

## Chapter 9

### The Silver Lining

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With money to spend on the little church at last there were many improvements undertaken after 1984. An Honour Board for previous executive officers of the Church Committee was the first on the list in January 1985 as well as a wedding present for Ian Langton and his bride in appreciation of his auditing the books. The possibility of developing the Church Committee into a Body Corporate was first mooted at this time.

The Committee accepted a quote for \$2000 from "Harry at Colinton" to paint the church in acrylic paint and the Treasurer had a small contingency fund of \$50 for running repairs. Even the President was able to be reimbursed \$20 for "out of pocket" expenses. By April 1985 the Committee was in a position to pay accounts of \$1500 for painting, \$105:90 for carpentry and an as-yet-unpresented bill from Werner's Sawmill.

To provide advertising for the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1985 lead by Rev. Barry Dangerfield, Robyn Buchanan from the National Trust offered to prepare a page sized article for the Queensland Times.

There were many donations to the Church at this time as well. Mr. & Mrs. C. Jones offered a cash donation, Mrs. M. Thomson gave a men's toilet needing repairs to the floor and Mrs. Ella Kenman provided a fan near the organ in memory of her parents, the late Mr. & Mrs. Amos Williams.

By October, 1985 the Committee purchased a memorial plaque for the late Frank Hopkins and his mother

Mrs. Alice Hopkins who had also been buried in September 1985 at the Caboonbah Church aged 101 years. The Uniting Church provided extra pine seats for the verandah on loan to the Caboonbah Church for their Anniversary Services

Early in 1986 the Seventh Day Adventist Church sought and obtained permission to hold Saturday Services in the Caboonbah Church. Only one such service took place.

The Baptist Church also held quarterly services at Caboonbah Church on March 16<sup>th</sup>, June 15<sup>th</sup>, August 17<sup>th</sup> & November 16<sup>th</sup> in 1986.

With this additional use of the Church, the Committee was successful in its representation to the Esk Shire Council for three additional road signs leading to the Caboonbah Church.

The Anniversary Service for 1986 was planned for 8<sup>th</sup> November and would coincide with a Somerest Family Reunion in the same year.

The minutes from one of the meetings in 1987 will resonate with readers experiencing the 2005 drought. "It was moved that quotes for tanks from 2000 to 5000 gallons be investigated, also pressure unit if necessary, and if suitable, the Committee to go ahead with purchase as the water situation is urgent." The Anniversary Service in 1987 was held on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

In 1988 firm decisions had been taken about the construction of the new toilet block which was to be built of better brick with a peaked roof in keeping with the Church. The plans included a tap on the floor as well as hand basins and lighting.

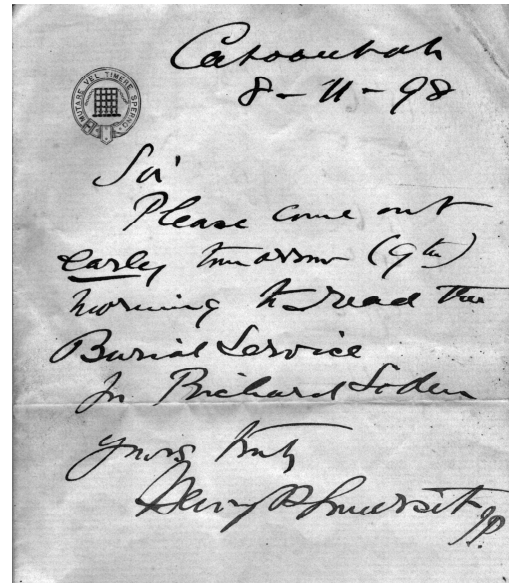
The weather was not kind to the district in 1988 either, and one of the meetings reported, "damage to graves, headstones done by his (Mr. L. Granzien's) calves during wet weather." This was serious enough to warrant a solicitor's letter, "stating that it is his responsibility to keep his stock out and fence in order." Later in the year it is recorded that, "a letter be written to Mr. Lloyd Granzien accepting his offer of fencing material to prevent a similar occurrence."

The meetings for the rest of the Bi-Centennial Year are taken up with the details of the new toilet block and the Bi-Centennial Service on 19<sup>th</sup> November. The guest speaker on this occasion was the Presbyterian Minister, Rev. D. Kieweet. Mr. Chester Jones made an Honour Board for the Church which was in place for the Bi-Centennial Service.

In February 1989, the toilet block was already under construction, but there appear to have been difficulties with the original plans. On the advice of Mr. David Andersen, corrections to the existing building were necessary and undertaken by W.R. Somerville (Plumber) on behalf of the Committee.

Mr. Mark Glindeman of the Queensland Water Resources Commission was also in further discussion with the Church Committee in 1989 about the possible return of the headstones removed from the Caboonbah Homestead to their original position. They had been moved to the Caboonbah Church cemetery in 1976.

The original letter from H.P. Somerset requesting the services of a minister for the burial of Richard Soden at Caboonbah homestead on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1898 is still available.



The minutes of a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1989 record that, "A resolution was passed re letter received in regard to the Headstones from graves at the Caboonbah Homestead, now positioned in the Church Cemetery". Clearly they were not returned to Caboonbah homestead and are now positioned with other members of their respective families in the Caboonbah Church cemetery.

An extraordinary meeting of the Caboonbah Church Committee was called for Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 1989 to formally accept the Rules of Incorporation for the Caboonbah Church. Mr. C. Kenman, the last surviving Trustee from 1963, chaired this meeting, and remained as Chairman of the Caboonbah Church Committee until 1991, after which he served as Treasurer in 1993 and as Vice Chairman from 1999 to 2002. Membership fees for the new Caboonbah Undenominational Church Inc. association were set at \$1/annum.

It is recorded in minutes for 19 March, 2000 that "the following Trustees were in office in 1989 – Mr. R.C. Kenman, Mr. J.C. Kenman, Mr. A.H. Somerset and Mr. I. Masters."

By October, 1989, the Guest Preacher (Rev. K.S. Colbert) and the organist (Mrs. Helen Harch) for the Anniversary Service on 13<sup>th</sup> November had been arranged, but there had been little progress on the toilet block started in February. There had been previous correspondence between the Committee and the Lions and Apex Clubs about their voluntary help with this project, but that did not reach any minuted conclusion. The Chairman, therefore, was “authorised to proceed with the job and engage tradesmen.”

There was also a need to refurbish the Church rails, restore the forms on the verandah that were badly weathered and attend to a damaged step. It was determined that Mr. Arthur Somerset would make a special appeal to the congregation at the Anniversary Service for more funds to complete the toilet block. The Treasurer estimated that the sum of \$5,979 was already available and that Mr. Irwin Masters and Mr. David Andersen had offered their trade services free for wiring and roofing the building.

By January 1990 the Committee still had to find \$1772:51 to complete the toilet block and the Treasurer offered an interest free loan to the Committee for its completion. Mr. G. Michael supplied and erected two 10 inch gate posts for the front gates of the Church.

The Annual Service in 1990 was a combined service with the Uniting Church and was held on 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in September (30<sup>th</sup> Sept.) at 11:15 a.m. The Guest Preacher was organised by the Uniting Church minister, Rev. V. Chapman

In February, 1990 the Uniting Church expressed its unwillingness to continue the Insurance Cover for the Caboonbah Church it had provided since 1982

because the Church was Undenominational, and other insurance companies were explored. The Treasurer’s Report for 1995 shows an account of \$397:97 was paid to “New Zealand Insurance” and Rev. Baker had to re-iterate to the Treasurer at another meeting in that year that the Caboonbah Church was still not eligible for Uniting Church cover.

Quotes were accepted from Wivenhoe Plumbing in 1990 to complete the pedestals in the toilet block in April but by August, it was reported that, “the plumber attending to the pedestals etc. is in financial difficulty”. Mr. A. Baisden offered to complete the job if necessary. By December the Committee had decided to keep the (presumably completed) toilet block unlocked for visitors to the Cemetery with suitable signage inside about conservation of water.

The President’s Report for the Annual General Meeting in 1991 is available and his relief at the completion of the toilet block is obvious. C. Kenman’s President’s Report is included in full.

“Well, 1990 has been a more satisfying year with the completion of our main project, the toilet block.

We owe a great deal and our thanks must go to David & Hans (Andersen) for all their help, without which we would be further in the red

To Chester (Jones) for help; among other things his effort to combat the pigeon plague. I feel we should make this our No. 1 priority for 1991

To our treasurer (M. Thomson) for keeping us up to date on our finances. I feel we may have made a mistake this year by combining with the Uniting Church for our Annual Service.

Thanks to members for helping out with loans and in general to all members who have contributed help in any form whatever.

To our secretary our thanks for attending to minutes and correspondence etc. (A secretary's job is a thankless one).

While expressing our appreciation I feel we need to be very careful in how we approach Council re mowing. I confidently believe that with the right approach the Council will mow all the Church grounds.

The man doing the mowing approached me recently and said Council had received a complaint that the mowing was not satisfactory. He was most upset. Being unable to contact the secretary at the time I rang the Council and the foreman rang me.

After discussion I received an assurance that the easement would be mowed in future. I believe Council now mow up to the toilet block and I feel a carefully worded letter would produce the right result.

Attached to the President's Report is a receipt for \$8:16 representing the proceeds of a donation box that was made by Mr. Chester Jones for the Caboonbah Undenominational Church in 1990.

In the previous year, a History of Caboonbah Homestead and Church had been compiled by C. Kenman for a Toogoolawah High School tour and the cost of printing more copies for visitor to the Church was sought.

The Annual Service was planned for 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1991 and the Guest Minister was Rev. Paul Trigge of the Uniting Church. Membership fees were increased to \$2:50 per person and \$5 per household and a donation of \$20 was expected from any Guided Tour Groups or buses.

On Saturday 13 June, 1992 Cameron Joseph Hickey Drane was baptised by Rev. Fr. Peter Lindenmeyer of Kilcoy at the Caboonbah Undenominational Church. Cameron Drane lived with his parents Patrina & Donald Drane in Rugby, Warwickshire UK and was the great great grandson of Mr. & Mrs. H.P. Somerset.

His parents made the long journey to visit grandparents Judy and Roley Drane. Cameron wore a 100 year old christening robe and his baptism was an occasion for a large re-union of the Somerset family.



**Mrs. Claudia Sharpe, Mr. Roley Drane, & Mrs. M. Thomson (grandchildren of H.P. Somerset), Mr. Pat Hickey, Patrina & Donald Drane & baby Cameron, Mrs. Violet Jeffrey and Mrs. Lyn Hickey**

In 1992 the date of the Annual Service was set for 31<sup>st</sup> October with Rev. Colbert as the Guest Preacher.

The Committee was still in discussion with the National Trust in 1992 about listing the Church building that was first mooted in 1978. Heritage listing of Caboonbah Church by the National Trust was never finalised.

The next year, 1993, saw working bees painting the very tall steeple; a task that C. Kenman still recalls vividly twelve years later. Mortimer and Hazel Soden offered to place a bell in this newly painted steeple tower.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1993 the christening of Keely Joan Lister was recorded in the Brisbane Valley Sun under the title, "Historic Caboonbah Christening"<sup>1</sup>.

The report reads, in part,

"Family and friends packed the Caboonbah Undenominational Church at Caboonbah on Saturday for the christening of the great great grand daughter of the church's founders.

On Saturday, it was full for the christening of the newest Somerset descendant, Keely Joan Lister, daughter of Phillip and Peta Lister of Dalby.

After the service, which was conducted by Rev. George Tully, the guests had lunch at Caboonbah."



**Christening photo of Keely Joan Lister**

Certainly the highlight of 1994 for the Caboonbah Church was the christening of triplets Naima, Rochelle & Philip Todd on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1994



**Christening of the Todd triplets in the Caboonbah Church**

The Honour Board recording previous Office Bearers of the Caboonbah Church was completed by Mr. Manfred Hirschmann and it was in place for the 1994 Annual Service on 15<sup>th</sup> October with Rev. Brian Goodacre as Guest Preacher.

In 1994, the executive members were re-elected except for the new Treasurer, Mrs. J. McDougall, who was elected a little later in the year. Mr. J. Somerset of Hall Chadwick, who had served as Auditor for the Committee since its incorporation, resigned and that role was taken over in 1994 by Mr. F. Grigg of Esk.

The pressure unit for the toilet block that was first proposed in 1987 had become a necessity by 1995 and the Committee was in discussion with Mr. K. Werner about its installation. Mr. Chester Earle Jones, who had made the Honour Board and the Donation Box for the Church, died on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1995 and was buried in the Caboonbah Cemetery. A plaque in his honour was placed beside the Honour Board.

The 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church was planned for 21<sup>st</sup> October 1995, with Rev. Hunt as the Guest Preacher. Mrs. Ella Kenman prepared the anniversary cake.

The new Church bell was to be tolled for the first time at this service and Roslyn McCarthy (nee Soden) asked that one member of the Soden family have that honour.

Sadly there is no record of the bell's installation until 1996 when the Secretary and Mr. Mortimer Soden were involved in discussions with Mr. Isherwood who was to install the Church bell.



**Mrs. Ella Kenman**

The same Mr. Mortimer Soden is recorded as solving the pigeon problem in the Church in 1996 but his methods are not minuted. In that year the following charges for the use of the Church applied:

- Weddings without flowers \$25:00
- Weddings with flowers \$30:00
- Christenings \$10:00
- Membership (single) \$2:50
- Membership (family) \$5:00

The Annual Service in 1996 was held on 26<sup>th</sup> October with Rev. K. Batchelor as the Guest Preacher. Jenny Ballinger was the organist on this occasion. The collection from the annual service in 1996 was \$236:90 and the Committee recorded a credit balance of \$1083:29 in 1996.

Brisbane Valley Kilcoy Sun<sup>ii</sup> provided a report of the annual service in 1996.

On Saturday, specially invited Uniting Church Pastor Jim Uhlmann welcomed over 40 people to the special Annual Service held at Caboonbah Udenominational Church.

Pastor Uhlman was accompanied by his wife Cathy, and two other special guests were acting Brisbane Valley Anglican Priest, Fr. John Wotlemaro and Methodist Minister Rev. Kevin Bachler ad his wife, Hazel.

President of the committee, Judy Drane, Secretary Moira Thomson and Treasurer Joy McDougall, greeted people on arrival and they had also arranged lunch outdoors after the Service.

Each of the Ministers took turns at reading special Prayers and led the congregation on Songs of Praise and other hymns.

A member of the congregation, Rollo Waite, presented a musical item, singing a Negro spiritual and a hymn

The Annual General Meeting in 1997 saw the existing executive committee re-elected. The Annual Service was planned for 8<sup>th</sup> November 1997 and Rev. Vincent (who had been President in 1976/7) was invited to be the guest preacher. There were three weddings held in the Church in 1997: Scott and Miki Greinke (5<sup>th</sup> May), Jan Cook and Mark Sutton (28<sup>th</sup> June) and Donna Nugent and Stevan Vogler (25<sup>th</sup> October).

The Caboonbah Church Committee remained unchanged after elections at the Annual General Meeting in 1998, and there was no change to the fee structure either. Mrs. Sonia Addison asked permission to add leadlighting to two windows on either side of the porch in memory of her mother Joan Elliot and her grandfather which was gratefully accepted. These were to be dedicated at the Annual Service for 1998 which was held on 31<sup>st</sup> October. The Guest Preacher was Rev. David Baker and Rollo Wait and Peta Lister provided solo performances at this service.

Also included in the annual service for 1998 was the scattering of Derek Wait's ashes with prayers at the grave of his sister Betty who had been buried in the Caboonbah Cemetery in 1937.

The collection from the Annual service amounted to \$332:90 and the last credit balance recorded for the Caboonbah Church Committee in 1998 was \$1644:97.

The election of office bearers at the Annual General Meeting in 1999 saw A. Somerset step down from the role of Vice President and be replaced by C. Kenman. The rest of the executive was re-elected. Mr. Frank Grigg continued to audit the Committee's books as he had done since 1994.

There is a delightful note in the minutes of a May meeting of the committee in 1999 in relation to locking the Church to satisfy the demands of its insurer, Suncorp. It had been perfectly safe to leave the church as an open sanctuary for 94 years and no-one now knew where the door keys might be. It is recorded that, "Mrs. M. Thomson has offered to find keys to fit the doors."

There is no record of whether the keys had been found before the Memorial Service for Katharine Andersen, granddaughter of H.P. Somerset, held at the Caboonbah Church on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1999.

The last Annual Service for the Caboonbah Church in the twentieth century was held on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1999 with Rev. Dangerfield as the Guest Preacher. Father David Snape contributed to the service and Jenny Ballinger was the organist again.

The little Church was approaching the start of the new millennium with a

history of religious tolerance over 95 years, a substantial bequest to safeguard its financial future and continuing support from the community it was built to serve.

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<sup>i</sup> Brisbane Valley Kilcoy Sun, Friday, May 7, 1993, page 10

<sup>ii</sup> Brisbane Valley-Kilcoy Sun, Thursday, October 31, 1996 – Page 10