

OUR HISTORY

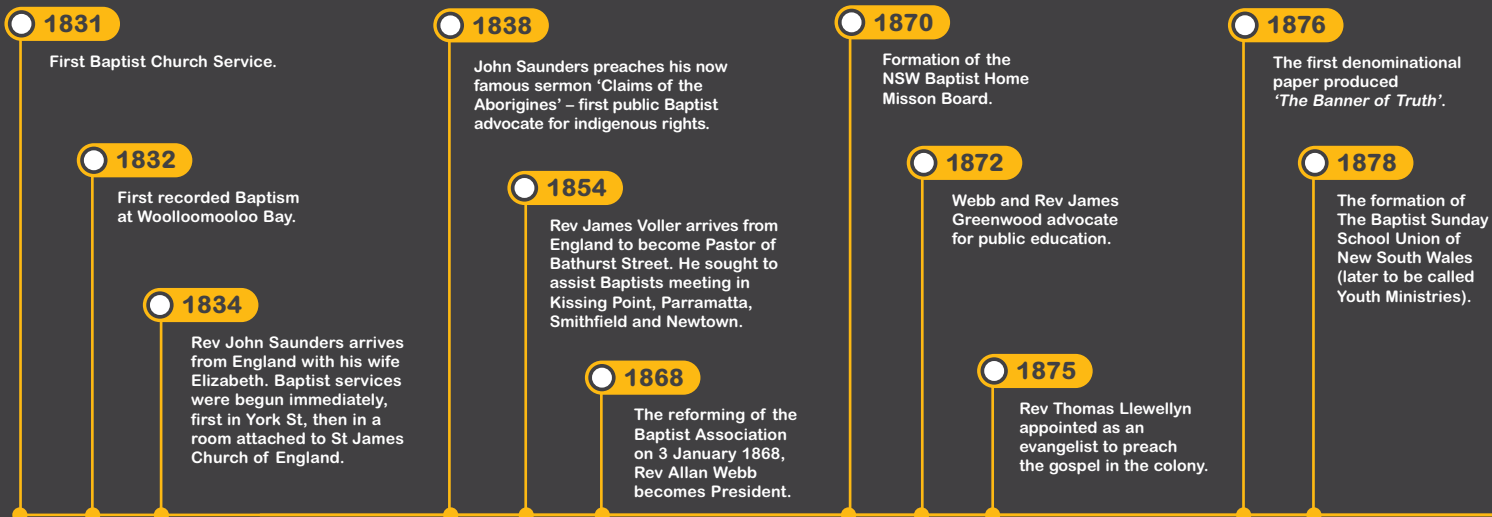


“Foundation stone laying” Northside Baptist Church – 1909

In 2018 the Baptist Association of Churches in NSW & ACT celebrated its 150th anniversary. The Baptist Association, as a voluntary network of churches, holds a common theological belief framework, purpose, values and vision. We work together to further the Gospel of Jesus in word, sign and deed.

It is this commonality and a passion to see the Kingdom of God expand that brought Baptist churches together for over 150 years. They knew that in order to serve Christ, to make him known and to live out the great commission in NSW they had to work together. And for over 150 years we have done exactly that.

In the early days of the Association, prayer was a central focus. The small group of churches fell to their knees and cried out to God to empower them to follow His calling boldly. This prayer bore fruit and the number of churches grew. Church planting was key to the growth in numbers, a vision that continues through to today. The Association is currently prayerfully pursuing a goal to become a movement of 1000 healthy Baptist churches in the next generation – primarily through revitalisation, evangelism and church planting.

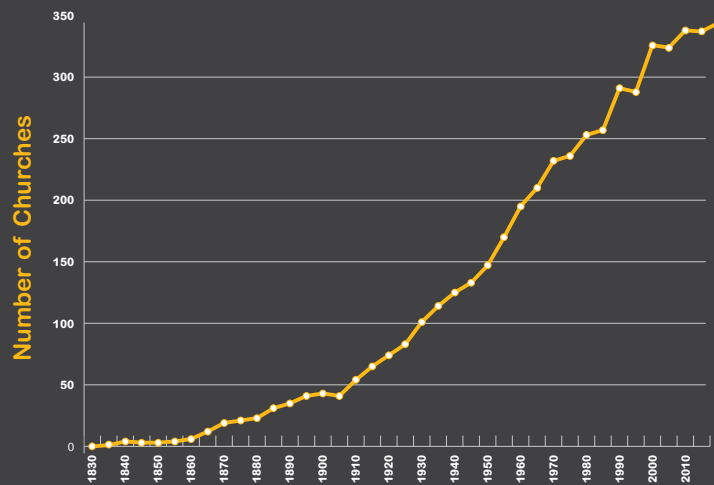




“Workers in Action” at Petersham Baptist Church – 1921

Growth came in fits and starts in the early days of the movement, but as the 20th Century approached a new sense of optimism and commitment to Home Mission emerged. Combined with clear strategy and more adequate resources, many new churches and preaching stations were commenced.

With this philosophy of ministry permeating the culture of the Baptist movement, significant social justice, mission and aid ministry was birthed from the local church. Baptist World Aid Australia began out of Frenchs Forest Baptist Church, growing into one of Australia’s largest



GROWTH OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN NSW & ACT

1879

The formation of the first Women’s Organisation in the life of the Baptist Union – *The Ladies Auxiliary*.

1884

Setting up of a Building Fund to assist Churches by way of loans and assisting in the reduction of debts on Church properties.

1886

Miss Ellen Arnold, went to India under the auspices of NSW Baptists.

1901

38 Baptist Churches in NSW with 3,104 members.

1908

The First Australian Baptist Congress is held in Sydney.

1909

49 Churches and 137 Preaching Stations in NSW with 42 Ministers and 12 Home Missionaries serving NSW Churches.

1913

The Australian Baptist based in NSW comes into existence as does *The Baptist Publishing House*.

1915

A decision by the Baptist Union of NSW to establish a Baptist Theological College.

1916

Formation of College.

1921

Rev G H Morling appointed as principal of the Baptist College, a position that he held for 40 years.



Papua New Guinea

and most dynamic faith-based international aid agencies and significantly impacting communities across the world through advocacy, aid, development and education.

BaptistCare, a ministry originally called the NSW Baptist Homes Trust, was established to provide housing for the aged and children. Through this and various other ministries including HopeStreet it offers support, care and compassion to street workers, the homeless and survivors of domestic violence as well as numerous partnerships with local churches to provide services to those in the community with significant needs.

NSW & ACT Baptists have invested heavily in global mission, especially through its national Baptist mission agency Global Interaction. One of the key areas of cross-cultural mission focus was the highlands of Papua New Guinea. An unreached people group up until the middle of the 20th century, in the decades following World War II the gospel was carried into the region and God worked powerfully to the extent that now this region has an extensive Christian community.

1929

Canberra Baptist Church formed – first Baptist church in the ACT

1930

100 Baptist Churches in NSW with 8,812 members.

1934

Premises in Charlotte Street, Ashfield are procured for the setting up of The NSW Baptist Theological College.

1937

The setting up of The Baptist Forward Movement – to assist in denominational fund raising and spiritual awakening.

1937

Land was granted at 619 George Street, Sydney for a Baptist Church, to replace Bathurst Street, and was to be known as Central Baptist.

1940

Baptist Church Membership 11,090.

1943

Bedford College was set up to train women in business and secretarial work.

1944

The Baptist Homes Trust, now BaptistCare, was incorporated.

1949

NSW Baptists commence work in New Guinea with Rev AH Orr and Rev Albert Kroenert as the first missionaries.

1950

An enquiry is set up to enquire into the life of the denomination titled *The Faith and Life Commission*.

1956

The setting up of the All Age Sunday School Program.



Revive Youth Night – 2013

The growth of the number of churches in the Association led to a need for equipped leaders to pastor churches and disciple new believers. Morling Theological and Bible College began with a goal to raise up, equip and release ministry leaders into churches. The college recently celebrated its 100th year of serving the Baptist movement (and other denominations) and continues to grow and respond to the changing needs of ministry in the 21st century.

Whether it is the establishment of training institutions such as Bedford College or Christian camping facilities such as Kiah Ridge, the Gospel and the Kingdom of God has always been the primary focus of the Association. This desire saw the Association undertake significant cultural and structural changes in 2012 to position itself for a new season of fruitful ministry, building on the same foundational principles that began the Association over 150 years ago.

Over this time, God has continually strengthened and led the Association of churches and we are humbled to be part of His continued work in His world into the future.

