

# HOW DID THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN BURWOOD come into being?

In 1920 there were a number of families who lived in and around Burwood who travelled to churches in other suburbs - Ashfield to worship and witness. They believed in the principles of the Churches of Christ - to preach salvation through Christ crucified and raised again, in all to be faithful to the scriptures, stripping away any man-inspired trappings. "Where the Bible speaks we speak where the Bible is silent we are silent" They believed in liberty in worship & in all things LOVE. They wanted to practise baptism by immersion and the observance of the Lord's Supper weekly.

My parents travelled to Auburn - remember they did not have family cars for many years & transport was by tram, train, push bike or walking.

These men (with support of their wives) determined to establish a local church. They worked hard and God blessed their effort for Him and there was increase to a membership of 60 in the first years. The first full-time preacher was called in 1928.

The first 7 years the church met in the Council Chambers. There was the 11 a.m. communion & preaching, the 3 p.m. Sunday School and evening gospel preaching. Land was purchased in the first few years in Belmore St Wynne Ave, part of the Plaza now, but there was <sup>restriction placed on</sup> restriction of residential only there but the land in Clarence St. became available and this chapel & school hall was built 1927/28. Q. it had to be sold

These pioneer members were truly committed to the Lord and His work and financed the establishment of the church without outside help. Some of them did the speaking at Burwood & also were invited to help other churches. The Sunday School was started right at the outset and had 27 children & 6 teachers very early. There were evangelical missions every few years & I remember 3 or 4 tent missions when great marquees were put up & missionaries & song leaders engaged for 2 or 3 weeks. They were times of commitment to prepare, to attend as many nights a week as possible, to follow-up, etc. God honoured these efforts.

Burwood was not insular. We served on committees for Overseas Missions, Aborigine Mission, Social Service, etc and financial support given to the wider work. Many have gone from here into full time service as missionaries, pastors of churches, and service in our church homes & hostels.

The Faith Offering was commenced about 1960. This still continues. We promise to give for missions, over and above our normal tithes and offerings, trusting GOD to enable us to meet our commitment.

WE PRAISE GOD AND THANK HIM FOR USING US IN THE PAST. What is the task before Burwood Church of Christ now? In essence it has not changed. It is the same as the great commission Jesus gave His disciples in Matthew 28. The details of service change but the responsibility for each individual to be faithful remains. We each have been entrusted with abilities and resources. We can't fail our Lord who said "If you love me you will keep my commandments".

This 2 blocks



## THE FIRST 25 YEARS

My TASK is to recount those first 25 years as I remember Burwood Church of Christ when I was young.

I was there from the beginning but did not make a sound until 3 weeks after the inaugural meeting on 2nd May, 1920. There were 5 families living in and around Burwood who were travelling back to their "home" churches at Lidcombe, Auburn, City Temple and Enmore.

Their desire was to establish a church in Burwood where their children could be trained in New Testament christianity as they understood it, and to witness to that Truth. Mostly they were young with family and financial responsibilities and the normal working week was  $5\frac{1}{2}$  days.

WORLD WAR I was just behind them and the GREAT DEPRESSION just a few years ahead.

TRANSPORT unpaved roads; horse drawn delivery carts for milk and bread, the "Rabbito" and "clothes props" salesmen, horse drawn cabs, the railway was through of course, and I imagine the trams ran early on from Concord to Ashfield through Croydon Park.

There in the Council Hall off Concor St. I remember looking for God in the church service. The man was talking to God but I could not find Him - not in the rafters, now round the seats Well???

Then too I recall Kindrgarten, one of my teachers was Ina Crocker (nee Stow who died only