black faces.

Mary had a tremendous spirit given to her by God, whom she served devotedly. She lived for her Lord and the aboriginals - was loved and respected through the Southern parts of W.A. in particular. I am proud to be her sister.

One ponders that had it not been for Mary Jones would there be Westminster Presbyterian Church today?

I Remember Brookton...

By Rev. David L. Cross

It was the first of February 1970 when I first drove over the top of the hill on the Brookton Highway and made that long descent into the town.

Housing had been arranged for us a couple of years earlier, but when we were delayed in coming the house had been rented out to one of the families from the church, so we moved into Miss Jones’ house and she stayed with a neighbour while we waited for a house to be jinkered from Perth to Brookton. The house arrived three weeks later, but was missing the roof, toilet, laundry room and kitchen. All had to be built on. It was the 8th of May before the house was fully functional.

In the meantime we got involved with the work. Sunday mornings I preached at Brookton while Miss Jones went to preach at Pingelly. After lunch there was Sunday School at Brookton, then a drive to Beverley for a Sunday School on the Reserve (if anyone showed up). After that we drove to Quairading and held Sunday School with a crowd of children who were gathered.
by Kathy and Conway Yarran with help from some of the Quairading folk. I remember watching a tiny Morris Minor disgorging streams of children like some clown car at the circus. After a picnic tea we had a preaching service at the old Methodist church building before we drove home for the night.

During the week there were Bible Studies and prayer meetings to be conducted in Pingelly, Quairading and Brookton, as well as hospital calls in Pingelly, Beverley, and Quairading.

Once the business of getting into our own house was settled we could take on some new things. One of the goals from the start was to get the church properly organised, and it was not long until I started meeting with the men in hopes of training elders for the church. We also started a youth club on Saturday nights in our home.

I worked with the men of the church on a project of installing a ceiling. When we arrived the building had been open to the galvanised iron sheeting. I remember one time when a heavy rain storm passed over during a service I had to stop preaching for a couple of minutes because the noise was so loud.

Several programs were interrupted by the decision to move to Perth. There were many Noon-gar people who had moved to the city during that period of rural recession. We intended to work with certain groups of them. That never happened because of some very clever opposition, but the move changed the nature of my relationship with Brookton.

For the next three years, with the brief interlude when Archie MacNicol came to work in Brookton, I went to Quairading on Sunday evenings and went both to Quairading and Brookton mid-week. It isn’t surprising that we were doing 25,000 miles (40,000 kilometres), and changing cars, every 10 months.

As the time approached for us to go back to the US for a year, I put more effort into getting the church in Brookton organised. We drew up a constitution and incorporated it. We also elected and ordained the first elder from the church, Conway Yarran.

Though I only lived in Brookton for eight months, my heart-involvement there has continued. Several of the families are good friends, and I look forward to spending eternity together with them.

**MEMORIES OF BROOKTON**

**By Barbara H. Cross**

The aeroplane trip from America had been long and difficult as we began our ministry in Australia. During a stopover in Hawaii both of our small children caught a very bad virus. We arrived in Perth with a four year old and a one year old running high fevers. After a visit to a Perth doctor we drove through the burning heat of a February day to Brookton with two very sick children. It was a frightening experience to a young mother. Family, friends and familiar ways of doing things were far behind and I was facing an unknown future with the complication of sick children and no house of our own in which to settle in the foreseeable future. Miss Jones, the lady missionary who had invited us to minister in Brookton, had planned a welcoming service for us in the little church which stood beside her mud and stone house. I was unable to go, having two children who were still very ill. It was not a good way to begin a new life in a new country. I remember sitting forlornly beside my feverish children in the darkness of that little house and hearing the sounds of the service beginning...
next door. "What am I doing here in this place?" I was asking myself. Slowly the music and the words of the song being sung so enthusiastically next door in the little church began to penetrate my mind.

"All the way my Saviour leads me, what have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt his tender mercy, who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in him to dwell.
FOR I KNOW WHAT E'ER BEFALL ME, JESUS DOETH ALL THINGS WELL."

This was the comfort and the assurance that I needed - that God had certainly brought us to this land, to this ministry at this time in our lives and that whatever was to happen HE DID ALL THINGS WELL.

The days that followed as we lived in Brookton were a mixture of the experiences that God had planned for our good and His glory.

There was the JOY of:

Meeting and growing in our love for our Aboriginal brothers and sisters in the Lord. How could we forget the Bennell Family, the Haydens, Mrs. Bolton, the Yarrans and many others who became our dear friends?

Sweet fellowship in the Word as we met in the little church or sometimes sat around a fire in a bucket on the front verandah of a house as we sang and prayed together.

Times of fun as we had a barbecue of delicious chops, bread and salad followed by a sing along.

There were times of STRESS when:

A house, cut in half and minus roof, kitchen, bath and proper wiring, was brought from Perth and placed on the mission property to be put together again. It seemed that the process of making it livable would never be finished and we could be a family in our "own place".

Miss Jones, who had faithfully ministered in the work in Brookton, found it difficult to turn over her work of many years to new hands.

There were times of LAUGHTER when:

I accidentally grabbed an unsuspecting Bob-tail as I turned over an old piece of roofing in a clean up session around the property. My screams, it was claimed, could be heard for miles, and there was much good natured kidding from my Aboriginal friends.

Everyone had a story about their experience with Miss Jones’ driving, which was a legend in the area. How could I forget the time when I was riding with her and she went into first gear while in the garage and we took out the end wall? Or what about the merriment when she backed into the outside toilet and the sheets of asbestos snapping made us think that a war had just started!

The Lord had many experiences for us as we began our ministry in Brookton and then moved on to other places. But our ministry in Australia ended as it began, in Brookton. Our last Sunday service before we left Australia was once again in the little church in Brookton. At the close of the service Lester Bennell got up and announced the closing hymn which was to be sung as a farewell to us. Once again, as our Aboriginal friends sang those familiar words - "All the way my Saviour leads me, what have I to ask beside.... For I know what e'er befell me, Jesus doeth all things well!" - our hearts were strengthened as we looked forward to whatever new ministry the Lord might have in store for us.

25 YEARS ON. 7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995
I REMEMBER LOCKRIDGE (MAIDA VALE)...

BY REV. DAVID L. CROSS

When we moved to Wilson (Perth) in October 1970 there was no intention of starting a church among the general population of the city. We thought we would be working among the 5000 or more Aboriginal people dotted around the Perth suburbs. But when we arrived we discovered that there were some serious problems with starting such a work.

Another ministry to Aborigines had recruited the help of white people from various churches to start Sunday Schools in every suburb where there was a concentration of Aborigines. Any place we went we could be accused of trying to move in on someone else’s work. The Aboriginal leader of the ministry already faced me on the grounds of the Royal Show and told me, “If you move to Perth, I’ll ruin you,” so I knew I had a problem. Several months earlier I had started a Bible Study that met every three weeks at Joyce and Andrew Priddle’s home. It was primarily a prayer meeting for the work in Brookton, but I knew it could become the basis for a church among the general population - a church I thought someone else would start some day.

One Sunday, a couple of weeks after moving to Perth, we had Frank and Dorothy Slater to our home for dinner. They were part of the Tri-weekly Bible Study and we told them of the problem we were facing in starting a new ministry. They suggested that we start a Sunday School in Lockridge, which was then a new housing area. The Shire was offering the use of the Caversham Hall to any groups who wanted to do anything in Lockridge, as there was no community hall in the development. Our discussion led to some planning meetings, the selection of the name Westminster Presbyterian Church, the production of a small leaflet and the start of worship services and a Sunday School on the first Sunday of December 1970.

We knew nothing about church planting, and after nearly six months there were many Sundays when I preached to the Priddles and the Crosses, as the Slaters were often away with CEF activities. Then came the beginning of a breakthrough when Merv Jecks began to come to church regularly. He was soon followed by others - the Shaws, the Westmacotts, the Winterfloods, the Whites and the Vickers. They were all looking for a Bible preaching church which held to Reformed doctrine. We were weak on evangelism, never made a significant impact on our target area of Lockridge, though we did get a number of children to come to Sunday School and eventually Maureen Merriman made a profession of faith following one communion service. Hers was the only adult response to the gospel I remember in those years.

The growth of the church with people who were committed to Christ, however, gave a base of people who were willing to rise to the challenge of calling a minister of their own. They called Warren Myers early in 1973 and he arrived on the scene in October.

Soon after that our family boarded a ship in Fremantle to return to the USA for a year of itineration before starting the next church planting project. We had already our eye on the northern suburbs as the logical target.

Memories of Lockridge (Maida Vale)

BY BARBARA H. CROSS

As I think back on the early days of what is now the Maida Vale Church there are many things that come to mind. Perhaps they are not the most important events that happened, but they are the things that make up my collage of memories.

Our Bible studies, held at the Guildford home of Andrew and Joyce Priddle, were one of the highlights of my week. I always have a chuckle as I think of us gathering in the lounge room in the winter and watching Andrew trying to get a fire going for us. He would try all kinds of ways to get the fire going, but it al-
ways seemed that Joyce had to step in to get it really started. There was especially good fellowship around a cup of tea with the Shaws, the Slaters, the Westmacotts, Merv Jecks, Geoff Fraser, the Winterfloods and the Whites. Our daughters, Shannon and Shelly, who were little at the time, loved to come as they knew they would be royally entertained by Marian Priddle.

It was exciting to see the women’s Bible Study grow in numbers and in knowledge of the Word as we met fortnightly, again at the Priddles.

One never knew what to expect when we arrived at the Caversham Hall to get ready for church on Sunday morning. Often there had been a party the night before and we would have to air out the place and wipe off the tables and the chairs lest we be taken for a Dub rather than a church.

Those were the days before seat-belt laws and we would load up our station wagon with kids from Lockridge and bring them to Sunday School.

Once, in an evangelistic outreach, we had a Saturday afternoon meeting just for the kids. It was quite a success as we had 80 come along. Before the children’s message Andrew Priddle showed us a new set of talents we didn’t know he had as he led all those children in several active and noisy games.

Maureen Merriman came along because of her son coming to the Sunday School. She first declared that she was an “atheist”, but then became interested in the Women’s Bible Study. That was followed by regular church attendance. It was a day of great rejoicing when, after a Sunday morning communion service, she felt real conviction of her sin and wanted to know how she could be right with God. Leaving the church hall that morning she remarked that she had never seen the sky so blue or the grass so green. That experience comes back to me each time I sing that hymn that says, “Heaven above is softer blue, earth beneath is sweeter green. Something lives in every hue, Christless eyes have never seen.”

Doug and Miriam Vickers began attending church during our time there and we had many wonderful times of fellowship as they graciously opened their home many times for special meetings or simply for a chance of fellowship together.

Our purpose was to plant a church and then move on. We rejoiced when the congregation was to the point that they could call their own pastor and were fully self-supported. But along with the rejoicing, it was very hard to leave the warm fellowship with the people who had become our dear friends.

The Lord graciously led us to a small but enthusiastic group of people who seemed to have what we were looking for. We already knew David and Barbara Cross and some of the others in this fellowship through our missionary work with the Aboriginal folk. We had also been to one of their communion services in the Slater’s home and to a Sunday School ‘break up’ at the end of 1971 in the Caversham Hall, Guildford. With our young family of four we were glad to throw ourselves wholeheartedly into this small warm fellowship of Christians where the Word was faithfully preached and lived.

David took us through the basics of the reformed faith and introduced us to the Westminster...
Confession of Faith. This was a bit on the heavy side for us after coming out of the Methodist church. We also fondly remember the picnics, social evenings, prayer times and Bible study at the Priddle’s.

We were just happy to keep it like that but the Lord had other plans. Soon we were teaching in the Sunday School, running a youth club, and I was working as a ruling elder and helping with the work at Brookton. It was all pretty exciting stuff.

Because the Lord blessed us by bringing together a group of mature committed Christians it was only about three years before we called our own pastor, Warren Myers, and David and Barbara went on to other church planting work.

At that stage we were meeting in the Caversham Hall. This hall was isolated out amongst the vineyards and open paddocks with kangaroos and rabbits as our neighbours. We were close to a housing estate but because the people kept moving on, there was little stability and this did not help to build a stable church in the district. So after a few years we decided to move to a better location where the hall was situated in a more stable and heavily populated neighbourhood.

During those early days we went through some shocks and testing times (things haven’t changed!) that weren’t written up in the books David gave me to read about being a ruling elder. But the Lord brought us through those times stronger in Him and glad that He led us into what has since become the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

RECOLLECTION
OF MY WPC INVOLVEMENT
Les Green

In January 1980 our family moved to Kalgoorlie where I was employed as a Camp School Director with the W.A. Education Department. Over a period of some months in 1980 we came into contact with a number of Christian people and were challenged by the claims of Christianity and the Gospel of Christ. It was during this period that both my wife Jennifer and myself were converted. Amongst other people who witnessed to us Murray and Jean Thomas and Jim Reeve were influential in both word and deed. Interestingly these three people all worship at Maida Vale WPC.

Contact with the Thomas’ brought me into contact with Jean’s father, Andrew Priddle. Andrew was and continues to be a source of wisdom and encouragement, particularly through his ministry of letter writing. It was Andrew who placed in my hand sound evangelical and reformed literature.

Following a move in 1983 to the South-West of the state, we also moved from membership in the Uniting Church to fellowship in both Mount Barker and Albany Baptist. Yet whenever we travelled to Perth during school holidays we sought out worship and ministry at both Duncraig and Maida Vale congregations. Our youngest daughter Megan was baptised in the Maida Vale church on 8 September 1985 by Derek Jones.

Through the auspices of Andrew Priddle I met John Hunt during the first week he arrived in Perth. As Principal of the Westminster Institute of Biblical Studies John was a source of encouragement to me both as a student of the Institute and of my continuing conviction to enter the pastoral ministry. In September 1986 he wrote to me saying that “One thing that WIBS can offer is practical experience. Our students are getting good training working in the churches under the direction of pastors.” Andrew Priddle also corresponded with me in 1986 writing that “both Bull Creek and Maida Vale are moving to two services per Lord’s Day morning and looking for associate pastors. We are on the verge of doing something new and constructive in the area of church planting here in W.A.. One inescapable result of all this will be a growing demand for pastors.”
In the course of time, following both prayer and counsel, we enrolled for theological studies at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada. In March 1987 James Packer wrote of Regent College noting “The faculty has on it no conservative Arminians and no dispensationalists, but otherwise most varieties of evangelicalism can be found here. We educate, not indoctrinate; you are confronted with alternative options, and draw conclusions from the evidence.” Our studies at Regent College proved to be one of the most formative experiences of our lives. We attached ourselves to the Faith Reformed Presbyterian Church, where I was employed as a student intern and became a ruling elder in that congregation under the able pastoral ministry of Doug Codling.

Following the completion of my studies and preparing to return to Perth we received overtures from both the Maida Vale and Kingsley WPC congregations in 1989. Peter Adamson from the Kingsley church wrote saying they would be “searching for a pastor” and whether our “family would consider involvement in the life and ministry of this church” while Peter Hill wrote telling me in June 1989 that “subject to the requirements of Presbytery we would like to invite you to consider an involvement at Maida Vale.” Later in 1989 Peter Hill left Maida Vale to take up ministry in Melbourne. In November of that year he wrote to tell us that “Andrew Priddle will be ‘holding the reins’ during the vacancy. I would want to encourage you, especially if you do your internship here, to have every confidence in him. He is a mature Christian and a discerning pastor. No one could show you the ‘ropes’ of WPC better than he.” Subsequent events and past experiences proved this to be correct and Andrew Priddle’s interest in us and encouragement of our aspirations with WPC saw us return to Perth and the congregation at Maida Vale in January 1990.

Following an internship under Andrew, and upon completion of Presbytery requirements I was ordained into the ministry at Maida Vale as a teaching elder in October 1990. Our family has enjoyed five years of fruitful and encouraging ministry at Maida Vale. We have found the people have welcomed and accepted our ministry and we are thankful to the Lord for being part of this part of His family.

October 1995.

I Remember Duncraig (Kingsley)...

by Rev. David L. Cross

It was February 1975, rental properties were hard to find, but Barbara and I had settled into a house on Spencer Road in Thornlie, even though we knew we would be starting a church somewhere in the northern suburbs. We decided to live closer to the Christian School for our children’s sake.

There were three families travelling from the coast area to the first church, (which by this time was meeting in Koongamia). Those families were the Lonies, the Vickers, and Neil MacLean. These three were going to become the core group for starting the new church.

A new community hall was being opened in Duncraig just at that time and we were able to get it for Sunday mornings. After a week or two the hall management decided to have an open house for all the groups using the hall - on Sunday! We decided to set up a table and try to make contacts with people. That was the day we met Sam Dalziel, who was later to become converted and a member of the church.

In June of that year, the Larry Billiter family came from the USA to work with us. We decided that they should focus on Duncraig while we moved on to start a third church. However, we felt it would be good to overlap with them for six months before making the move. I preached in the mornings and then went to Brookton for an evening service, and Larry preached in the evening. He also took over the mid-week Bible study.

It was during this period that the PRC issue came to a crisis. Those were “the bad ole days”
EARLY DUNCRAIG - NOW KINGSLEY

by Jim Thomas

Although the church was in embryo stage (approximately 12 - 15 adults and 10 plus children) in early 1977, the Duncraig WPC was reasonably well established. The Rev. Larry Billiter had succeeded Rev. David Cross as Pastor and in the ensuing three years or so the congregation grew to average 50 - 55. On one occasion the meeting place at Duncraig Recreation Centre saw 75 present.

In the early days many families: Vickers, Thomas, Jones, Loney, de Grauw, Hunter, Delbridge, Henry, Duckworth, McCarren, MacNaughton, Swan, Perkins and Collins to name a few, laid solid foundations for the church’s future. Some have remained in WPC and others have moved elsewhere.

Larry Billiter and family were ultimately to move to Queensland, but due to Larry’s persistence not before land was obtained in Kingsley for a future meeting place.

Roger Wilson was called to pastor the church on an interim basis and in due course the church moved to a Primary School in Kingsley and Duncraig changed its name to Kingsley WPC.

During this period Rev. Oliver Claassen, Rev. John Hunt, Peter Adamson and others undertook various vital roles at various times. Roger Wilson left to assist Derek Jones at Maida Vale and for a considerable period the church relied on John Hunt to oversee Session affairs.

In 1981 Dan Jones and family joined the church and in 1982 the Thomas family left to join Bob Scott as seed family in planting what is now the Beechboro Church, then commenced in Dianella. It was at this time that Roger Wilson was called to pastor the Kingsley Church.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MEMORIES

by

DOUGLAS VICKERS

The providence of God orders the way of His people and brings to convergence His own purposes and the actions and decisions that structure their lives. It was one such remarkable development that led me in 1972 to assume the Chair in Economics at the University of Western Australia. I had grown up in Queensland but had spent several years in graduate work at the London University in England and as a member of the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania in the United States. My return to Australia held prospects of events more important than I had imagined.

Miriam and I almost immediately met David and Barbara Cross (and Shannon and Shelly) who had not long before come to Western Australia to begin their work that has led, in the mercy of God, to significant results. We remember well the meetings in Caversham Hall (where, on the occasion of our first visit, Shannon took a wonderful initiative and quite inde-
independently of her parents introduced herself) and the occasions when the first small group of friends visited us in our home in City Beach. Among the new friends, we were delighted to find an old one in Len Shaw who had been a member with us at Westminster Chapel in London.

The ministry grew. Difficulties were not absent. A Presbyterian movement from the East (which quickly appeared to me to have more enthusiasm and devotion to rigour than wisdom and sanctified common sense) threatened to disturb the fledgling flock. But the danger passed, and the new work progressed. Those of us who sat in the pew learned from David Cross’s patient teaching important lessons in both the Christian faith and the responsibilities of church membership. Those who were called to, or assumed, positions of leadership learned lessons of compassionate ministry that avoided lordly rule.

Following the change of location from Caversham to Koongamia where we worshipped for some time, we were privileged to participate with David in establishing the new activity in Duncraig. At the very beginning, while I was away on a visit to the United States, Miriam assisted in placing announcements of the new work in local letter boxes, and she, along with Mr. and Mrs. Dalzell, was present at the first Duncraig worship service. We enjoyed the ministry of David Cross and Larry Billiter at that location until I returned to the United States to assume a professorship at the University of Massachusetts at the end of 1977. We recall that shortly before that time we had the opportunity to join with David and Barbara in the worship services in the school room that led to the development of the Bull Creek church.

As we reflect on those early years we give praise to God for His goodness and mercy, his many blessings and his overruling providence. Our return visits to Western Australia during the years since have given us a deep sense of gratitude for the progress of the flourishing ministry that has resulted from those early beginnings of which we were privileged to be a part. We send our greetings to the Westminster Presbyterian Church on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, and we join our old friends and new in giving glory to God for his matchless mercy and grace.

December 29, 1995

I Remember Bull Creek...

by Rev. David L. Cross

In the early days of the work at Lockridge I spoke to Keith Warren, then minister at the Reformed Church in Victoria Park about our working on the north side of the river and then working on the south. Mr. Warren had moved on, so I spoke with Peter van Dam about our desire to move south of the river and develop a work in the area developing around the new, Murdoch, university. With that point cleared away, we secured the use of a school, distributed leaflets and began worship services. Thirteen people came to the first service.

We had the help of Jack and Vera Higgins and Carolyn Mayhill and Richard were also part of the church from the beginning. It was only a week before the Daveys started to attend.

Christine Fairburn began to bring Marisa right from the start, and I called on her to see if she understood the gospel. I have never met a person who was more prepared and open to the gospel message. She responded right there and then. She was the beginning of a harvest that kept right on going through the years we were in Bull Creek.

Evangelism was not a high pressure activity in the church, but it was going on through the preaching, as people like John and Jackie Fallon and Oon-Swee and Linda Yeoh under the gospel week after week until it became their own conviction. Others came through the witness of the women to their friends and neighbours. Sometimes I asked someone like Christine to call on a woman who visited the church, and look for an opportunity to share their testimony. The last ones to come along seemed to be the husbands of the women who were being converted, but they too responded to the open friendliness of the church.

25 YEARS ON. 7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995
One of the things we set out to do from a very early stage was to plan for the church to have its own building. We set up a committee and we started putting money into a building fund. Sometimes it seemed we would never get the building. We were such a small church at that time. One memory I find humorous from that project was that the first design we had submitted for the church was rejected, and one of the reasons for rejecting it was that the pitch of the gable roof was not steep enough.

After Peter Adamson had worked as an assistant for a year or so the question arose as to whether he should be called as the pastor so that we could go on to a new church plant. The decision, however, was that the church would support him so he could go and start a new work in Kelmscott and we would stay a little longer in Bull Creek.

In 1980, as we approached the end of five years at Bull Creek, I began to feel that the time was coming for me to leave Westminster Presbyterian Church. I had been too much a part of every decision that was made, and it was time for the maturing leadership in the presbytery to make their own decisions. On a certain day in October the issue became clear to Barbara and me quite separately, but over the same events, and the next day I told the elders at Bull Creek that I was leaving Australia. When I announced it to the congregation the next Sunday, there were tears in almost every eye - certainly in mine.

Leaving Australia was hard because we had learned to love so many people in each of the places we had opportunity to serve, but as I look at what has been built since I left, I am sure it was the right decision. I’m only glad that I have opportunity to come back and see so many of you again.

Memories of Westminster Church
Bull Creek

BY BARBARA H. CROSS

When the time came for us to move on from the ministry in Duncraig we had found that there was a new development going on on the south side of the city called Bull Creek. As far as we knew there were no other plans for starting an evangelical church there. I will never forget the first day that David drove me through that developing area where we saw new house after new house being built. A statement that he made as we drove slowly down those new streets stands out most in my mind. He said, “The Lord has his elect people here and it is up to us to come here and try to find them.”

How could we forget that first Sunday when we met in the new Bull Creek School. The little group that gathered together that first Sunday included Mark and Carolyn Maybill, Richard Shapcott, the entire Jack Higgins family and the family of Lorraine Davey’s sister who came to see what we were about, as well as the four Crosses.

David began preaching a series on the Life of Christ while I began teaching a Sunday School class for the children covering the same material. To each child who came we promised them a special pencil with a Scripture verse on it when they had come three Sundays in a row. Colin and Lorraine Davey to this day like to say that the “pencil offer” got them hooked into the Westminster Bull Creek Church. Though they had no intention of coming back a second time to a Presbyterian Church, their children insisted that they must get their pencil and by the third Sunday they were already part of the church.

What a joy it was to see others come, one by one, or family by family. How could we forget the Sunday that Lynn Amen arrived at church holding an invitation that had been put through her mailbox some months before. “Is this the church on this invitation?” she asked. How blessed
we were to see her listen eagerly to the Scriptures and in time place her faith in the One who had led her to the church.

The early days were great times of fellowship. Colin and Lorraine Davey opened their home, situated across the street from the school, for many after church lunch get-togethers. The Ladies’ Bible Study was a delight to teach every fortnight as we looked one year at the Book of James, and another year explored the characters of Pilgrim’s progress together.

One of the challenges that we had each week was setting up for the services. Desks had to be moved and stored as we brought in chairs, the moveable pulpit and the little travelling organ (before the days of keyboards). The teachers in whose rooms we met were very fussy to the point that we drew detailed diagrams of where each desk and small item went so that we would not annoy them.

An exciting answer to prayer was when we received news that, in answer to our application for land, we had been given a Crown Grant of land (on which the present church stands) for just $9.50 - the price of the survey fee. With a large congregation now it may be easy to forget that the small earlier congregation gave sacrificially of their time and money to build that first church building.

Church buildings matter little in comparison to the lives claimed for Christ and built up in Him in those early days. Our five years at Bull Creek were a great joy to us as we ministered to “the elect” that the Lord had brought together.

BULL CREEK

Through the eyes of Mark Mayhill.

Our own involvement with the WPC came about when Carolyn commenced attending in response to a letter drop from the Maida Vale Church, then at Koongamia in 1974. At that time I did not attend very often, partly due to my work commitments and partly due to my lack of knowledge of the denomination, but I came to know Warren Myers from his visits to our home.

We built a new home in Parkwood in 1976, moving in on Saturday, and attended the first service of the Bull Creek Church on the Sunday 1st February, there being the Cross, Higgins and Mayhill families plus Lorraine Davey’s brother in a demountable at the Bull Creek Primary School.

It was an interesting time seeing the gradual growth of the church, and the first mid-week Bible Studies were held in our lounge room. Colin and Lorraine Davey and family moved into her brother’s house opposite the Primary School shortly after the first service and commenced attending and the early congregation meetings were held at their place. We took part in letter drops which were generally followed by a picnic and have very fond memories of the early fellowship and Biblical Teaching.

David Cross shocked us all when he formed a committee of Jack Higgins and Colin Davey to commence a search for land to build our own premises when we only had a congregation of about thirty people. Jack and Colin worked hard at their task and initially came up with a very large block which was exchanged by the Crown Lands for our present site. At this time we had grown to about one hundred people, including children, and had moved to the Bateman Hall. The surrounding land had been set aside for Ngala Homes, consequently at that time there was no thought that we could ever expand on that site, and this has been to me a very graphic example of the way God
makes provision in ways we never consider.

Jack Higgins was our first ordained elder, and much of what the Bull Creek church has become is a direct result of his commitment and hard work in those early days, and he repeated this work and commitment when the Higgins family with John and Jackie Fallon moved from the Bull Creek Church with Peter Adamson to plant the Kelmscott WPC.

Jack Higgins was our first Treasurer, followed by Carolyn Mayhill, John Tibbet, John Van Santen, Mark Mayhill and then John Van Santen again. It should be noted that John Van Santen was Treasurer while the original building was erected and was back again throughout the building of the extensions. Shortly prior to our anniversary it became necessary to appoint an assistant Treasurer and Jeff Powell was elected to this position.

Our embryonic property fund received a big boost when the pedigree bull, which Colin and Lorraine Davey donated to the fund on it’s birth, was sold. They raised the calf and sold it on our behalf when it was of age.

The church grew rapidly after the completion of our building in August 1976 and various outreaches such as Girls and Boys Brigades, Day Nursery and Youth Groups, Bible Study at the MS Society, the outreach at Mt. Henry Hospital and Home Groups were commenced.

After we had branched out to two morning services to cater for our enlarged congregation God’s Providence revealed itself in the cancellation of Ngala’s interest in the property around ours and we were offered this property, which, despite our procrastination, we were eventually able to purchase. We were restricted in our use of this property, two thirds having to be sold for residential purposes, however, we were permitted to amalgamate the balance of the land with the Crown Land we already had the use of to enable us to have our large car-park and extend the building. At this stage it was decided that the Westminster Theological College would join with us in our building programme and establish themselves upstairs, the combined building to be for our mutual benefit. Perhaps if we had not procrastinated this would not have occurred.

We have been blessed by God in our teaching ministry as all our teaching elders have been excellent preachers. Our first was our Planting Pastor, David Cross, and after a few years he arranged for Peter Adamson to serve his internship at Bull Creek, after which Peter moved to Kelmscott. Shortly before David Cross returned to America, Larry Beckler, an American graduate came to Bull Creek for a year, and filled in for a short period between David’s departure and Larry Billiter’s return from his furlough in the U.S. when he took over until we were able to call our first Pastor. Eventually Ron Nugent accepted a call and came to us from Brookton. Later Derek Jones came to us for twelve months as a part-time Evangelism Pastor after his resignation from Maida Vale, and after this period was called to a full-time position to work with Ron. The next addition to our staff was Nigel Chalmers who came to us with his wife Shirley and family from Brisbane to work as a Youth Elder, a position that both he and Shirley filled admirably until they felt the call to return to Brisbane in 1993. Some twelve months after Ron Nugent’s resignation to accept a call to Kingsley we were able to welcome Gary Goeschl and his family from America. In early 1995 Paulus Surya was called from Indonesia with his wife to become an Indonesian speaking Pastor to care for the needs of our growing Indonesian congregation.

It is gratifying to look back for close on twenty years and remember and see God’s goodness and faithfulness to us, particularly when we have stepped out in faith, and it was a great privilege to be able to take part in the 25th Anniversary celebrations. For the benefit of future members, these were, in the main, the bringing out from England of David and Barbara Cross to speak at all the WA churches, a barbecue and concert at Pt. Walter during the Synod session and the finale of a combined Service held at All Saint’s College Gymnasium which was attended by some four hundred people who heard reminiscences from David Cross, Andrew Priddle, John Westmacott and Nigel Chalmers (who read a poem from Shirley which appears elsewhere), several singing items and an excellent sermon from Warren Myers of Redbank Plains.
During the first year of the Bull Creek Westminster Presbyterian Church and while there were only half a dozen families attending, the Pastor, Rev David Cross formed a committee to look for a property on which a church building could be situated. The committee consisted of the Church’s first Elder, Mr. Jack Higgins and myself.

At first sight the task was daunting. Land in Bull Creek was expensive and we would need several house blocks to be large enough for a church and a parking area. If we bought the land it would take years to pay it off and the building of a church would be postponed indefinitely.

Our first idea then was to lease some land. We approached Melville City Council for help. Their officers were very friendly and positive and they did have several parcels of land available for lease. Unfortunately each of these blocks was too small being really only normal house lots. The Town Planner suggested that we would perhaps be better to approach the Lands Department. We felt quite buoyed up by our visit to Melville City Council. Their positive attitude helped dispel the worries which had been generated by opposition to our church led by one Bull Creek resident, a Uniting Church Minister who was working part-time at Murdoch University.

We arranged to have an interview with an officer of the Lands Department. He produced a map of the district and we again asked if there was any land to be leased. The Officer told us that the Lands Department was not in the business of leasing land and we felt our hopes dashed.

We explained that leasing was our only hope because the cost of land would set back our building plans for years. Almost as an afterthought the Officer then asked us why we didn’t apply for a Crown Grant! We didn’t even know what that was and he explained that the Lands Department would allocate land to us free of charge.

Naturally Jack and I were very excited. Here was the answer to all our worries. Free land right in the centre of Bull Creek. We chose a block a bit east of our present site and a little over an acre in size.

A few weeks later however, there was a slight problem. A different Lands Department Officer contacted us and said that the block was too big. Perhaps we would like to buy part of the block and be granted the rest. Once again we explained about our need to keep our finances for the church building programme and not to tie ourselves down purchasing land. He then suggested that we should pick another block. He said, “What about this one here on Benningfield Road?” When I pointed out that it was marked with the name of the W.A. Fire Brigade he simply erased their name off the map and inserted “Church”!

The Crown Grant was quickly issued and our small committee then started the exciting tasks of looking for an Architect and drawing up of church building plans.
THE MAKING OF THE INDONESIAN CONGREGATION.
How WPC - the Indonesian Service - was established

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Matthew 6:33

Approximately in 1991, there were quite a number of students, and others who were permanent residents in Perth, who longed to have a warm christian fellowship with one another. Hence, those people who were interested in solid reformed doctrines and theology, agreed to establish a youth fellowship called the Indonesian Reformed Evangelical Fellowship (IREF). The IREF members were mainly university students led by Ricky Sahala Siahaan. The fellowship was held every Saturday morning at the Blue Gum Recreation Centre. The vision of IREF was to outreach Indonesian students in Perth and teach them the Word of God that was truly biblical. With God’s blessing, this vision was slowly achieved through the different fellowship programs such as Bible studies, seminars, weekly sermons, outings, retreats and cell groups.

IREF eventually grew, both in quality and quantity, and this growth attracted the attention of a pastor who happened to be in Perth at the time. His name was Pastor Jusak Susabda Sth from New Zealand. He advised the fellowship to meet in a church instead of in a recreation centre. With his assistance and guidance, the youth fellowship committee was introduced to the Pastors at Westminster Presbyterian Church Bull Creek, namely Pastor Ron Nugent and Pastor Derek Jones. Praise be to God because after the introduction, they allowed IREF to use the church building and facilities. Pastor Ron Nugent himself was also willing to become IREF’s counsellor. The fellowship could truly see and feel God’s blessing, guidance and love that were shown through WPC.

As the relationship of IREF and WPC became stronger, the committee started to consider the possibility of IREF becoming a part of WPC organisationally. A meeting with about twelve people was held by Pastor Ron Nugent and Pastor Derek Jones in the home of Soesanto and Tanti Adiwibowo on 22 March 1992. In the meeting it was expressed that the group did not intend to form an independent Indonesian church which borrowed Bull Creek church as a place of worship, but they wanted to join the Bull Creek congregation, to have a service in Indonesian, and God willing, to have an Indonesian pastor to enhance the ministry and outreach opportunity. They explained that although IREF and WPC had a different culture and background, they were one in the body of Christ. This idea was also supported by Pastor Stephen Tong from the Reformed Evangelical Church (GRII) in Indonesia. This was further discussed with Pastor Joshua Lee, a representative from GRII who came to Perth as the speaker for the Youth Camp that year. Pastor Stephen Tong himself discussed this matter personally when he visited Perth for evangelical purposes in August 1992. To do so, however, the people who were involved in God’s service must attend approximately ten membership classes at WPC. Apart from the youngsters, there were also older people who attended the membership classes. These young people highly supported the idea of IREF becoming one with WPC. These were also the people who were later involved in the commencement of the Indonesian service at WPC Bull Creek.

The growing number of people who came to the fellowship and the large number of those who attended the membership classes gave Pastor Ron Nugent and Pastor Derek Jones a new vision, and that was to start an Indonesian service here at WPC. Without prior knowledge about each of their desire, both prayed about this matter. After much prayer and discussions, it was then decided that the Indonesian service would be held every Sunday at 4 p.m., starting 11 October 1992. Speakers from GRII would come to minister the service for approximately three weeks every two months. During the weeks where there were no Indonesian speakers, the Word of God was given by either the committee members or the pastors at WPC, who were then translated to Indonesian. This condition took place for approximately two years.

The desire to have a full-time Indonesian minister continued amongst the Indonesian congregation. They persistently prayed for
this, and in the mean time, they carefully selected speakers from Indonesia who were considered to have not only the desire and calling to minister the growing Indonesian service here in Perth, but also a strong reformed theology background.

Eventually, out of all the ministers who were invited to come to Perth, Ev. Paulus Surya was considered to be the best. This did not mean that the other speakers who were invited were not qualified as we believed that each minister would be placed and called by God to different areas and places of service. Ev. Paulus Surya and his wife decided, after much prayer, that they were willing to come and minister the Indonesian congregation at WPC Bull Creek, Perth. On 17 May 1995, both of them left the church in Surabaya at which they had ministered for five years and came to Perth.

The Indonesian congregation’s desire to have a full-time minister was completed when Ev. Paulus Surya was finally ordained on 17 March 1996. Before he was ordained, he had to be examined by Presbytery at WPC. This meant that he had to pass three exams. Although the steps he had to go through to become a full-time pastor were not easy and simple, we believed that God had worked wonderfully in giving him and the Indonesian congregation strength. God’s work and blessing are truly evident now as the number of people who attend the Indonesian service every Sunday and the Youth Fellowship every Saturday continually grow.

Whenever we look back and see the ups and downs that WPC had gone through, concerning the establishment of the Indonesian service, we can only pray and lift our praises to the Lord. It is through times like this that we can see how without God’s blessing, love and guidance, we are so vulnerable and therefore need to constantly depend on the Lord.

The Invasion of the Methodist Snatchers -
WPC Bull Creek 1976
by Andrew Davey

God moves in mysterious ways. If my sister’s stomach had not disgorged its contents (consisting mainly of Nestles Strawberry Quik) onto the floor of the family Peugeot 404 one sunny day in 1976, I would never have been taken to the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Bull Creek.

We had just moved from Albany and our Methodist church there. My parents harboured an irrational disinclination towards all things Presbyterian, and were looking for another Methodist church or, if they got desperate, a Baptist. However my sister’s illness meant that she, Mum and my other sister had to stay home on Sunday morning while Dad, reluctantly, took me to the church in the school at the end of the street.

To a seven year old brought up in a quiet, sedate farming community, Americans are frightening creatures. David and Barbara Cross greeted us effusively, and treated a congregation of half a dozen with all the vim and vigour usually reserved for groups ten times that size. Barbara Cross acted as Sunday School teacher, and did not go in for rambling sedentary monologues. She used big exciting visual displays, and gave her story presentations with all the energy and pizzazz of a Spielberg film. The other tots and I were dazzled.

When we arrived home, my mother asked us how the service had gone. Dad reported that the pastor was overwhelmingly American, but greatly gifted as a preacher. I merely insisted that we return, because I’d been promised a special pencil if we came back next week. There’s nothing like spiritual succour splashed with childish avarice.

So we went the following week, I duly got my pencil, and my four year old sister demanded one too. So we had to go back the next week, and by that time we were hooked. Sharp operators, these Americans.
AND THEN

THERE WERE FIVE

by Jack Higgins, Session Clerk, WPC Kelmscott

The Kelmscott congregation was the fifth WPC church to be planted in Western Australia, with the Fallon, Howe, Stuart and Higgins families gathering with the organising pastor Peter Adamson and his wife Jenny for the first service in the Kelmscott Senior High School on February 3, 1980.

Peter Adamson had been appointed by Presbytery as a church planter, following a couple of years assisting David Cross at WPC Bull Creek. Peter was the first Australian to be involved in WPC church planting. Two of the seed families at Kelmscott were also from the Bull Creek congregation, and financial assistance for the new work was provided through a reducing aid program funded by World Presbyterian Missions and WPC Bull Creek.

Peter worked part-time as a teacher for the first couple of years, and at the same time he and Jenny worked very hard at building up the church. Steady growth took place, with a particular feature being the good rapport that Peter had with young people. Initially we transported our young people over each week to meet with the Maida Vale youth group, but then our own youth group of 30 or so members came into being. A significant factor in this development was the arrival of the Wilson family (and others) from the Armadale Congregational Church, coming to learn more about our brand of Reformed Theology. A number of the young married couples that we now have in the congregation met originally in the youth group.

Peter Adamson served with us until June 1985, when he left to take up the position of State Director of Scripture Union. Andrew Priddle was then our organising pastor for one year until the installation of Robert Calderwood as our first called pastor in August 1986. Rob remained until July 1991, when he left in response to a call from the Nepean Valley WPC. Andrew Priddle then returned to serve with us as pastor till the end of 1995. Linleigh Roberts is presently serving as our interim pastor, pending the arrival of Julian Bull from New South Wales, who has been called to become our pastor, commencing from October 1996.

Things of note over the years have been:

- A strong missionary interest in the early days. We gave strong financial support to the Ugandan work of Africa Foundation, and also sent two of our people (Anne Webster and Steve Higgins) to serve for a short term in Uganda. Joseph Musiitwa, a trainee pastor from Uganda spent some time with us in 1983.
- Purchase of our church land in 1986. This was a big move at the time, but has proved to be a very sound investment. We have quite a large block, and we still have quite a large portion of land available for further development even after the erection of the church building.
- Completion of our church building in 1993. The impossible became a reality through the Lord's provision, plus the generosity of Andrew Priddle in not drawing a full stipend, and voluntary work by Mobile Mission Maintenance and John de Boer, our building contractor who supervised the whole job free of charge. It is a real joy to have our own building, after the years of meeting in various schools and halls around the district.

Now for some general reflections. As with any congregation we have had our highs and lows. The road has been a bit bumpy at times. This is perhaps not so surprising when the composition...
of the congregation is taken into account. Congregational, Baptist and Anglical influences were fairly strong in the early days of the congregation, to which can be added a dose of Reformed Church influence later on. Some folk were understandably quite strong in their position, and so it is little wonder that differences will crop up from time to time. Tensions about questions such as ministry style and direction will inevitably arise. We see a kaleidoscope of faces in our collective congregation spanning the past 15 years. All are searching for some meaning to their lives. A number have come bearing residual pain. Some have shown anguish as they departed from us. Many fortunately have stayed.

We have a close knit, wonderful group of caring people at WPC Kelmscott. We are a family of God’s people in the true sense of the word. Many could be named for their faithful service over the years. But then others less heralded but just as precious to us could be overlooked. We long to see our church continue to grow both in numbers and also in maturity. We pray for a strong sense of unity and direction in the years ahead. We always seem to be on the edge of viability, and we exist by the grace of God, and also due to His generous provision for the needs of His people.

WPC BEECHBORO

BY PAT SWAN

In January 1982 Missions to the World sent Bob and Libby Scott to help plant a new church in Perth. After meeting with Presbytery the Morley area was decided on. With the assistance of Jim Thomas, Les Walton and Russel McLaren they looked for a venue for their services. They were able to rent for a small fee the Seventh Day Adventist church in Benara Road.

The next step was to do a leaflet drop in the area, and so the first service was held on Sunday 13th February 1982, with a total of sixteen people attending. The people met for two hours consisting of the morning service, Sunday School and 1 hour Bible Study. The evening service was held in the garage of the home the Scotts were renting in Brand Place and also some Christmas morning services.

The Lord continued to bless us and after the first twelve months we had 3 adult baptisms at different times.

Around this time Scott and Gail McNaughton were coming back to Perth for a wedding and hoped to be able to stay in Perth for a year. A proposal was put to the congregation that we invite Scott to assist us in the church. This Scott accepted. But before this happened we had to look for a new venue for our services and negotiations were started with Dianella Plaza for hiring an empty hall they owned opposite the Plaza.

Now Scott was back from his honeymoon we were able to put not only his spiritual talents to work, but also his talent of painting. Scott and a few helpers spruced the hall up and we had our first service there in August.

Although we lost a few of our congregation with moving, God was gracious and sent us more families. Sunday School was held in a caravan parked in front of the hall.

The church continued to grow numerically as well as spiritually under Scotty’s guidance. The congregation agreed with the help of a few friends to supply a loan so the church could get a bank loan to buy ten acres land in Coast Road, Beechboro. The land became the church’s in December 1985.

Congregational numbers had increased from 21 to 62 and the hall was starting to get a bit small when we received word from Dianella Plaza that they were demolishing the hall to extend
the car park for the shops. After much discussion and prayer it was agreed to look for a venue closer to the land. A van was purchased to provide transport for those who would need it. We moved to Lockridge High School where we had much more room. We had the use of the drama room for the service and two class rooms for the Sunday School and a small room for the creche. After we had been there for a while we had contact with Chinese students and transport was arranged to pick them up in the city.

It was now time for Scott to move on and problems started to occur with no pastor to guide us. But our gracious Father sent us Roger Wilson as our moderator and at the same time we were able to have Barry Swann to help us with the Sunday Services.

Doors started to close: we were told that our vision for the land was not possible, as we were unable to sub-divide. Around this same time we heard from Homeswest that they were opening more land in Beechboro and that four blocks would go to a church if we were interested. After much prayer we decided to put our land on the market and if possible buy land from Homeswest.

The Lord was with us and the land sold immediately. This not only allowed us to pay all loans back and buy land from Homeswest, but we had enough to start building God’s church. God in His wisdom gave us this to hang on to as Satan was at work amongst the congregation. We lost some members but those who stayed were able to support one another and through this we became more united. We then called Paul Bloomfield to do 12 months internship with us while he was still at the College.

After much prayer and discussion a plan for building and also a builder was decided on. We accepted the quote from Hacienda Homes.

Our building of the church was completed and we had our first service on 13 August 1991. Paul accepted a call as full-time pastor and began in this ministry in November 1991.

Now we are about to enter another stage and it is with much regret that we lose Paul’s services at the end of 1995, but thank our God for His graciousness in giving us Andrew Priddle as our Moderator.

Those who have been in the church from the beginning have seen many snares but through it all have also seen many blessings.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF MANDURAH WPC

**by**

Barry and Cynthia Swann
on behalf of the Mandurah Church Planting Team

Future Church Planters take heed. A creative way to meet your handful of core people is from hospital! In December 1988 when Cynthia and I were looking for a house to purchase, our agent’s car and another were involved in an accident. We hold the dubious distinction of being the first couple (note that “couple”) in Mandurah hospital’s new maternity ward!

Mandurah WPC held its first official public service in the library of the Glencoe Primary School on February 26 1989. Presbytery had received a “Macedonian call” from Trevor and Kathy Hill, a couple who lived with their family in Mandurah. From October 1988, Rev. Derek Jones travelled weekly from Perth to Mandurah to hold a Bible Study. Trevor and Kathy, Lynne and David Miller her son, Roger and Dianne Miller (the junior Millers), and Jill Mickan were among our first families. In 1996, they are WPC members, and maturing, keen, outreaching Christians.

Barry Swann was commissioned as Church Planter/Organising Minister by Presbytery, and
Clem White as the Ruling Elder. During the first couple of years Clem and Pam commuted 100 km from Darlington to Mandurah, where they weekended in their caravan, which was parked under the Swanns’ huge shed. Barry’s office was also in the shed; in a partitioned area. During the summer months, the “shed” was vacated by 11 a.m., as it was just too hot to work in!

In the seven years of Mandurah’s existence there has been steady numerical and spiritual growth. Naturally there have also been “hiccups” at times. Church planting is not just setting certain goals; it is “people intensive”. It is a labour of love.

Church planting requires much prayer. Take a peek at many members’ knees. Tuesday morning prayer meetings are special times. We pray seriously, and have experienced God’s rich blessings poured upon us.

From its inception, a denominational spirit has been consciously fostered. In Mandurah it is, “have car, will travel”. A small church needs to know it belongs to a larger body of Christ’s church. We all need encouragement through the larger group. We exhort YOU to think denominationally, as well as your local church.

WPC Mandurah has two elected Ruling Elders, plus the Church Planting Team. We have four Deacons. Towards the end of 1995, a constitution was drawn up and accepted. By the end of 1996, the Church Planting Team is out of a job, as Mandurah can call their own Pastor.

The work at Mandurah was begun and has been sustained by the faithful prayers and generous giving of God’s people. The Lord has blessed this work because of your faithfulness. We gratefully thank you for it.

FINDING THE PROMISED LAND: MAIDA VALE WPC

By Rod Gunn

It’s now twenty years ago that we came to Westminster. I had been brought up in the Presbyterian Church of Australia and thought this was where I should stay. I first met Andrew Priddle when I was about 13 years old. He taught me in a Sunday School teachers training class at Subiaco. I knew he was an old man then (well, he was about 33) so what has changed? Well, he’s still an old man! Years later he contacted me to tell me about this new group he was working with. I went to a couple of their meetings but could not see the sense in starting something new when there was this available mission field within the Presbyterian Church - many did not seem to have understood the gospel (not a very clear understanding of the church eh?). So I continued but Andrew contacted me occasionally - by letter, of course. I continued to get more frustrated and was at the end of my patience with the push for church union at all costs. The Uniting Church document was deliberately vague eg, the Bible contains the Word of God - not that it is the Word of God. The obvious question - what else does it contain?

In the midst of all this Andrew again dropped me a note. It seemed that the little group were making some progress because they were installing a new Pastor from the USA - Warren Myers. Well we went, we heard and we were hooked. How tremendous it was to sit under preaching like this - we couldn’t get enough. It seemed that we had entered the promised land. We promptly left the PCA and applied to join Westminster. The elders suggested we slow down a bit but we were anxious to throw our lot in with the little congregation at Caversham. It has always remained as a sadness to me that I didn’t see the issues more clearly from the start and missed three years ministry under David Cross. Nevertheless the Lord calls us in His timing. Several other families followed us to Westminster.
when they found how good it was. The Waltons, Sims, Burnetts and Nelsons were soon with us. They were great times soaking up the teaching. The elders spoke of Reformed doctrine and I expressed my ignorance, but as they shared we were pleased to confirm that that was how we understood the Scriptures too. Soon we invited Paul Winterflood to lead a Bible study in our home and they were precious times. Wendy Burnett had recently been converted and was an eager participant. Nevertheless she warned us, “You’ll have to treat Bob with kid gloves. Don’t push him.” We were not sure what to expect from this guy. How tremendous to see Bob declare his faith and to continue to grow in his faith and service to now be the pastor at Buderim. Our pastor Warren was taking the youth group through studies from Berkhof’s Systematic Theology, so we extended the age limit and joined them. We couldn’t soak up enough of the teaching that was available. The only problem Jenni and I encountered was whose turn it was to stay home with the children on Sunday nights. We got around this by taping the sermons.

It has been a great privilege to be part of Maida Vale for the past twenty two years, seeing the church grow and mature, and new churches flourish in WA and the Eastern States. God has been very good to us as we sat under the ministry of Warren Myers, Derek Jones, Peter Hill, Andrew Priddle and the present ministry team of Les Green, Martin Spadaro and Scott MacNaughton. We love the people at Maida Vale and they have become closer than brothers and sisters to us.

A TIME TO MOVE ON.

Pastor Ron Nugent brought a proposal to Presbytery in September 1995 to plant a church in the central Perth/Northbridge area. This satisfied my personal criteria for a church planting work. The church planter was an experienced pastor with a good track record. There was a viable group to reach out to those who are not receiving an adequate Reformed testimony. In fact, the vision encompassed ethnic groups not being effectively reached with the Gospel and within easy reach of Northbridge. It also included an outreach to U.W.A. students, particularly overseas students, as a mission to other countries. Years ago I served on a Presbytery Evangelism and Missions Committee and the central Perth area had been seen as a strategic place to plant a church.

What we felt was needed was a pastor with a great gift for preaching. Following the theory that the majority of people travel to a church on the city side of their home, this church could cater for the older established areas that we have not been effectively reaching. A central church could also minister to workers in the city in their lunch hours. For the above reasons and others I enthusiastically supported the proposal.

I never really thought about being involved with Ron. Nevertheless God was working in my life and circumstances to draw me to this work. Meanwhile Ron and Mina had been praying for a team of twenty people to work with them. On Saturday 30 December it was exciting to meet with most of the group for a social evening and twenty one people attended. This group represented nine nationalities. At the time of writing we look forward to the commencement of our prayer meetings next week on Sunday and Wednesday.

We are excited about beginning our Sunday morning services - initially just with the church planting team - from 4 February, and then reaching out from 3 March with public services and also launching the SNUF (Sunday Night University Fellowship) at U.W.A. I expect that by the time this booklet is printed we will be in full swing D.V.

We are praying that the name of the church will also be its experience, ie. “All Nations Presbyterian Church” and that as a congregation of WPC we will see an ingathering of God’s elect people from many ethnic groups. Having read this, please also petition our great God to do a mighty work amongst us in our city of Perth. Won’t it be great to see a Reformed testimony in what has been one of Satan’s stronghold ie. Northbridge.
It was in 1974 that Wendy and I first encountered Westminster Presbyterian Church. At the time it was meeting in a little hall at Caversham. We attended a night service (Wendy had been a couple of times before) and I remember well my first question to Elder Clem White after the service: “How many churches in this denomination?” His reply was: “One. This is it”. Of course, there was also Brookton. But I was a little shocked. Having a background in a mainline denomination I never knew that denominations could come in such small packages.

But small package or large, it seemed pretty good to me and provided the answers to the questions about life we had been asking. Soon after the church moved to Koongamia Hall.

Before stumbling across (rather, being led to) WPC, Wendy and I had been through a time of searching. Our two sons, Chris and Darren, were approaching school age and our lives were characterised by barrenness and emptiness. We found no satisfaction in worldly pursuits. They could provide but a few moments of fleeting pleasure - then in would seep that emptiness again. We often said to one another “There has to be something more in life”.

There was - God. He began to draw us to himself, initially through an old man at Augusta who invited us to a Christmas Carols evening while we were holidaying down there. Wendy was so impressed that upon returning to Perth she put our children in Sunday School. Though not a WPC Sunday School, it was staffed almost entirely by WPC people, the Gunns, Waltons and Sims (but that is another story).

Our eldest son began pre-school in 1974, and the pre-school we chose was again staffed by WPC members - Daphne Shaw and June Winterflood (strange that). So it was not surprising that we were invited to the WPC.

Wendy’s conversion followed shortly and I was re-awakened - a penitent backslider who had been converted at the age of 15 and who for ten years had tried to bury any thought of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. There followed almost two years of blissful involvement with the Koongamia congregation (now Maida Vale). Pastor Warren Myers preached from the Bible. Now that was something, and we loved it.

Warren once told Wendy that I some day might become an elder. Now, at the time, I thought that was a bit of a joke - I had a tremendous aversion to responsibility, and if I were to become an elder I would have to be dragged kicking and screaming across the threshold. Obviously Warren could see more than I - later I did become an elder (firstly at Bull Creek), and I did so volitionally, - no kicking and screaming.

We cherish fond memories of being disciplined by Paul Winterflood at a mid-week meeting in Rod and Jenny Gunn’s home during 1974-75 - there the foundations were laid for what we hope is a life of fruitful Christian service.

WPC Koongamia went through some rough times during that period, but through it all we saw God’s hand at work in the church and in us.

Study commitments took us up to Northam for two years. But we maintained contact with WPC and at the end of my studies we returned to Perth to take up work, and threw our lot in with the newly-established WPC Bull Creek, which was not far from where we lived. It was being pastored by Dave and Barb Cross, and there we learned much about the doggedness...
and determination which is required of church planters.

I became an elder at Bull Creek, and during our eighteen months there spent many happy hours letterbox dropping the neighbourhood and otherwise serving in the church. It was there that I first preached. I doubt that it has gone down in the annals of Christendom's best maiden sermons, but it was a beginning. I have the deepest admiration for pastors who allow a novice into their pulpits - these are anxious moments.

Peter (fresh from Westminster Seminary) and Jenny Adamson joined the Bull Creek team while we were there, and our lives were further enriched by their input and friendship.

Wendy and I and our family left Perth to return to our home state Queensland in 1979, just as the Bull Creek building project began. We stood on the concrete slab, but weren't there to see the walls raised.

It would be fair to say that upon our return to Queensland we pined for WPC, our spiritual Alma Mater - in fact we went through the horrors. There was nothing that could fill the void. We were WPCers through and through. That is not, by the way, denominational pride; that's long since been beaten out of me. God is much greater than WPC and is at work across the denominations. But like a comfortable set of clothes, WPC suited us and still does.

We were pleased when in the early '80s WPC came to Queensland. The first Qld WPC was begun at Redbank Plains, in Brisbane’s West, and though two hours drive from the Sunshine Coast we attended there regularly and I was appointed acting elder for the Redbank Plains congregation.

In 1982 we offered ourselves as a seed family for a WPC on the Sunshine Coast. In 1983 the work began, with Sunday meetings at Buderim Memorial Hall. We had no pastor at first, but the preaching was maintained by men from Brisbane, with myself leading the services and preaching about once a month.

In 1984 (twelve months after we began) MTW church planter Sam Larsen and his family moved to Buderim to pastor the church. During the latter part of his five year ministry at Buderim, Nigel Chalmers and I began training for the ministry. It would be fair to say that Westminster Theological College (Qld) was established to accommodate our needs - mature age students for the ministry with families to support.

After twelve months training, Nigel was called to assist with pastoring the Centenary Suburbs congregation and at the conclusion of his training was called to Bull Creek as youth pastor.

When the Larsens returned to the U.S. in 1988, I was called to pastor the Buderim congregation, where I labour to this day.

SCENIC HILLS

Here follows a report, giving an account how WPC spread to the East Coast of Australia.

by Ron Norman

I made contact with WPC in 1980 when I was Principal of Goodna Christian School in Brisbane. This contact was made through Mr. Derek Bound who was at that time a teacher on my staff. Derek had previous knowledge of WPC and excited my interest so we wrote to Perth Presbytery asking them to send someone across to discuss with us the possibility of beginning a work on the East Coast. Providentially Rev. Oliver Claassen was available and was sent across by Perth Presbytery.

There was a sense of excitement at that meeting and a real sense of God’s hand upon us. We
knew that He was in this and sensed the leading and direction of His Holy Spirit.

Oliver came, and the church began with three families, Oliver’s, Derek’s and mine, in my lounge room. We found a small disused Church of England building in our area which was for sale, which Derek and I bought for $7,000.00, building and land. This gave us instant credibility in the area since this was a historic building, over 100 years old.

After much hard work, painting and renovating, we began services here with two or three families. The Lord used my position as Principal to attract more people to our work, as well as the dynamic ministry of Oliver, and our little church grew in an area called Redbank Plains.

Joy and I left there in 1982 to build a new work with Rev. Larry Billiter in Centenary Suburbs, another area of Brisbane. This work grew, however, when Larry was called back to the United States and my time at the school came to an end, the work at Centenary combined with Indooroopilly under the leadership of David Kiewiet.

Joy and I then returned to Sydney, our home town, and were in correspondence with Oliver who had returned to America after the calling of Warren Myers to Redbank Plains. I was in the process of completing a Science Degree at Sydney University when I suggested to Oliver that we get together to plant another Church in Sydney. This we did in Penrith at Mt. Pleasant in 1985, and this became Lakeside WPC which eventually called Rev. Ray Wilson as its Pastor.

A couple of years before Ray came, Rev. Scott Kroeger had been appointed Pastor at Lakeside, and Oliver was involved with a Chinese Church in the inner city area of Sydney.

Scott and I were then directed by our Committee of Presbytery to begin another work in Campbelltown, (Scenic Hills WPC). Scott handed over this work to me as Senior Pastor in 1995, and he took up a Church with the Presbyterian Church in Victoria.

FROM BUDERIM AND BACK AGAIN

BY SHIRLEY CHALMERS

Nigel and I first heard of WPC through Bob and Wendy Burnett when we worshipped together at the PCA Church at Woombye. At that time there were no WPC Churches in Queensland so, though we found their accounts of the people and ethos of WPC very interesting, we had no thought of ever joining the denomination. A few years later Sam Larsen moved to Buderim to commence a church planting ministry with the help of the Burnetts and a few other families. Nigel and I both felt that there was a lack of spiritual growth in our lives and were unhappy in our church situation. A retired missionary friend of mine, Ev Pattemore, had begun to attend WPC and as I saw her at a woman’s Bible Study group every week she shared with me just how wonderful this Sam Larsen’s preaching was and that I really should come along to hear him. This went on for several months before Nigel and I decided that we should take her advice.

The meeting we attended was held in a smallish room in the local Memorial Hall and we found the warmth and welcome, along with Sam’s preaching and his personal interest in us a great blessing. Being ever cautious we did not jump in immediately but took a six month leave of absence of our duties and membership of the PCA to give WPC a try. From then on we only went forward in our faith and growth in the Lord and in time Nigel, along with Lance Copland, joined Bob in the eldership.
We soon moved from the little hall to the very attractive community hall of the Buderim Mountain State School. Under Sam’s ministry and through his encouragement and enthusiasm Nigel eventually decided that the Lord would have him undertake studies through WTC in Brisbane. Through the generous and loving support of God’s people both Nigel and I were able to attend the college and undertake full time studies for the next two years. This was a great privilege in my opinion and I loved every minute of the lectures. Nigel, Bob Burnett and myself were the first three people to pass through WTC Brisbane. We all have some very happy memories of those times, especially of suffering from “information overload” which came as a result of travelling together from the coast down to Brisbane with Sam, who had the happy knack of making every second count. I think we had more lectures in the car than we did in the college.

Nigel was called to help in the work at Centenary suburbs after our first year of study. We gained much from the experience of working with Dave and Jan Kiewiet along with Dan and Sue Rowton and all the folk in the Centenary Church. On completion of the second year of study Ron Nugent arrived in Brisbane on a teaching and teaching assignment and when Nigel met him and Mina at the airport he immediately decided that Nigel was the man they had been praying for at Bull Creek. Within a few months the Chalmers family was packed up and the family station wagon headed for Perth.

Bull Creek is special. Working in a team ministry with Ron Nugent and Derek Jones was a great blessing and joy to Nigel. We loved the people and Nigel had a fruitful ministry in Youth Work and administration. After almost five years the Lord has brought us back to Buderim. We arrived to find a beautiful and spacious church building which had been erected in our absence. Although many well known and loved folk are still attending the church there have been many new faces to get to know as well. Nigel feels a strong commitment to exercising his gifts of servanthood and encouragement in supporting Bob in his ministry here.

In the growth of the church as a whole and in our own personal lives there have been many struggles. Yet God is faithful and He keeps His people as we trust in Him.

TRUST IN GOD

By the grace of God
We stand where we stand today
He brings us through
The trials along the way
His sovereign hand
Unfolds His love’s decree
As He reaches down
To strengthen you and me.

His purpose plain
Unflinching we must take
The narrow way
Eternity’s at stake
We can’t afford
The devastating loss
If we forget
And then forsake the cross.

We shall endure
The battle belongs to Him
And as He has promised
His power won’t grow dim
Though we be battered
And bloodied in the fight
We stand unmoved
And trust His holy might

The commission’s clear
The Gospel lights our path
The truth of God
Will be revealed at last
And our reward
As we stand before the Son
To hear Him say
Well done my Faithful one.

Well done
well done
well done, you faithful ones.

This poem by Shirley Chalmers was read by Nigel Chalmers at the Anniversary Celebration of 25 years of the Westminster Presbyterian Church on 7-1-1996.
The seed embryo for the beginning of PCI goes back to September 1987 when Dan Rowton presented a demographic study of the greater Brisbane area at the Mission to the World Queensland Team Retreat. Indooroopilly was listed as one of about a dozen possible locations for Church planting. Reasons being: No Reformed and Presbyterian witness nearby, proximity to Queensland University, well-known community/visibility, accessibility, additional growth anticipated within close geographical areas.

In July of 1988 the David Kiewiet family moved into Kenmore, a suburb adjacent to Indooroopilly with plans for the eventual establishment of a new church. At the September 1988 Mission to the World Team Retreat, David Kiewiet presented a six month plan of development for the establishment of a new church.

This plan called for a letter-box drop to Indooroopilly and its surrounding communities within an eight week time frame during the months of October and November 1988. Approximately 12,000 homes were covered through this venture. The broadside invited people to join in the formation of a new church which would be committed to biblical preaching and teaching, and family oriented programs. A contact phone number was included on the sheet. Eight people phoned up as a result of the letter-box drop.

A newspaper advertisement was also placed in the local weekly that covered the targeted area. This ad ran for three weeks and read: “Presbyterian Church Now Forming: Interested? Ring... with contact number.” Six people phoned up for information.

An information meeting was set up for the last Sunday evening in November. Letters were sent to all those who had responded to the letter-box drop and the newspaper advertisement inviting them to an informal gathering at our home. Three people came for this meeting besides those those who were part of the MTW Church Planting Team. The purpose of this meeting was to tell about who we were and what our intentions were for starting the new church.

In December, a Telemarketing List of 6,600 names was purchased from a local agency. These lists included the names, addresses and phone numbers of all those in one of the postcodes (zip code) of our targeted area. Arrangements were made for additional personnel assistance from the Church Planting Team in Sydney in February.

In January 1989, the publicity mailings which would follow-up the telemarketing calls were created and contracted out to a local printer. It was decided that 750 pieces of three separate mailings would be ordered. These would be mailed out successively in the three weeks preceding the launch day for the new church. It was decided to follow the theme: “The Birth of A Church.” The launch day was set for Easter Sunday March 26, 1989.

During the second week of February, 10 people were involved in the Telemarketing phone callings. During that week of phone calling, approximately 2300 answered their phones. Of that number 640 responded positively to receiving the information concerning the new church to be started on Easter Sunday.

During the month of March, the three mailings were sent out. A packet of information describing the Church, it’s philosophy, personnel, and ministries was created to give to each
family attending the first service. A special document which recorded those present as a witness to “The Birth of A Church” was also drawn up for the first service. Advertisements were again placed in the local newspaper announcing the “Birth of A Church for Easter Sunday.

On Easter Sunday, 1989, 53 people were present for the first Worship Service of the Presbyterian Church at Indooroopilly. Of that number 23 were actually present as a result of the various advertising methods used during the six month period.

All those present were followed up with a letter of welcome and an attempted visit. Each person present at that first service was sent a certificate stating that they were witnesses to “The Birth of A Church”.

Average attendance at PCI ran for about a month at half of that of the launch day service. A month later the attendance had increased by 50%.

Through the months of July and August, PCI had a tremendous amount of exposure to the community through a music drama team that performed at various community high schools and in public places. As a result of this group a solid Youth Group was established by the end of August. By December of 1989 PCI had doubled in its attendance.

In January 1990, due to much discouragement in the loss of members, the Centenary Church, WPC voted to amalgamate with PCI. This union brought an additional 30 regular attenders to the Indooroopilly work. This along with an influx of new families during the summer holidays brought PCI’s morning worship attendance up to the 85 level.

That same month saw the beginning of a Divorce Support Group Ministry by a member of PCI. This has expanded to include support for single parent families as well.

In March 1990, PCI began a ministry on the University of Queensland. Recognising the need for a university church for the resident students, the church decided to hold its Sunday evening worship service on Campus with a special emphasis to the University student and their needs. The result of this ministry has been well over a dozen students attending the morning worship services in Indooroopilly.

The Church has followed the Tillapaugh theory of hiring “slave” labour. It presently is paying 3 students to serve as pastors. One of Youth, one of University Ministries, and one of Evangelism. It is looking towards hiring a fourth student to serve as Pastor of Visitation in the near future.

God has been good to PCI. It is our desire that He be given all the praise, glory, and honour for what He is doing.

For He alone is worthy!

INDOOROOPILLY

BY DAVID BROCK

My own involvement goes back to January ‘89 when I started a lay counselling course at WTC, which met at the back of the book store at Westlake in the western suburbs of Brisbane.

At that time I had no intention of joining WPC or continuing at WTC. I had just deferred my Business degree studies and thought the counselling course would be useful.

But in time my interest in further study at WTC grew and I was soon faced with a decision - to continue, or go back to my Business studies. Consequently I asked the Lord to close the doors He didn’t want me to enter and open the doors He did.
So here we go at the end of '95. I've got my final WTC exam on the 27th of October in Hebrew at the Presbyterian Hall of Queensland. I'm an elder at Indooroopilly and the possibility of ordination looms likely in '96.

As for our involvement with the Indooroopilly congregation, my wife and I first went there in September '89 when the church met in the teachers lounge at the school.

We had just set ourselves six months to look around at the various churches about us, but on the first Sunday we visited Indooroopilly, and have not left since. Our only time away was for fifteen months during '91, '92 when I was pastoral assistant to Bob Burnett in the Buderim congregation.

For us there has always been an attraction to Indooroopilly and a sense of belonging. It has been a great joy to be part of its continued growth. Although nowhere near perfect, the church has had an atmosphere of concern for both God's Word and for the people.

We hope and pray that this will grow in the future.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT CAPALABA
"Man Proposes — God Disposes"
By David Kiewiet

Our family returned to Australia, after our first furlough, on Boxing Day of 1991. With plans to leave for Synod in Perth the first weekend of January 1992, we were in a bit of a rush to find a suitable home to rent and a car to purchase all within approximately 10 days time. To add to that, the Presbytery of Queensland wasn't exactly sure in which suburb they wanted us to plant another church. So within a day of our arrival, a presbytery committee met and confirmed that Carindale would be the suburb for planting the next WPC church. By God's grace we found a house in Carindale and moved in the day before Dave flew off to the Synod meetings.

Within that first few months, the Lord began to gather a core of people who were interested in being part of this new work. The Cormack family decided to move from Indooroopilly to Carindale to be a seed family for the work. Another family from Canada contacted us the day before we left the States, announcing that they would be moving to Brisbane in April and would be a part of the church. There were a few singles as well who also committed themselves to the new effort. With this commitment, it was decided to begin a Sunday morning worship fortnightly in our home beginning on Easter Sunday 1992. However, we would not make a public thrust into the community until August.

In the time between, we did all the usual work of preparing to launch a new church: advertising in the community newspaper, letter-box drops throughout the neighbourhood, visiting the local clergy, checking into RE opportunities, prayer meetings for the new work, purchasing foldup chairs, business cards made up, banners painted, etc. On a Saturday in March and April we had a whole crew of our young adults from University of Queensland SNUF join us for Neighbourhood Door Knock Survey Evangelism, after which Jan fed them. It was fun and profitable, providing us with additional contacts and exposure. During the month of July we had four Summer Impact workers arrive, who letterboxed dropped the entire “targeted area” of Carindale and its surrounding suburbs. We also procured the use of a room at the Carina Primary School for our weekly services.

“Launch Sunday” was set for 16 August. The first public worship of the Carindale WPC had
51 people present. A number of these were folks from other WPC churches that came along to encourage us with our new start. There were a few new contacts from the community. After that, the attendance leveled at around the 30 mark.

Nine months later, the school announced that the room we were in was being converted to a computer room and it would not be available on weekends. So we prayed and looked. The Belmont Primary School, also in Carindale, offered us a room that wasn’t being used for classes, so the church family moved there in April of 1993. Attendance continued around the 30 mark. At the end of 1993 the Belmont School announced that the room we were using would have to be turned into a classroom in 1994 and would be unavailable to us, so again, we prayed and we searched. We found out what we already knew, there were no public halls or function rooms within Carindale except the local motel, which was out of our price range. There were varying opinions as to where the church should go next. Some wanted to move nearer Griffith University, where a SNUF ministry had been started. Others wanted to move elsewhere. A meeting of the borrowed Session brought unanimity that the church should relocate to Capalaba, ten kilometres further east from where we were at present. A new family had started attending from Capalaba, and two of our families living in Carindale were purchasing homes in Capalaba in 1994. So in February 1994, the WPC Carindale became the WPC Capalaba.

The Lord has blessed the move with growth for the church. We immediately picked up two additional families and attendance has grown to around the 50 level. During 1994 the church formally organised with a membership. In late 1994 nominations were received for church officers... and officer training began. In February 1995 the church elected its first two elders, Andy Cormack and Peter Farlow and its first deacon, Michael Bos. Steve Cheshire was elected as the church’s second deacon in August. In May of 1995 the Presbytery declared WPC Capalaba a particular church of the presbytery.

Before the church was ever started, Jan prayed that God would make this church a generous church. The Lord has kindly answered that prayer. The WPC Capalaba, though not a large church, has done tremendous works of both a diaconal and benevolent nature since its beginning. (Including the sponsoring of an Ethiopian refugee.) Its commitment to missions is also a testimony to its generous heart. It is our prayer that the Lord would continue to use this church as a great witness in Brisbane and around the world.

In The Next Pages God Takes This Part Of His Church From

[Map of Australia and New Zealand]
INTRODUCTION

On August 11th 1991, I had the privilege of officiating at a special service to receive the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) of Christchurch, New Zealand, into the Queensland Presbytery of the Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC). That service marked the climax of a decade of contact between the two church bodies.

As the former pastor of the EPC, I had been intimately involved in that process that led to its ultimate union with the WPC. What follows is a personal recollection of that process. It has been written to celebrate the sovereign providence of God, and to consolidate relationships between churches and individuals separated by the Tasman Sea.

Readers interested in learning about the beginnings of the EPC (in 1974) should write to Rev. Neil Benfell, 117 Cheyenne Street, Christchurch, New Zealand, asking for a copy of the booklet "Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us", written by the present author on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the EPC.

THE LETTER THAT BEGAN IT ALL

Tucked away in my files is a letter dated 6th May 1980, written by Rev. Andrew Priddle of Perth to the Manager of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church Bookshop in Christchurch, New Zealand. The letter contains a request for a book that Mr. Priddle had seen advertised in "The Gospel Witness", the official magazine of the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches of New Zealand. More importantly, it also contains a suggestion that the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches of New Zealand consider entering into a formal contact with the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Australia.

I have this letter in my possession because it marks the first written contact (howbeit informal), between the WPC and what was later to become the EPC of Christchurch, New Zealand. At that time, the EPC was a member church of a small and struggling “proto-presbytery” of churches known as the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches (OPC) in New Zealand. Later, the Christchurch congregation withdrew from the OPC and changed its name to the EPC.

Whether or not the OPC acted on Andrew Priddle’s suggestion and initiated communication with the WPC escapes my memory. What I do know, however, is that the enterprising bookshop manager of the Christchurch OPC took it upon himself to supply the Clerk of the WPC Presbytery, Rev. Andrew Priddle, with a brief sketch of the history and aims of the Christchurch congregation. This prompted a second letter from Mr. Priddle, dated 5th June 1980. He in turn provided a synopsis of the origins of the WPC, including an account of the turf-breaking missionary work of Rev. David Cross and his wife Barbara.

A paragraph in this letter is of special interest in the light of later events. Rev. Priddle writes, “A recent visitor to the West was Rev. Robert Rayburn, a past Principal of Covenant Seminary in the USA and still serving as head of the Practical Theology Department. Dr. Rayburn will be in Melbourne for a couple of months at the Evangelical College of Biblical Studies. He plans to return to the USA through New Zealand, and I understand through David [Cross] that he will be passing through Christchurch. We would like to suggest that you write to him in Melbourne soon and make arrangements to meet him on his way home. He is anxious to see all that he can, and I am sure that you would like him very much.”

We did get to meet Dr. and Mrs. Rayburn.
Remarkably, their brief visit with us coincided with fledgling plans on the part of the Christchurch Session to send my wife Nola and I to Britain and America for a period of study leave. Dr. Rayburn was able to organise a recent graduate from Covenant Seminary to come and supply our pulpit for the twelve months we would be away. He and his wife also graciously offered to host us for as long as we could be with them at Covenant Seminary in St. Louis, USA.

REMARKABLE EVENTS IN AMERICA

In April, 1982, while Nola and I were bound for St. Louis via a circuitous route taking us to Alabama, we stumbled upon what to us anyway was an incredible discovery. One Sunday morning as we were travelling to worship at Pastor Walter Chantry's church in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Nola noticed a folding billboard outside a Seventh Day Adventist Church. Its bold printing advertised that the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Carlisle met there on Sunday mornings. What caught our eyes especially, was the name of the organising pastor of this congregation - Rev. D. Cross. We immediately asked our host if this Rev. Cross could be the Rev. David Cross who had spent some years in Western Australia. To our joyful surprise, we discovered that it was.

Later that same day, we were ushered into the lounge of the Cross home and welcomed as though we were long lost friends. David and Barbara still had their hearts in Perth, and any visitor from "down under" found a rapturous welcome in their home. We talked long and late about Australia and New Zealand. Nola and I realised that we had found true and enthusiastic allies in our campaign to promote biblical Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Australasia.

Never one to let the grass grow under his feet, David was on the telephone to Nelson Malkus, head of World Presbyterian Missions (the mission arm of the Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod) before we left that night, arranging a meeting in Wilmington, Delaware, for the next day. That lunchtime meeting was to establish a bond that grew and developed throughout the 1980's. Nelson was instantly appreciative of the needs of Presbyterianism in New Zealand, and committed himself to a hearty interest in the work of the EPC in Christchurch. He also urged us to take up immediate contact with the WPC churches in Australia, and to forge the closest possible contact with these churches. He mentioned that he hoped to visit Australia again within the next year, and promised that if he did so, he would plan to include a whirlwind visit of New Zealand as well.

THE FRUSTRATING YEARS

Upon returning to New Zealand in July 1982, our Session, (the Session of the Christchurch EPC) made contact with the Rev. Oliver Claassen in Queensland. Oliver, a Mission to the World (MTW) church planter, assured us of the keen interest of Queensland WPC churches in what we were doing in New Zealand, and of their hope to one day send church planting teams to help us. He expressed interest in visiting New Zealand to gain a first hand impression of the condition of Presbyterianism there, and took steps immediately to join Nelson Malkus on a tour of the country in April 1983.

Rev. and Mrs. Nelson Malkus and Rev. Oliver Claassen toured both North and South Islands between April 6-18 1983. They called upon ministers and elders from the Reformed
Churches of New Zealand and the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, as well as our own congregation and the Dunedin Evangelical Church. At the recommendation of these men, we wrote to MTW headquarters in Atlanta, asking them "to consider commencing work in our country (NZ). Specifically", the letter continued, "we would like to see a team of MTW church planters in the city in which we are located, Christchurch".

Unknown to us at the time, Revs Malkus and Claassen had made far more ambitious recommendations to MTW. They urged that MTW put "three (church planting) units in Christchurch in 1985 and five units into Auckland in 1986". However, the Atlanta MTW authorities were not to be pressed into hasty action. In a letter to me dated June 2, 1983, Nelson Malkus wrote that the Committee of MTW did discuss our request and his report and took the following decision: "That we accept Nelson Malkus' recommendations as information and that we continue to do further research and study concerning New Zealand and the possibility of placing a church planting team there".

Three months later, Nelson was to write again saying that "the possibility of opening the new field of New Zealand has never been discussed by the Committee of Mission to the World and, as far as I can tell, although there is not disinterest in that possibility, it is, as we say, 'on the back burner'". In December, another letter arrived from the same source with further discouraging news: "I am sorry to have to report that there was no progress made on establishing New Zealand as a new MTW field at that November meeting (of the Committee of MTW). There was, however, considerable progress made on seeking to strengthen our church planting teams in Australia, and my understanding is that, as soon as that is done in a significant measure, MTW will seriously consider opening New Zealand as a new field." Commenting on that same decision, Rev. Paul McKaughan, at that time coordinator of MTW, wrote "This does not mean that New Zealand is out of the picture, but it does mean that it will not be a priority in the near future."

In the months that followed Rev Nelson Malkus "went to bat" for New Zealand on every possible occasion. His next move was to suggest to MTW church planters stranded in the USA waiting for visa approval, that they consider working in New Zealand if they were denied entry to Australia. One of these church planters was Rev. David Kiewiet. He and his wife Jan had successfully raised their needed support to go to Australia, but were dogged by visa delays. "We have waited over ten months and have not yet received them" he wrote to me in a letter dated 30th October 1985. "We are beginning to question if perhaps the Lord would have us consider other options. Mr. Malkus told us of your desire to see the Reformed Faith, even the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, promoted there in New Zealand and that you have from time to time requested help from the PCA." He then went on to ask about visa requirements for New Zealand, and urged me to begin making exploratory investigations with immigration officials.

As the weeks passed, it became increasingly possible that New Zealand might get its first church planting family - the Kiewiets - by default. Late in February, a letter from Nelson Malkus (dated Feb. 17th 1986) arrived containing this exclamation: "I can hardly believe it...! David [Kiewiet] tells me he has the authorization of the Committee [of MTW] to pursue the possibility of going to your beautiful country." In a letter written the very same day, David provided us with further details. "At the Feb. 13-15th meeting, MTW voted that May 8th would be the cut-off point for our waiting. If no visa then, we don't go to Australia."

As is now well known, visa approval for the Kiewiet family was granted in time. Late in April, a letter reached us from Rev. Paul McKaughan saying, "We are grateful to God for opening the way for the Kiewiets to secure visas into Australia... At the present time we have no plans for starting a work in New Zealand, but perhaps when we complete the project in Australia, that would be a possibility. We will trust the Lord with you to work out His purposes in this situation."
Somewhat frustrated by this turn of events (yet not rebellious), Nelson Malkus turned his thoughts in another direction. If MTW could not foresee starting a new field in NZ for some years, perhaps there were retired ministers who might be willing to travel to New Zealand to boost the ailing cause of Presbyterianism there. Two or three promising leads were explored, but came to nothing. It seemed that the door to work in New Zealand had been firmly closed.

**THE HOLIDAY THAT CHANGED IT ALL.**

MTW-WPC contact dried up after that for a year or two. But in December 1989, the Kiewiet family decided to take a holiday in New Zealand, the country they were so nearly consigned to three years earlier.

I can still vividly remember standing in the kitchen of our home on the evening of Saturday, 2nd December, tea towel in hand, when the telephone rang. A distinctly American voice enquired when and where we were holding our worship services the next day. Having given directions, I thought it best to add that we were to celebrate the Lord’s Supper at the morning service. I mentioned that we welcomed members of other evangelical churches to share with us in the sacrament, and asked if my caller came into that category. “Yes”, he replied. “Actually, my name is David Kiewiet, and I am the minister of a WPC church in Brisbane, Queensland”. “David Kiewiet!” I exclaimed, “Do you want to preach?”

Because of their busy itinerary, David and Jan Kiewiet and their delightful children could not stay long after the service the following morning. However, two weeks later, this time on a Saturday afternoon, I heard David’s now-familiar voice on the telephone again. He told me how he and his family had been deeply impressed with the sense of need to pray for us, and to make further contact with us before returning to Australia.

Over the telephone we talked about goals, aims, needs, and the possibilities of closer contact between our churches. David urged me to write to the Synod of the WPC, shortly to convene for the first time, and he also encouraged me to consider visiting Queensland. We both finished our talk very excited, and deeply conscious that God in His providence had brought us into personal contact.

Within weeks of that telephone call, I received a request to speak at an Easter Bible Conference in Sydney. With the hearty endorsement of the Session in Christchurch, I arranged to travel to Brisbane after Easter to spend a week with the Kiewiets and the WPC in Queensland. Little did I imagine that within seven months, I would be returning to be the teaching elder of the WPC at Indooroopilly.

**RAPID AND WONDERFUL CHANGES**

After returning to New Zealand and reporting on what I had learned in Brisbane, the EPC elders decided to invite David Kiewiet to visit Christchurch to advise on church planting strategies.

David’s arrival on July 28th coincided with an extraordinary period of uncertainty and change in my own life. Since returning to New Zealand after a second preaching trip abroad in June, I had been plagued with a loss of vision and direction for the work in Christchurch. To add to my confusion, our congregation received a request to oversee a Christian school. That responsibility would have required me to become the school pastor, and demanded considerable administrative and educational as well as spiritual input.

In the course of unburdening my doubts, confusion and discouragement to David on the Sunday evening of his visit, he challenged me to consider that the Lord might be calling me to leave Christchurch and work elsewhere. Specifically, he asked me (in a semi-joking way) to consider coming to Brisbane to serve the newly formed Indooroopilly WPC congregation.

His suggestion stunned me. Nola and I had never contemplated leaving Christchurch, let alone New Zealand. But to our amazement,
the moment we began to think about such a possibility, we found ourselves filled with a strange and powerful peace and joy. Within hours, we both had a deep assurance that the Lord was indeed going to call us to Australia.

But what was to happen to the Christchurch congregation? Deeply ingrained principles would not let me abandon the flock we had loved and leave it shepherdless. Besides, we had committed ourselves to oversee the Christian School, and someone had to do that. If we were to go, someone else had to be found — someone with very special qualities.

That concern stirred me to pray throughout the hours of that Sunday night. Long before the pale rays of the sunrise announced the arrival of a new day, I was persuaded that I had been given an answer. Rev. Neil Benfell, a New Zealander serving the Reformed Church in Wellington, seemed just the man that was needed. As a former teacher, then lecturer at a teacher’s training college, the founder of Christian schools in Australia, and an ordained minister, he appeared to have all the needed credentials. But would he be willing to come?

Excitedly, I shared my thoughts with David Kiewiet when he rose that morning. He too seemed to be caught up in an unusual, heavenly joy. We both felt that the Lord was at work. All through that day as we drove to the beautiful alps, we talked, planned and prayed about what He might be doing. It appeared that God was not simply opening doors for our family to go to Australia, but drawing our churches together to work unitedly for the cause of the gospel in both countries. It excited me to think that there might be some way of continuing to serve New Zealand, even if we were in Brisbane.

What followed was a thrilling chapter in our personal spiritual pilgrimage. In brief, the Benfells in Wellington has also been prepared by God to move, and quickly assented to the call to come to Christchurch; the Indoortoopilly congregation were united in their desire to have us come and serve them; and the EPC were of one mind to seek the closest possible tie with the WPC - namely, full membership as a congregation in the Queensland Presbytery. Within the space of four months, our possessions were packed, our house rented, and we were ready to go. We bade farewell to our loved friends and the homeland we had never expected to leave, not with a sense of forsaking them but of leaving them temporarily to further their cause in the larger body of WPC churches in Australia.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

In March 1991, the Queensland Presbytery received a formal request from the Session of the EPC to become part of the WPC denomination. As mentioned earlier, that connection has been made. In its wake has followed an exciting train of events in New Zealand. A graduate from Westminster Seminary in the USA, a New Zealander by the name of David McKie, has returned to take up church planting work with the WPC/EPC in Auckland, New Zealand. A group of families in a town 50 miles south of Christchurch has asked the EPC to begin church planting work with them. Further south in Dunedin, the Dunedin Evangelical Church (DEC) is seriously considering aligning itself with the WPC. Rev. Nelson Malkus, that faithful advocate of New Zealand’s missionary needs, has himself spent nearly six months working with the DEC helping it reach a point of decision about its future. The doors he once thought closed to work in New Zealand, appear to be opening in ways totally different to what anyone imagined.

With that, this brief reminiscence comes to a close. I, for one, am convinced that the union forged between the WPC in Australia and the EPC in Christchurch, New Zealand, is of the Lord’s doing. What the future holds is completely in His sovereign hands. But for the present, I am sure that He means us to work together with all of our power and resources to promote the true gospel of His Son, and to establish faithful, biblical churches throughout Australasia.

Brisbane, January 1992
The EPC Christchurch began its existence at the end of 1974 as a group of a dozen members, including two elders (Bill van Rij and Andrew Young). Most of the members had previously fellowshipped within the Presbyterian Church but had become increasingly concerned that the church showed no signs of dealing with the issues of apostasy rife within it and indeed the influence of liberal theology appeared to be growing every year.

During the first ten years of our history we had two main foci for our ministry:
(i) Local evangelism, mainly through children’s work, within the Rowley suburb of Christchurch, and
(ii) A national ministry of tapes, books and magazine articles seeking to promote the great truths of the Reformed Faith.

Over this time we enjoyed pastoral assistance from the Protestant Reformed Churches in America and we were in fellowship with another three congregations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches in New Zealand.

At the end of our first ten years we were supporting Andrew Young as a full-time pastor and had grown to a congregation of about fifty adults and thirty five children with an adult membership of twenty five.

During 1988 we moved the location of our church to better facilities in the university suburb of our city. Almost immediately there was an increase in visitors attending worship and over the next six years the congregation grew to about 100 people. This growth mainly came from people relocateing for work or study. We have undertaken extensive door to door visitation work and occasional outreach programmes and while these have provided opportunity for witness, they have resulted in only a few conversions or solid contacts.

Contact with the Westminster Churches in Australia was initiated through David Kiewiet and his family while here on holiday. This contact, subsequent discussions with the members of Presbytery in Brisbane, together with a remarkable number of events and needs coming together, convinced us that the Lord was guiding us into new paths. To cut the story short, the upshot of these events was:
(i) Our pastor was called to become pastor of the Indooroopilly Church in Brisbane and to teach at the Theological College.
(ii) Neil Benfell was called to be pastor of our congregation and to take leadership in developing a Christian day school which we had recently been entrusted with.
(iii) Our congregation joined with the WPC within the ‘Queensland’ Presbytery.
(iv) Our long-standing desire to see biblically sound and evangelistic Presbyterian Churches established in New Zealand was rekindled with the plan to work together with the WPC and MTW to begin church planting in the Auckland area.

Distance precludes regular interaction between our churches but those who have crossed the Tasman have found churches very closely akin to our own. We are also greatly impressed with the urgency and energy with which the WPC has set about planting churches and undertaking theological training.

The subsequent years have not seen the rather grandiose plan of church planting with the help from the MTW that we had planned for. However, some solid progress in the establishing of new congregations has been achieved. David McKie was commissioned to begin church planting work in Auckland and he together with his wife Beverley are soldiering on in this task.
Also, our congregation was privileged to be able to support Peter and Janet Boyd for a period of 18 months during which time Peter’s main work was to establish a church in Ashburton and to begin a work with university students. These works both continue today and the Ashburton work has now grown to be a well settled fellowship under the pastoral care of Ian Bayne (a founding member and local farmer).

At this point in time, it seems unrealistic to expect much support in church planting in New Zealand from our already over-extended and committed brethren in Australia but there does appear to be real prospect of forming a Presbytery within New Zealand.

**AUCKLAND WPC - NEW ZEALAND**

**BY DAVID MCKIE**

The Auckland WPC held its first worship service in June 1992. Earlier that year church-planter David McKie with his wife and family had moved to Auckland after a period of theological training at Westminster Theological Seminary in California, USA, and involvement with several PCA churches in Southern California.

The McKie’s had not gone to America with any thoughts of becoming church-planters, rather David’s desire at that time was simply to gain a greater appreciation and knowledge of the Scriptures. They had always planned to return to NZ but found it difficult to see just where there would be any ministry opportunity to return to. God used their time in America to enable them to objectively compare and contrast the respective merits of the christian churches in the USA and NZ. The longer they remained in America the more aware they became of the superficial character of the NZ church and the great need for a presbyterian and reformed witness in NZ that was faithful to the Scriptures and reaching out into the community with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thus it seemed providential that at a time when the McKie’s were struggling to see what the future held in store for them, the Queensland Presbytery was giving serious consideration to the possibility of planting WPC congregations in NZ. Thus through MTW we were brought into contact with the WPC and began to prepare to return to Auckland to start the first church to be planted by WPC in NZ.

For about six months in the early part of 1992 we endeavoured to form a small core of people interested in establishing a new work, before holding our inaugural worship service in the local primary school library. We continued to meet there as a small group of 10 - 15 people until the completion of a new community hall on the school site early in 1993. We then transferred there and have been meeting at this excellent facility ever since.

Growth has been slower than we initially envisioned but today about 30 - 40 people regularly gather for worship each Sunday. Sadly none of the original small group are still meeting with us. In fact during our three years of existence we have been amazed at the high turnover of people. Unfortunately, this has impeded our ability to develop a stable ministry base and a unique ethos and identity as a congregation. Yet, we are thankful and encouraged by the people God has gathered in the past year or so and continue to look to Him for growth in the future. We have established a base here in the West Harbour area in the midst of rapid residential development in the NW suburbs of Auckland.

It is our hope that on this base God will be pleased to build a strong and vibrant church bringing honour to His name and significantly impacting our community for Christ.
The Reverend John Hunt interviewed

The Reverend John Hunt (Th.M. Covenant Theological Seminary) was interviewed recently regarding his own background and the Westminster Institute of Biblical Studies (W.I.B.S.) of which he is the principal.

His wife Inez and he have two children, one of whom graduated last year from Covenant Theological College. At the behest of World Presbyterian Missions, Rev. Hunt and his wife were in Korea for about twenty years. In this time they have seen a great working of the Holy Spirit in South Korea which manifested itself in terms of population from 7% Christian population in 1958 to about 20% today. These figures the Rev. Hunt gave with some hesitation centring on the over simplification and practical limitations of reliability inherent in such statistical estimates of “Christianity”. He attributes the movement as one of the Holy Spirit engendered through lay people in Korea. Initially missionaries to Korea tended to be from Methodist Presbyterian denominations and over the last ten years the Baptists have initiated a strong presence.

Comparing the progress of Methodist and Presbyterian activities Rev. Hunt remarked that in general the Presbyterian affiliation has prospered and that the majority of Christians in South Korea are Presbyterian.

The greater readiness of Koreans today to become Christians when contrasted with Australians he attributes to the prevalence of secular humanism in Australia as the most significant factor.

Other aspects of Rev. Hunt’s life concerning himself and his involvement with W.I.B.S. follow in question and answer sequence below.

Q Whose idea was W.I.B.S.?
A It was the desire of Presbytery - a committee was formed to look into this and as a consequence of the “Jones’ Report” the decision was made to proceed with a theological college.

Q What is the primary purpose of W.I.B.S.?
A To both train pastors and to give lay training as well.

Q In what way would you like to see W.I.B.S. developed?
A For the full time training (as well as part time lay training) of pastors.

Q In what way do you conceive of W.I.B.S. as being different from other bible colleges?
A In that its teaching will be of Reformed dogmatics and the training of reformed pastors.

Q How many were enrolled at W.I.B.S. last term?
A Twenty one enrolled for part time courses.

Q How many are expected this term?
A A smaller enrolment. Six have enrolled to date though most people enrolled in the week prior to lectures commencing last term and this may recur.

Q Are any being specifically trained for the ministry now?
A No, though a couple are inclined this way.

Q Are there any things that you think readers of this article should know of or you consider to be important in respect of W.I.B.S.?
A1 Yes, enthusiasm and encouragement from the church members and prayer
A2 A library is being currently stocked for W.I.B.S. and I am in contact with the librarian of Covenant Theological Seminary, Dr. J. Hall, who has built libraries in Korea and India.
He suggested that a fund be established in the United States for people to raise or make
donations for the W.I.B.S. library, and Mission of the World have acted accordingly in
the establishment of such a fund.

Contact with Covenant, Reformed and Westminster Theological Seminaries has revealed
an interest in their sending well qualified members of their staffs to us in terms of a
sabbatical eg. Dr. George Knight, Dr. Rayburn.

We do not want W.I.B.S. to be an “ivory tower”. High academic standards and practical
standards will form the basis of future full time studies, ie. practical training in the
various Westminster churches for the training of the “whole man” or “servant of God”
will be integral with academic studies

I am enthusiastic about the W.I.B.S. programme and pleased with the calibre of students.

WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
PERTH
1988 TO 1996

While the people of WPC were praying for a new principal for WTC back in 1988, my family
and I were comfortably supplied and contented in the nicest manse (church-owned pastor’s
dwelling) in Southern Mississippi. New session members and a diaconate were trained and
installed. Most of the goals I had set before the Lord and a couple He had given me along the
way as well were on or near fulfilment. I had a sense that my ministry at Collins Presbyterian
was coming to a close. One thing that I felt the church still lacked was a foreign missions focus.
My wife Berenice is Australian by birth. “Ah”, I thought, “if we start building a vision for the
world by featuring the needs of Australia the congregation would have a vested interest in
reaching out for world missions”. I rang up Mission to the World to find out what the needs
were in Australia.

Somehow, unbeknown to me, my call was routed to recruiting. In God’s providence Sam
Larsen was on furlough and about 100 km away at Reformed Seminary. An appointment was
made with Sam to “talk about Australia”. The room we met in was an old office. We sat amid
dozens of dusty book shelves which were in the process of being dismantled. As Sam outlined
the need at WTC, the purpose for which he thought he was interviewing me, our hearts began
to feel the inexorable tug of the Holy Spirit. I like to describe it as a custom fitted glove. As we
talked it was apparent to us all that God had led us together. It was one of those moments of
common realisation when everyone senses God’s leading in the same instant. A moment later a
mob of workers descended on the room with noisy hammers and crow bars to remove the book-
shelves. We were about to pray!

The next day I had a pastoral visit to the hospital. Dozens of relatives crowded the room.
“Make room for the preacher” someone said. Without warning I was barraged by theological
inquiry. Sensing some sort of preparation had gone on before my arrival, I commented, “This is
more like an inter-denominational Bible conference than a sick room”. I was completely dumb-
flushed by the sick man’s next words to the relatives, “We’re proud of our preacher, we think
he’s going to make a fine seminary professor one day”. You could have knocked me over with
a feather! A fortnight passed and a letter came from Andrew Priddle. In his inimitable style,
Andrew issued all but a call from the presbytery. That night we prayed, we talked and we wrote
a letter to Andrew. We received a positive letter from presbytery twelve days later. No small
miracle considering a letter usually takes ten to fourteen days ONE WAY!

25 YEARS ON. 7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995
I'm a denominational sort, so I rang up the chairman of the presbytery's missions committee. "Praise the Lord brother, we have been praying that God would raise up one of our teaching elders to do seminary work abroad" were his first words. Two weeks later I was before my presbytery sharing the vision, as much as I understood. I had expected presbytery would give "permission to labour outside the bounds". What took me by surprise was the official endorsement that followed and a motion to support us from the presbytery level! One week later we were raising funds. The session and congregation were keen to, "Help in any way possible". The next week saw us before the general assembly committee of Mission to the World. It was an unusual approval process as the members of the committee approved a cooperative agreement which was, at the time of their meeting, not even in hand or perfected. All of this took place within the space of six weeks! A process which on average takes eighteen months!

After sixteen months of living out of a suitcase and making close to seventy slide presentations with slides borrowed from the Hunts we arrived in Australia September 19 1990.

At that point WTC was more theoretical than reality. Nearly two years had passed since the Hunts left Australia. The presbytery had appointed Andrew Priddle as interim principal. He was keeping interest up through classes designed for that purpose while trying to juggle his time between Maida Vale, Presbytery and WTC.

During those first few months of adjustment to Oz and an entirely different church scene, I spent many hours picking the brains and hearts of men in Western Australia. Many prayers went up as I struggled to come to grips with the culture and the needs. I made a lot of cultural mistakes and I'm sure often stretched the patience of the brethren, but in the end the vocations committee met and approved a new philosophy for WTC, basic goals, and a new curriculum for pastoral training.

As the new principal, a servant to the WPC and an American serving with MTW I felt I had to become one with the WPC. One of our first term goals in Australia was to earn credibility with the WPC. To aid in that goal and to move more aggressively I needed help. In 1992 presbytery appointed a Board of Governors which now governs the college as an agency of presbytery.

We asked God
to raise up three new men to begin pastoral training in 1990.

God gave us - six at first and we ended up with ten that first year.

We asked God
for a wider influence in the Christian Community.

God gave us - students from four different denominations. Today we enjoy the endorsement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia for the training of their men here in Western Australia.

We asked God
for a means by which we could grant a degree.

God gave us - Birmingham Theological Seminary. In 1992 BTS offered to take us under their institutional umbrella while allowing us autonomy. I have to admit, we did not think God would move so quickly on this one as accreditation for WTC was a long term goal.

We asked God
for a new location. At the time we were using the hall at Maida Vale WPC.

God gave us - the splendid villa in Yokine which served as a home for the
Rarigs as well as the college for the next four years. The owner dropped his lease price to accommodate the amount we had budgeted. In 1993 we entered into a joint venture with Bull Creek WPC. The church was in drastic need of expansion and our lease was about to expire on the Yokine property. We agreed to build together and share the facility. The joint venture was in keeping with our philosophy of "Church based Theological Education". In practical terms, each of us gained twice the space at half the investment. God allowed us to build the current facility with a fair bit of room for expansion. Our mortgage was underwritten by "The Friends of WTC" in the space of one month.

We are thankful to God who is able to give above what we ask or even think.

PRAY FOR THE FUTURE:

We are asking God:

to expand our library collection by 35,000 volumes in the next five years. We have received donations to date which have allowed us to fill half of the library with the shelves. Volunteers are busy receiving books into our collection and pledges have come in for over the two thousand volumes per year.

We are asking God:

for a second full-time man to specialise in New Testament.

We are asking God:

to allow us Australian accreditation so that we can grant our own degrees, and sponsor foreign student visas and see our students gain access to student benefits.

We are asking God:

to raise up funding for a full-time administrative head for the college.

We are asking God:

to make us a light to the nations. One of the most exciting goals we have involves "Theological Education as Mission". Taking our program into Asia, where we can provide theological stability in an otherwise unstable region. This type of ministry has the benefit of being the most cost effective way for our denomination to have the greatest impact possible in Asia.

In 1995 we undertook an aggressive public relations campaign. Advertisements were aired on the local Christian FM station and a new, professional looking, prospectus was circulated. With the addition of an administrative assistant in the form of Berenice Rarig, the principal is able to focus on representing the college and teaching more effectively. The college in Perth has a current enrolment of twelve full and part-time students. With broader publicising and Aussie accreditation this number is set to grow exponentially.

Our denomination continues to need WTC for the training of her ministers. We can also look to the college as an outreach to the broader body of Christ with "Lite Theology", a sound doctrine builder using large screen video. The majority of our students come from other traditions, and since 1990 half of those graduating from WTC and licensed to preach in WPC have come from non-Presbyterian backgrounds. While WTC will always remain focused on providing pastoral training for WPC it will clearly be used as an outreach in our next twenty five years or until the Lord’s return.

Stephen Rarig,
principal,
WTC, Perth.
INTRODUCTION

WPC originated with a convergence of two historic facets brought together to meet a local need. This can be diagrammed as:

Reformation view of the church + Missions emphasis = WPC

(this diagram was developed by Peter Adamson)

BACKGROUND

Various issues and movements in churches in Australia led to the beginning of involvement by World Presbyterian Mission.

1. British migrants established Presbyterian churches in Australia with the first congregation being near Sydney in 1803.

2. Disruption in the Church of Scotland brought about the establishment of the Free Church in 1846, which later became the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. (This group continues as exclusive Psalm singers.)

3. The Presbyterian Church continued to grow in each state of Australia, forming the Presbyterian Church of Australia in 1901, which was characterised by a modification of the Westminster Confession of Faith, allowing for some departure from the Reformation doctrines.

4. During the 20th century, liberalism grew in the Presbyterian Church, affecting theological colleges and the churches.

5. Ethnic groups came from overseas and established various strains of churches. For example:-

   Dutch - Reformed Church of Australia
   - Free Reformed Church
   British - Reformed Presbyterian Church, Irish Synod (Psalm singing)
   - Welsh Presbyterian Church (few remaining)
   - Free Presbyterian Church (Scottish origins, exclusive Psalm singing)
   American - Bible Presbyterian Church (American spawned, fundamentalistic, one congregation)

These groups have basically remained ethnic in their ministry and outreach.

6. In 1949, Miss Mary Jones, daughter of an evangelical Presbyterian minister, went to minister to Aboriginal people in the country districts of Brookton, near Perth, WA.

7. Some new groups developed within Australia. Some were the following:

   Presbyterian Reformed Church (withdrew from the PCA)
   Evangelical Presbyterian Church (began as Baptists in Tasmania, include exclusive Psalm singing)

8. Miss Jones asked for assistance from World Presbyterian Mission who sent David and Barbara Cross in 1970 to work in Brookton. It was not initially expected that they would be involved in church planting, but...

9. Later in 1970, some concerned Presbyterians and other Christians asked David Cross to lead...
a Bible study, which eventually resulted in the first congregation of WPC in Perth.

10. In 1976, many Presbyterian Church of Australia congregations joined with Methodists and Congregationalists to form the Uniting Church in Australia, leaving the PCA with the following different groups or elements within its ranks:- traditionalist; generally evangelical; Reformed; and charismatic.

**TIME LINE**

**SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Mary Jones, the daughter of a Presbyterian Minister and formerly a Missionary in Mt. Margaret, purchased the former Church of Christ meeting place in Brookton.</td>
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<td>1949</td>
<td>Mary Jones began work both in Brookton and Pingelly among the Nyoongar people.</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>Mary Jones worked with help from time to time from various individuals and couples in the towns of Brookton, Pingelly, Beverley, York and Quairading. Property was secured in Pingelly, adjacent to the Aboriginal Reserve and a building was transported to the site.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Rev. William Mahlow of World Presbyterian Mission (WPM) visited Brookton at the request of Mary Jones and subsequently WPM agreed to take on the work Miss Jones had begun. After visiting others in Australia, especially Rev. Graham Kerr in NSW, Rev. Mahlow recognised the need for a new Presbyterian Church in Australia.</td>
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<td>1965</td>
<td>Rev. Dan Cannon visited Brookton during the annual Easter Convention and, while in WA, helped to organise a “Holding Committee to take on the Brookton and Pingelly properties and to assist Miss Jones in promoting the work”. The committee included: Andrew Priddle, Jack Higgins, Bon Johnson, C.A.M. Robertson, Don Dowling, Emily Jones (Mary’s sister), Ross Patterson and Harry Burggraaf. (This was also the year when David Cross, then a Seminary student, first heard of the work in Brookton.)</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>Rev. Warren Myers was sent to Brookton on temporary assignment by WPM. During this time he spent several months in Auckland, NZ, helping a small group who had withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church of NZ over the Geering controversy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>David and Barbara Cross arrived in Brookton with their family in February. Shortly after arriving David began a tri-weekly Bible Study in the Priddle’s home in South Guildford. It was also a Prayer Meeting for the support of the Brookton Mission. At the same time David hoped it would become the foundation of the new church that Rev. Mahlow had seen the need for, a church, he assumed, someone else would come to develop sometime later. Mary Jones decided not to retire (she was 65 this year) and it was decided that the Crosses should move in October. An opening developed to start a church serving the new development of Lockridge. The name “Westminster Presbyterian Church” was selected and people from the tri-weekly Bible Study / Prayer Meeting helped to get things moving. Geoff Fraser assisted with the literature distribution. Frank and Dorothy Slater together with Andrew and Joyce Priddle, with their daughter Marian, joined the Crosses in the commencement of services on the first Sunday of December at the Caversham Hall. This was the first church of what is now WPC, and its beginning formed the prospect of a Presbyterian.</td>
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25 YEARS ON: 7-12-1970 — 7-12-1995

57
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Mary Jones retired from the work in Brookton and Archie McNicol was appointed to that work.</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>Archie McNicol arrived in Brookton in February and resigned four weeks later.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Maida Vale church (then meeting in the Caversham Hall) ordained its first three elders - Andrew Priddle, Clem White and Paul Winterflood. Warren Myers was called to be their minister and he arrived in Perth in September. Conway Yarran was ordained as the first elder in the Brookton church. The Crosses left Australia in November for a year of ministry in the USA.</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>Bob and Judy de Grauw carried on the work at Brookton for the year the Crosses were away. The Maida Vale church moved from Caversham to another temporary location - the Koongamia Hall. The church experienced significant growth in numbers this year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>The Crosses returned from the USA and, with the help of the Jim Loney family and others, started a new work in Duncraig, which is now the Kingsley Church. In June the Billiters arrived from the USA and took responsibility for the Duncraig work. Near the end of the year the church weathered a crisis over different opinions about union with the Presbyterian Reformed Church. The Westminster Bookshelf was begun by David &amp; Barbara Cross in their home.</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>The Crosses began the work in Bull Creek with the help of the Jack Higgins and Mark Mayhill families.</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>Derek Jones filled the Brookton pulpit. The Reformed Theological Association was formed, later to become WIBS, then WTC. The Bull Creek church received the promise of a Crown Grant of land on which to build their church building. Warren Myers resigned from the Maida Vale church to return to the USA and Derek Jones from Brookton was called to replace him as Minister.</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>Derek Jones was ordained as Teaching Elder at Maida Vale church. Peter and Jenny Adamson arrived in March to begin working as “Minister-in-Training” at the Bull Creek church. Bob Burnett, now a minister in Queensland, was ordained as a Ruling Elder at Bull Creek. Westminster Bookshelf, which had been located on the Crosses’ back verandah, was moved to commercial premises on Albany Highway near La Plaza Shopping Centre, staffed by Malcolm Stuart and a band of volunteers.</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>Bull Creek saw the completion and dedication of their building. The Presbytery began work on its ‘Form of Government’, a task that was to take several years to complete.</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>The Adamsons, with the help of the Higgins family (Jack was Bull Creek’s first Ruling Elder) and John &amp; Jackie Fallon started the Kelmscott church. Ron Nugent was called to work at Brookton. In August, Oliver &amp; Helen Claassens arrived in Perth and worked with the Kingsley (Duncraig) church. Larry Beckler arrived at Bull Creek from Covenant Seminary, USA, as an intern.</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>The Claassens' moved to Brisbane and began the Redbank Plains church. The Crosses resigned and returned to the US. The Billiters returned from a year in the US and took a temporary place at Bull Creek. Scott McNutt (later McNaughton) &amp; Rob Berry came from the US as interns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Larry Billiter, together with Ron Norman from Redbank Plains church commenced the Centenary Suburbs church. Ron Nugent was called and ordained as Teaching Elder at Bull Creek. John Hunt arrived in Perth to establish WIBS. Sam Larsen arrived from the US to assist in Church Planting. Bob and Libby Scott arrived from the US to help with church planting.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>1983</td>
<td>Nelson Malkus (MTW) &amp; Oliver Claassens visited NZ and recommended that the Christchurch EPC contact MTW Headquarters to ask for them to consider a work in NZ. Bob Scott commenced Covenant Church in Dianella, now Beechboro WPC. Meetings commenced at Buderim, Sunshine Coast. Roger Wilson was ordained as Teaching Elder at Kingsley. Joseph Msiiitwa, an elder from Uganda, visited WPC Kelmscott for a period.</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>The Rowtons arrived in Centenary Suburbs replacing the Billiters who returned to the USA. Warren Myers was installed as Teaching Elder at Redbank Plains</td>
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<td>1985</td>
<td>Oliver Claassens and Ron Norman commenced the Cranebrook church at Penrith. Peter Adamson left WPC Kelmscott to become State Director of Scripture Union. Andrew Priddle filled in as Teaching Elder at WPC Kelmscott. WPC Kelmscott purchased a large block of land at Kelmscott.</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>David Kiewiet and Family arrived to work at Centenary Suburbs. Scott Kroeger, Kip Slawter &amp; Steve Schoof arrived at Penrith from MTW to assist in Church Planting. Rob Calderwood was ordained as first Teaching Elder at WPC Kelmscott.</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>New Life Ministries commenced in South Penrith. Nepean Valley church was commenced in Leonay, WIBS was renamed Westminster Theological College (WTC). Peter Hill was installed as Teaching Elder at Maida Vale. Derek Jones resigned as Teaching Elder at Maida Vale and was called as WA Presbytery Evangelist and part time Evangelistic Pastor at Bull Creek. Akemi Hanzawa arrived as a missionary from Japan to work among the Aboriginals at Brookton. Darlene Myors was sent to Japan as a missionary by WPC Cranebrook. The Queensland Presbytery was formed and a full time WTC course commenced in Queensland with two full time students.</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Steve Schoof commenced the Belconnen Church in Canberra. Bob Burnett was ordained as Teaching Elder at Buderim after graduating from WTC Queensland. Barry Swann, Bruce Russell and Ray Wilson were the first three graduates from the full-time WTC Course in Perth. Derek Jones commenced the Mandurah Ministry.</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>Barry Swann was commissioned as Church Planter /Organiser at Mandurah. Centenary Suburbs closed, Indooroopilly commenced. Tuggeranong commenced in Canberra</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>First Synod was held in Perth. Les Green was ordained as Teaching Elder at WPC Maida Vale. Barry Swann ordained at WPC Mandurah, and Ray Wilson was ordained as Teaching Elder at Cranebrook. Cranebrook changed its name to WPC Lakeside. Covenant Church changed its name to WPC Beechboro. Paul Bloomfield was accepted as an intern there.</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>Second Synod was held at Brisbane. Rob Calderwood was installed as Teaching Elder at Nepean Valley. Christchurch Evangelical Presbyterian Church NZ became part of Queensland Presbytery. Andrew Young moved from Christchurch to be installed as Teaching Elder at Indooroopilly. Paul Bloomfield was ordained as Teaching Elder at Beechboro. Andrew Priddle returned to Kelmscott to fill in until a new pastor was called.</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>David McKie arrived in Auckland to commence work in the NW Suburbs of Auckland working with the Queensland Presbytery. Ron Norman was ordained to be Church Planter in the mid-Pacific proto Presbytery. Campbelltown church planting work commenced by Ron Norman and Scott Kroeger. Church planting work commenced at Logan City. The first Indonesian language service was held at Bull Creek on 11 October. David Kiewiet commenced WPC Carindale.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Ron Nugent resigned from Bull Creek and was installed as Teaching Elder at Kingsley. Frank Johnston was called to Brookton for six months. Westminster Bookshelf closed. Gary Goeschl was called from the USA by Bull Creek and Kelmscott completed the building of their church.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Gary Goeschl ordained as Teaching Elder at Bull Creek. Roger Wilson moved to Tuggeranong to assist as Bob Scott departed for the US. Lakeside Church closed, some of its members relocating to New Life. WTC combined with Bull Creek WPC to extend the Bull Creek premises to provide more room for Bull Creek and to accommodate WTC. Paulus Surya was called from Indonesia to complete his studies and pastor the Indonesian content of the Bull Creek Church. WPC Carindale relocated to Capalaba and renamed WPC Capalaba.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Paulus Surya arrived at Bull Creek to pastor the Indonesian portion of the congregation. Clem White was ordained as Teaching Elder to assist the Mandurah Church Planting team. Perth Presbytery invited David &amp; Barbara Cross from England for the 25th anniversary celebrations. They arrived early December. Paul Bloomfield and Ron Nugent resigned from Beechboro and Kingsley respectively. Ron Nugent was authorised to start a new inner city church called All Nations Presbyterian Church.</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>The sixth Synod was held at Perth and included a 25th celebration barbecue and concert at Pt. Walter and a combined celebration service at All Saints College, Bull Creek, where some 400 - 500 heard messages from the Crosses, Andrew Priddle, John Westmacott and Nigel Chalmers, some fine singing and a great sermon from Warren Myers. Gary Goeschl tendered his resignation to return to the USA, Andrew Priddle was installed at Beechboro and Paulus Surya was ordained as a Teaching Elder at Bull Creek. Julian Bull from Sydney accepted a call from Kelmscott WPC, which for the time being has Linleigh Roberts as interim pastor.</td>
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