



Hi Folks,

In an after-church service discussion in early March last year the topic of the day was – after extreme temperatures, drought, bushfires, floods, ... what's next? Jennifer Turnbull suggested 'a plague of locusts.' Well, we certainly got the plague!

From 19th March our face-to-face worship services were closed, as were the devonshire teas and hospitality provided to visitors through the church shop.

Our Hawkesbury Mission Zone ministers Rev. Ann Perrin and Rev. Rodel Palma rose to the challenge, learning new computer skills on the run and providing worship services via the internet. Our church members kept checking on one another and on others in the community. A disappointing part about that time was that with good rain and a winter with no frosts, the church grounds were looking their best ... and we could not share them with anyone!

How pleased we were to start to open up at the beginning of October! Within the limits of covid regulations, weekly worship services have resumed. The church shop has reopened but, with reduced volunteer support, only five days a week, Wednesday to Sunday. By March this year we were again receiving inquiries for group bookings – aged care groups, Probus, a motor cycle club, historical societies, retreats by church groups, ...

And then there was the flood, a flood of magnitude we had not experienced since 1978. Many homes were devastated.

Since our last newsletter we have inducted Rev. Ann Perrin as the team leader of the Uniting Church Hawkesbury Mission Zone. Ann has contributed a reflection for this newsletter.

Newsletter No. 26! It has been a long road since the first newsletter in 2005 but a most enjoyable and satisfying one. The current congregation is committed to maintaining our links with church pioneer descendants, past ministers and past members and we have appreciated the support you have given us in return.

I hope you find something of interest in this edition of the newsletter.

Ted Brill

### From the Minister's Desk

As a community who embraces the mystery of Easter, I am charged to reflect on what Jesus' resurrection might mean for us. As I sit at my desk having experienced what some are calling a once in a lifetime flood, here in the Hawkesbury, I am reminded quite starkly what this is means for us as a Christian community. We are called to be part of the rebuilding of the wider communities to which we belong. While we have members who are part of the State Emergency Services, the Police, and Rural Fire Services, we at Ebenezer Uniting Church also rally to help rebuild shattered communities searching out and discovering those places, people and their activities where the government funds don't cover or stretch. It is not just at this time, but it has been a response of the church from those very early times.

We know in our DNA that God's action in the mystery that is Easter is the resurrection. While Jesus death is at the hands of the power and principalities of the day, God is saying no to the death of God's love in the world, Jesus, and yes to the renewal, reconciliation and restoration of all creation through the resurrection. Bringing renewal, recreation and the confidence that we can always start again no matter what, is the gift the Christian community offers. This is the gift of the people of Ebenezer Uniting Church to its community.

That early Easter community, in the first century, knew the importance of banding together and sharing what they had amongst themselves with enough left over to share with others in need. They discovered as we do that there is a special joy in sharing what one has with others. It is not basking in the glow of thanks. When one shares out of what one has, we have a much deeper and more profound experience of God's love in action in the world. Living God's reconciling and restorative love in this way, as part of God's creation, is the jubilation of Christian community.

To all the friends of the Ebenezer Uniting Church, my hope is that as we move through the season of Easter everyone finds renewed meaning and understanding for their lives in whatever communities to which you belong. May we all be refreshed and renewed in the spirit of God's reconciling love.

Blessings all,  
Rev. Ann Perrin

### Wedding in Church Grounds during covid times



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*This newsletter is sent to 210 postal and 391 email addresses across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Should you receive the newsletter by post but now have access to email, please let us know.*

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## Hawkesbury Aboriginal Place Names

Grace Karskens, a researcher and historian, has uncovered a document prepared by Ebenezer's first ordained minister Rev. John McGarvie that recorded some 90 Aboriginal place names for the Hawkesbury. They are listed in her book, *People of the River*.

The names include: Werriling (Ebenezer), Wangie (Wilberforce), Booldoorra (Cattai), Balyayorang (Windsor), Marrengorra (Richmond), Dorumbolooa (Sackville North), Woolloomoorang (Wisemans Ferry) and Dyarubbin (Hawkesbury River).

### What do we know of Ebenezer's first ordained minister Rev. John McGarvie?

He was ordained in Glasgow as minister of the Presbyterian Church at Ebenezer in June 1825. He left Scotland in November 1825, arriving in Sydney in May 1826. McGarvie preached his first sermon in Ebenezer Church on 25th June 1826 and remained at Portland Head until 1832.

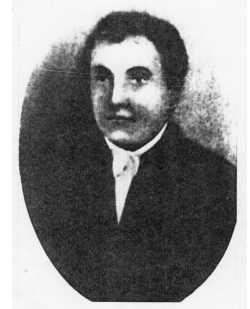
He then moved to St Andrew's Scots Church in Sydney and remained as minister of that church until his death in 1853.

The newspaper the 'Australian', 13th August 1839: 'On the 6th August a dinner was given to Dr McGarvie by his friends of St Andrew's and ...by the people from Windsor, Pitt Town

and Portland Head ..... He was presented with a beautiful silver vase containing 200 sovereigns and a gold watch and appendages.

McGarvie was one of the founders of the 'Sydney Infirmary (Sydney Hospital) and he was the honorary secretary for many years.

His brother William was one of the original proprietors of the Sydney Morning Herald and Dr McGarvie wrote the first leading article in that paper, continuing to write articles for several years.



Rev. Dr John McGarvie

In the Sydney Morning Herald, in an article 'A Century of Journalism' it was written:

'Dr McGarvie was a highly educated man, and held many important offices in the Church. His sermons were distinguished for their literary merit and the same quality is easily observable in the leading articles which he contributed to the Herald week after week for so many years. He died in the 58th year of his age, after completing a most illustrious and useful life.'

## Visitors' Book

For many years in Ebenezer Church there has been a book for visitors to sign and make a comment. Comments include:

### Connected historically

- *Linda, Karen, Lauren, and Harrison – visiting ancestor Sarah Stockings*
- *As a descendant of Owen Cavanaugh, it is wonderful to see how well this church and school and surrounds are being looked after. Thank you so much.*
- *I am so happy to be here. I am a great, great, granddaughter of the Rev. George Macfie.*
- *Sarah Richards (Hawkesbury Councillor) and Matthew Bennett – a wondrous, rich place of history.*

### A favourite place

- *My favourite church. I always come in every time we pass through Ebenezer.*
- *My little piece of heaven on earth.*
- *This is a beautiful and historic place. It's really special!!*

### A Touch of Humour

*Kylie F. (Parent): Enjoyed our visit. My grandfather used to bring me here as a child and I loved signing the book.*

*And underneath: my name is Lily F. (aged 6)*

*Charlotte F. aged 10 wrote: I enjoyed my visit to this small, beautiful place. One day I might bring my kids!*

### Thanking the volunteers

- *Fantastic little church ... a tribute to all volunteers and community. A great devonshire tea!*
- *Leura and Leura Evening Branches of the CWA thank you for your lovely morning tea and interesting talk.*

and then there was this longer entry on 14th January 2017.

### Peaceful

- *I always find peace here.*
- *We found Ebenezer Church peaceful and loving.*
- *Visited this peaceful sight with my father today. Lovely to walk around the grounds. It feels very restful here.*
- *The history of Christianity in Australia lives and breathes here. Thank you for an opportunity to re-charge our 'Spiritual batteries'.*

And then there was this longer entry on 14th January 2017.

### OUR SON DAVID

*David first came to Australia in the 1980's after Uni.*

*In 2010 he emigrated with his son Jack and wife Maxine, fulfilling his lifelong ambition.*

*David died on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 following a four-year fight against brain cancer.*

*Our thanks to the volunteers who keep this wonderful church going. It has provided a place of prayer and peacefulness to us on our many trips over to Australia.*

*Peter & Mary ... UK via NZ*

.....

Note that their son David died on 11th January 2017. This entry was made in the visitors' book three days later. Three days after the death of their son they came to Ebenezer Church – in their words 'a place of prayer and peacefulness'.

**How good it is to keep the church and church shop open and have someone on site!**



# Joshua Jones – the first man to respond to the call from Ebenezer

When Ebenezer Public School in Coromandel Road was destroyed by a bush fire in December 1901 schoolmaster Walter King arranged to lease the front two rooms of a settler's cottage in Sackville Road as temporary accommodation for the beginning of 1902.



This photograph of the cottage was taken in January 2002, one hundred years later. There were two buildings. The one on the left consisted of four rooms divided by a central hallway; there was a verandah on the front. The building at the rear was the kitchen and laundry. Both buildings were originally clad with slabs of ironbark.

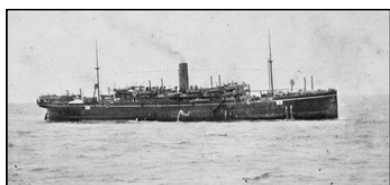
It was the property of Joshua & Maria Jones and was rented by the Department of Public Instruction for £1 per week. When school resumed on 20th January 1902, Mr King enrolled 27 pupils; by the time a new school was ready for occupation six months later, there were 48 pupils.

Joshua & Maria Jones had a son, also called Joshua, who would have been 12 years old and a pupil when school was held in his family home

The year 1914 saw the commencement of World War 1 and on 1st September 1915 Joshua Jones, now a young man of 25 years of age, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). He was the first man from the Hawkesbury community of Ebenezer to do so.

From army records we know that Joshua Jones was 5 feet three inches tall (157.5cm), his eyes were brown and his hair dark brown. On the enlistment form his handwriting is neat, clear and consistent – no doubt he had achieved a good standard of literacy as a student of teacher Walter King.

He stated that he was 25 years of age and his occupation was a farmer. His father had died sometime before September 1915 as his mother Maria Jones was listed as his next-of-kin.



Pte Joshua Jones sailed on *HMAT Berrima* and disembarked at Suez.

On 5th February 1916 he was admitted to hospital with mumps and was later discharged.

As a member of 45 Battalion Joshua Jones proceeded to join with the British Expeditionary Force) on 2nd June 1916, travelling via the *Kinfauns Castle*, leaving Alexandria and disembarking at Marseilles on 8th June.

But like the fate of many young Australian soldiers, Joshua Jones' contribution to the war effort was cut short. In early 1917 Maria Jones was to receive sad news – 'Private J. W. Jones, 45th Battalion, was killed in action in France on 9th January 1917 and was buried in Bulls Road Military Cemetery, Flers, 8 miles East North East of Albert, France.'

Among the personal effects of Pte Joshua Jones that were later returned to the family was a prayer book, a brush, a knitted square, letters and two straps.

Once the war was over Ebenezer Schoolmaster Mr Ben Humphreys organised functions to welcome home returning soldiers and those who did not return were not forgotten. On 24th May 1917 special Empire Day celebrations were held at the school to unveil an Honour Board and the late Joshua Jones was to receive a special mention.

### The Windsor & Richmond Gazette reported:

'On Thursday afternoon last the residents of Ebenezer turned out in full force to celebrate Empire Day, and also to do honour to those who had gone away from that part to do their "bit" with the Allies on the different war fronts.

The celebrations were held in the Public School and commenced about 3 p.m. Mr Humphreys, the worthy schoolmaster, was in charge of the ceremonies and in the opening, addressed the people. He said the object of the gathering was to unveil their honour board, containing the names of those brave lads who had left the district to fight for them.

He made lengthy reference to the heroic deeds of our boys on different fronts, and then called on Mr. R. B. Walker, M.L.A., to address the audience and unveil the honour roll.

'We cannot let this occasion pass,' said Mr. Walker, without specially referring to the sacrifice made by Private Joshua W. Jones, the first lad to leave Ebenezer for the front, and who lost his life in the service of the country, and died as a true patriot, and a brave soldier on the battlefields of France. To his widowed mother and bereaved relatives we offer our sincerest sympathy.'

*Mr Humphreys and pupils in school grounds c.1918. In that year the pupils sent two parcels to the troops overseas. The parcels included 18 pairs of socks, 3 pairs of mittens and 1 muffler.*



## Ebenezer Church Heritage Day – A Heritage Festival Event Saturday 1st May & Saturday 15th May



This event planned for **1st May** has proved so popular that the limit of 50 people has been reached and a second day is being held on **15th May**. It is an occasion when people can learn more about the interesting pioneer story of Ebenezer Church.

Starting at **10.00am** there will be a talk in the church, morning tea and walk-and-talks through the church grounds and colonial graveyard. Participants are asked to bring their own picnic lunch to enjoy in church grounds. After lunch there will be a walk to the quarry from which the stone was cut to build the church and to the historic riverside beach.

**Location:** 95 Coromandel Road, Ebenezer

### **Bookings and prepayment essential:**

Adults: \$20 (*includes morning tea*), School Children: \$8 if having morning tea, no charge if not

**To book ...First confirm that a place is available for you by contacting ...** Sue / Ted Brill - tedbrill@bigpond.com - 02 4579 9235 - 0438 777 215

**Once confirmed, make a direct deposit to ...**

BSB: 634634 Account No: 100024249

Name of Account: Ebenezer Church Shop

Please use your surname as a reference

## Church Pioneers - Place of Burial

Most of the pioneers of Ebenezer Church are buried in in the church graveyard but not all.

### Ann Turnbull ... at Wilberforce

Ann Warr would have been 25 years old when she married John Turnbull, 17 years older, on 4th April 1790. While living in London Ann gave birth to 6 children. They were Ralph, Mary Ann, John, Mary Ann, James and Jessica. Sadly the first Mary Ann lived only 14 days and son John died at the age of 2.

In the new colony at Portland Head Ann gave birth to John in 1804, George in 1806 and William in June 1808; William was actually named William Bligh Turnbull, the Turnbells showing their loyalty to Governor William Bligh who was deposed by the military in January 1808.

Like other Ebenezer pioneers John Turnbull most likely built their first house too close to the river and it was destroyed by floods. By the time he could afford a sandstone house he knew where to build it. The Turnbull sandstone house stills stands today.

When the first Presbyterian minister in the colony, Rev. John Lang, visited Portland Head he always stayed with the Turnbells, which says something about Ann & John's hospitality.

Ann died on 18th December 1819 and she was buried in the Wilberforce cemetery. Perhaps this was because she was originally of the Church of England denomination and that cemetery, besides being close to the Wilberforce Church of England, was originally consecrated by the Church of England in 1811.

Perhaps also when Ann died in 1819 the cemetery at Ebenezer Church had not been established. For many years we believed that the first burials were in 1811 and 1813 but family research has shown that they were 1841 and 1843. It now appears that the first burial at Ebenezer Church was not until after Ann's death. The burial was on 19th February 1825, that of Robert McKenzie.



## The Hawkesbury River in Flood – March 2021

The old hands in the Hawkesbury felt that a big flood was coming – and they were right. It caused much damage, perhaps because it was over 40 years since we have had a flood of this magnitude and many people were inexperienced regarding the extent the river would rise and where they and their possessions would be safe.

In flood times residents in floodable areas of Coromandel Road move their cars, caravans, boats, mowers, jet skis, ... to higher grounds in front of the church.

On this occasion the 14 metre flood broke the church river banks and came into low lying church property. The church and graveyard however were well above the flood level.



### EBENEZER CHURCH PILGRIMAGE

This event will not be held this year.

### GRONO FAMILY

Please note there will not be a family reunion this year.

The next reunion will be in May 2023.

### STUBBS FAMILY REUNION

The next Stubbs Family Reunion will be held on  
**Saturday 30th October 2021**

**at Ebenezer Church Grounds**

More details in the next newsletter or from

Reg Smith 02-9634-118 email: [stubbs1802@gmail.com](mailto:stubbs1802@gmail.com)

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