



# “God is Witness”

A Short History of the  
Presbyterian Church, Inverell  
N.S.W.



“To Celebrate 100 Years  
of Presbyterianism”

1854-1954



By the Revd. Norman Monsen

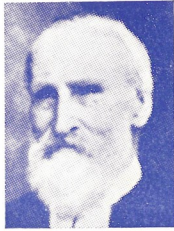


THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW





**Revd. Archibald  
Cameron**



**Revd. Thomas  
Acheson Gordon**



**Revd. Dr. Thomas  
Stirton**



**Revd. Alexander  
Fraser**



**Revd. James  
Stewart Scott**



**Revd. Robert  
Moorhead-Legate**



**Revd. James  
Keith Miller**



**Revd. Thomas  
Frithjof Johansen**



**Revd. Alexander  
McE. Stevenson**



**Revd. Emlyn  
James**



**Revd. Arthur  
Edmunds**



**Revd. John  
Vardre James**



**Revd. Malcolm  
Charles Mayes**



**Revd. Norman  
Monsen**

## REGISTER OF MINISTERS

1854—1954

The Revd. Archibald Cameron:

Sept. 1854—Dec. 1869, continued on at Glen Innes.

The Revd. Thomas Acheson Gordon:

Dec. 1869—May 1873; 3 years, 5 months. Demitted.

The Revd. Dr. Thomas Stirton:

Sept. 1873—June 1898; 24 years, 10 months. Demitted.

The Revd. Alexander Fraser:

Oct. 1896—June 1898; 1 year, 9 months. Demitted.

The Revd. James Stewart Scott:

March 1899—Jun. 1901; 2 years, 3 months. Translated.

The Revd. Robert Moorhead-Legate:

Oct. 1901—Dec. 1905; 4 years, 3 months. Demitted.

The Revd. James Keith Miller:

April 1907—March 1916; 9 years. Demitted.

The Revd. Thomas Frithjof Johansen:

June 1916—March 1919; 2 years, 9 months. Translated.

The Revd. Alexander McEwen Stevenson, M.C., M.A.:

Oct. 1919—Dec. 1923; 4 years, 3 months. Demitted.

The Revd. Emlyn James, B.A., B.D.:

Feb. 1924—Oct. 1936; 12 years, 9 months. Translated.

The Revd. Arthur Edmunds:

March 1937—April 1942; 5 years, 2 months. Translated.

The Revd. John Vardre James:

Aug. 1942—July 1944; 2 years. Demitted.

The Revd. Malcolm Charles Mayes, B.A.:

Sept. 1944—Feb. 1949; 4 years, 6 months. Translated.

The Revd. Norman Monsen:

March 1949—Nov. 1954; 5 years, 9 months. Translated.



## INTRODUCTION

The preaching of God's Word in Inverell by means of the Presbyterian tradition dates back to one hundred years ago! A centenary anniversary is a definite milestone in the life of any institution, especially as we recall how youthful is the Australian nation. In this regard, the present generation takes cognisance of its heritage! The past one hundred years have seen vast changes in the environment in which men and women live. The development of the ordinary amenities of life have revolutionised relationships within homes and nations. Civilisation has moved on rapidly during the past century! Those who lived in 1854 would probably consider it a different world to-day! Whilst the environs of Man may have altered to such an extent, they would recognise that Man himself is essentially the same! The Gospel of Saving Grace needed then in 1854 is still the requirement of 1954!

We may be pardoned for looking back through the years, because for many older folk there is a nostalgic remembrance of the "good old days." For those who knew the "horse and buggy" there remain traces of personal romance. The years crowd back again! Unfolding comes a realisation of all the difficulties of primitive transport in a new and untouched area; the essential amenities of to-day unknown in a primeval forest land; a loneliness only understood by the pioneers. Enough to deter! Less courageous and steadfast people would have failed to venture! The story now told reveals an epic in the annals of Inverell.

Anyone looking at our district to-day quickly notices how well the foundations were laid. In no small measure was this due to the Scottish element of the early settlers! With that capacity for sound settlement in virgin places, they also expressed a genius in character and personal devotion to the religious tradition of their beloved Church. Presbyterians in the beginning thought well, built well and worshipped in acknowledgement of God's guiding Hand!

The past is past! We of the present cannot stay! The future calls us! However, this centenary anniversary commands our respect because of the past. We salute and pay tribute to all who over the years since 1854 have contributed to the establishment and maintenance of the Presbyterian Church in Inverell. As the past lived for the present . . . so must the present, appreciating the past, live now for the future! Ours is a goodly heritage! The Presbyterian cause to-day is well established and sound but a little more than appreciation of tradition is required, if we are to justify the efforts of the past.

Our responsibilities are great but not burdensome! Consecrated service and humility in the presence of God are necessary attributes to continue the work so well begun. Anything we hand on, let it be better than we received! I am proud to have served St. Andrew's. I have been enriched by the fellowship of its people. I am confident of its future. Thanks be to God!

NORMAN MONSEN

## "IN THE BEGINNING AND CONTINUING"

### THE COMMUNITY:

Unnamed, unknown and untouched until 1839! In that year, Alexander Campbell selected a holding on behalf of the McIntyres, of "Blairmore," of Aberdeen, N.S.W. This was named "Byron Plains." Another holding was established across the river (which river Mr. Campbell named McIntyre, after his employers) and this area was given the name "Inverell."

This constitutes the beginning of land settlement in this area of North West N.S.W. Conditions were primitive! No roads; no fences; transport nothing faster than the horse drawn vehicle! Supplies and mails irregular on an over-land route from Morpeth! Homes of slab and bark! Water from the creek! Medical attention unknown except where a long and hazardous journey be undertaken.

However, the years brought improvement. Settlement on grazing properties normally required an established base of supplies. This prerequisite began on what was known as "The Green Swamp" . . . a resting place for the teamsters. As this place was on Inverell Station it naturally received its name "Inverell" as it showed signs of growing. But the first attempt to establish a commercial business was made in 1853 by Mr. Donald McIntyre, of Byron Plains, and Mr. Colin Ross, a newcomer. The situation of the store was on Byron Plains but is now that part of the town called Ross Hill, just across from the present McIntyre River bridge.

The progress and development of the town was rather slow, but in 1866 when free selection of land became operative an improvement was quickly apparent. Over the many years since, development has gone on unceasingly . . . sometimes slowly but at other times with great rapidity, according to the social conditions of the times. To-day in 1954 we are privileged to see Inverell as a thriving town, of seven and a half thousand people!

### THE CHURCH:

In a country so young as ours we will never cease singing the praises of the pioneer! Their days were epic! We are justly proud of the courage and faith of those early settlers but we do well to consider that the Church, too, was a pioneer! The history of Inverell's settlement suggests that the worship of Almighty God was as important to the early labourers as was the sharpening of the axe and ploughshare! This worship provided a common meeting ground and those who held fast to the Presbyterian tradition were quick to seek ways and means of providing a place of worship!

The settlement of the Presbyterian Church in this North and North West corner of N.S.W. dates back to 1853 . . . only 14 years after the coming of Alexander Campbell. The Colony of N.S.W. was needing ministers as well as



artisans at that date! The Revd. Dr. John Dunmore Lang . . . a giant of his day . . . was instrumental in bringing out a number of Scottish ministers to Australia. Among them of the Free Church of Scotland was a young man, Archibald Cameron, destined to serve this northern section of the State for a lifetime! He was in every respect a pioneer!

#### THE REV. A. CAMERON.

Th Revd. Archibald Cameron was sent by his Church in 1853 to Wellingrove to proclaim the Gospel. He was the first settled minister in these vast areas to undertake the onerous task of labouring in God's "virgin vineyard."

Wellingrove was the established centre for the far northern Tablelands. When on 18th September, 1854, he was inducted into the pastoral charge of Wellingrove, he found his parish a far flung one! It stretched westward to Moree; northward to the Queensland border and southward halfway to Armidale.

Thus the tiny settlement of Inverell could claim that in 1854, a Presbyterian minister gave the Bread of Life to its people! In the beginning, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Ross opened their home to Mr. Cameron. The first religious services began there with zealous minister and eager Presbyterians and friends praising God for His mercies!

Practical expression of this was made three years later in 1857 with the construction of a timber Church on the banks of the McIntyre river.

The visits of Mr. Cameron to Inverell continued until 1869, when the Presbyterians of Inverell felt strong enough in numbers to undertake a separation from Wellingrove. At Falconer, 25th January, 1869, the Presbytery of New England on the advice of Mr. Cameron unanimously agreed to "recognise Inverell as a district charge" and "requested the Revd. Dr. R. Steel (a visitor) to give official intimation of this to the Inverell Congregation on Sabbath next; the thirty first."

The Revd. Archibald Cameron established the Church of Presbyterian tradition in Inverell and to him we give honour and praise for his devotion and courage. Where he had sown, others were to reap!

#### THE REVD. T. A. GORDON.

The Revd. Thomas Acheson Gordon came to Inverell in December, 1869, as the first settled minister of any denomination! Presbyterians of that day, with the desire for more frequent services, felt strong enough in faith and numbers to undertake the provision of a settled ministry. Mr. Gordon at the time was the minister for Balmain, Sydney. He received a unanimous call to Inverell. This he accepted and his translation was agreed to by the Sydney Presbytery in June, 1869. Mr. Gordon was "a good organiser and an eloquent preacher." In May, 1873, he demitted, having served Inverell for three and a half years with acceptance.

#### THE REVD. T. STIRTON.

The Revd. Thomas Stirton (afterwards Doctor of Divinity), began his

ministry here in September, 1873, and continued for twenty five years. He came from the parish of Dungog. Over the long period of his ministry, Dr. Stirton discharged his duties with "great faithfulness, ability and efficiency." This minister's memory is revered even to-day for the labours so willingly given in the extension work of St. Andrew's. The present church buildings of St. Andrew's, Nullamanna and Oakwood were all erected during his ministry. The development of the work at this period was mainly in the rural areas, with many preaching centres being established. This arduous task necessitated assistance, which Dr. Stirton had from time to time. But assistantships kept changing, so the Congregation considered a more permanent arrangement and met the requirement of an ordained colleague to Dr. Stirton. This led to the Call of the Revd. A. Fraser, of Glen Innes, twenty three years after Dr. Stirton began in Inverell!

#### THE REVD. A. FRASER.

The Revd. Alexander Fraser was inducted as colleague to Dr. Stirton in October, 1896. Although with just less than two years ministry in Inverell, it is recorded that Mr. Fraser "laboured with remarkable energy; full of missionary spirit and a good preacher." It is sad to relate perhaps that often these arrangements of two ministers working the one parish are not satisfactory. This one caused some upset . . . in as much as a Commission of Assembly was appointed to "investigate and take final action" in the matter. As a result, both gentlemen resigned from the Charge and thus Inverell was declared vacant. Dr. Stirton retired to his home in Inverell and Mr. Fraser received a Call to Grafton in June, 1898.

#### THE REVD. J. S. SCOTT.

The Revd. James Stewart Scott accepted Inverell's invitation and was inducted to this Charge in March, 1899. He was translated from Maclean on the Clarence River. Mr. Scott took over the work at a critical period in the Congregation's life . . . which period was due no doubt to the previous "double Ministry." His wisdom was a "potent factor in restoring the unanimity of the Congregation." Mr. Scott was an able preacher. However, after two years in Inverell he accepted a Call to the Hunter Baillie Memorial Church in Sydney and was translated there in June, 1901.

#### THE REVD. R. M. LEGATE.

The Revd. Robert Moorhead-Legate came to Inverell in October, 1901. Mr. Legate faced an arduous task in order to do justice to the widely scattered preaching centres of the parish as well as cater for the needs of a growing town! There were eighteen centres stretching away all round to as far as Fraser's Creek beyond Ashford. His ministry was "popular and successful." In December, 1905, Mr. Legate demitted and it is understood he went to Victoria.

#### THE REVD. J. K. MILLER.

The Revd. James Keith Miller took over his duties in Inverell in April,



1907, having been translated from Kogarah. During Mr. Miller's ministry here new building programmes were undertaken and completed, namely a Manse and the Church Hall at Ross Hill (which later was added to). The critical years of the 1st World War required the services of able ministers with the armed forces. Mr. Miller enlisted, serving as Chaplain. Shortly after his return, he demitted his Charge here in March, 1916, and later went to Paddington, Sydney. Mr. Miller's ministry was marked "with dignity and thoughtful preaching."

#### THE REVD. T. F. JOHANSEN.

The Revd. Thomas Frithjof Johansen, having recently arrived from Scotland, was inducted in June, 1916. He served for nearly three years in Inverell. This period was not an easy one on account of the war years, but the cohesion of the Charge was maintained. It is recorded that Mr. Johansen was "an effective and cultured preacher." In March, 1919, he accepted a Call to Woollahra, Sydney.

#### THE REVD. A. M. STEVENSON.

The Revd. Alexander McEwen Stevenson serving at Hillston in N.S.W., resigned in 1914 to take up Chaplaincy duties overseas. His valiant service earned for him the Military Cross. Returning to Australia, Mr. Stevenson was inducted into the pastoral charge of Inverell in October, 1919. During his ministry, the very fine Church Hall now in use was opened. The years immediately following the war were also difficult ones but it is said of Mr. Stevenson that his ministry here was "strong and healing." He demitted the Charge in December, 1923 . . . but later in 1925 accepted a Call to Armidale.

#### THE REVD. E. JAMES.

The Revd. Emlyn James was inducted in February, 1924, this being his first Charge in Australia. Mr. James was a native of Wales. He served the interests of the Church and Community for almost 13 years in Inverell and earned for himself the appreciation of everyone. Many who felt keenly the "depression years" remember with affection his sympathy and practical deeds of kindness.

During Mr. James' ministry here, the additions to the Ross Hill hall were made; a pipe organ installed in St. Andrew's and extensive reconstruction work done to the buttresses of the church. It is recorded that Mr. James' preaching was "marked by sound scholarship and incisive thinking." His warm personality was truly loved. In October, 1936, Mr. James accepted a Call to Ryde, Sydney, and was translated.

#### THE REVD. A. EDMUNDS.

The Revd. Arthur Edmunds was translated to Inverell from Wynnum, Queensland, in March, 1937. Mr. Edmunds also was a native of Wales. These were difficult years from at least two considerations. The second World War commenced, disturbing the equilibrium of both Church and Community. This naturally caused upset in Congregational activities with the enlistment of

the young members. For some, the sorrow of "no return" was a sorrow the Minister sympathetically shared. Because of the ill health of Mrs. Edmunds, leave of absence was granted to Mr. Edmunds at the latter part of his ministry. During his absence, Inverell was served by an affectionate "brother in the Gospel," the Revd. Vardre James. Mr. Edmunds' ministry is remembered with appreciation and affection. In April, 1942, a Call came from Turramurra, Sydney, to which place Mr. Edmunds was translated.

#### THE REVD. J. V. JAMES.

The Revd. John Vardre James first served Inverell as a supply minister during the Revd. A. Edmunds' leave of absence. At the time, Mr. James was a Minister without Charge. When Mr. Edmunds was translated, the Congregation extended a Call to Mr. James. He was inducted in August, 1942. It is of interest to note that Mr. James was the third successive Welsh minister to serve Inverell. The war years continued throughout his ministry with all their contributing difficulties. Although Mr. James' ministry in Inverell was of short duration, he is remembered as being "most steadfast in his faith of the Word, full of reverence for the Sabbath and extremely loyal to the Church." In July, 1944, Mr. James retired from the Ministry to become a Minister emeritus.

#### THE REVD. M. C. MAYES.

The Revd. Malcolm Charles Mayes resigned from the parish of Casino in September, 1943, to take up Chaplaincy duties in the R.A.A.F. Having received a Call from Inverell, Mr. Mayes was inducted in September, 1944. With the closing of the war years "greater heart" was felt and much thanksgiving expressed. The Congregation welcomed Mr. Mayes most enthusiastically and there was a quick response to his guidance in the general activities of the Congregation. This was particularly noticeable in the youth work. An amplifying and hearing aid system was installed in St. Andrew's. It was felt at this time, that services were needed at Ross Hill, mainly to help the older folk. Mr. Mayes commenced these services just before he left Inverell. It is recorded that he "exercised a very intensive ministry in Inverell." Mr. Mayes is remembered affectionately for creating a new and fresh buoyancy in the life of the Congregation. In February, 1949, he was translated to Murwillumbah.

#### THE REVD. N. MONSEN.

The Revd. Norman Monsen (the present Minister) having received the Call from this Congregation was inducted in March, 1949, being translated from Clunes-Dunoon. Mr. S. R. Burnard, Session Clerk, has provided the comment on Mr. Monsen's ministry: "A prominent feature of his ministry has been to maintain and develop further the work among the young people. Since November, 1950, four young men have constantly shared the preaching duties of the Minister with much encouragement. Mr. Monsen's ministry has been marked by considerable progress due entirely to his unique ability in organising. By wise and prudent guidance he has made it possible during the difficult inflationary years to overcome financial problems. Mr. Monsen's preaching has been in-



spirational and greatly enjoyed. An intuitive understanding of the individual marked his leadership."

The monthly broadcasting of Sunday morning services from St. Andrew's commenced in September, 1951. The Ross Hill services have been continued and developed with help from the Ashford Home Missionary and the lay preacher's panel of seven members. A new modern Manse was erected in 1953 with the property taking on a "new look" with Mr. Monsen responsible for the planting of approximately 150 roses, trees and shrubs. Mr. Monsen is to be translated on Call to Epping, Sydney, in November, 1954.

### PREACHING PLACES.

During the course of the past one hundred years there has been change in the centres of population. This is evident in the fact that once populous mining centres have now become sparse in people. Modern transport has quickly moved the centre of interest and trade from the rural locality to the town. This change is reflected in the history of Inverell's Presbyterian Church.

In the early years, the Minister's main interest and activity lay beyond the boundaries of the town to such a degree that if the various centres were to be catered for the Minister required assistance in his preaching. In comparison with the modern tempo, the early years could be described as being leisurely . . . but no one would gainsay the wide-spread work to be done!

For instance, in 1905 the preaching centres were Newstead, Elsmore, Howell, Stannifer, Copeton, Gilgai, Gum Flat, Little Plain, Rob Roy, Oakwood, Ashford, Frazer's Creek, Nullamanna, Brodies' Plains, Byron, Swanbrook, Tingha and Inverell . . . 18 in all! This arrangement could only mean one service a day in St. Andrew's . . . whereas to-day three services are provided in Inverell per Sunday, with one country service. From a distinctly rural parish, Inverell has developed into a substantial town parish with its preaching centres of St. Andrew's, Ross Hill, Elsmore, Nullamanna and Oakwood! In comparison with the year 1905, it may appear that the Presbyterian Church of Inverell has deteriorated . . . but in point of fact, it has never been stronger! The emphasis has merely shifted, from the rural areas to the urban in line with the modern trend of life.

This trend of development is reflected in the following comparison (with due regard to money values):

1909: Communicant membership, 186.

1953: Communicant membership, 300.

1909: Collections, £455.

1953: Collections, £1333.

1909: Donations to church enterprises, £40.

1953: Donations to church enterprises, £390.

### REGISTER OF ELDERS.

1854-1954

No commentary on the progress of the Presbyterian Church can be complete without mention of the Eldership. The actual commencement of our beloved Church in Australia began with the activities of an Elder in the early settlements along the banks of the Hawkesbury River, N.S.W. It is probable that much of the very early activities of the Inverell Congregation was sustained by the devotion of its Elders. At least, it can be established that Inverell has had a great measure of devotion from the appointed Elders all through its history.

The early records of the New England Presbytery reveal that the Revd. Archibald Cameron was granted permission on 29th March, 1866, to ordain two Elders and two Deacons in Inverell. This was the beginning of the Eldership in Inverell. The first Elder to represent the Congregation on the New England Presbytery was Mr. Thomas Harland (Presbytery minute, 14th June, 1869).

Inverell has been particularly favoured by the sustained devotion of Session Clerks. Exact length of service cannot be given in each case but the following is approximate. For instance, as far back as 1904, Mr. Hugh Currie occupied the position, and continued until his death in 1921. Mr. A. K. Gilchrist took up the work in 1921 and continued until his death in 1931. Mr. A. W. Pulsford then held office until 1935 when Mr. S. R. Burnard was appointed and has held office ever since for 19 years.

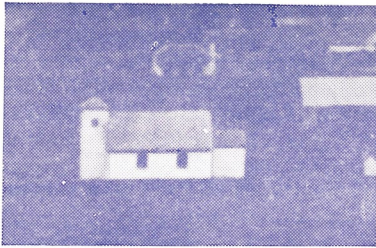
Former Elders: Colin Ross, Thomas Harland, Alex McIlveen, John Fletcher, Andrew Murray, Archibald McLeod, Peter C. Campbell, Thomas Mather, Thomas Hawkins, W. Wilberforce Fraser, John Fraser, Dr. F. S. Stuckey, Thomas Wilson, A. K. Gilchrist, Hugh Currie, D. W. Swan, John Chisholm, W. S. Rickey, D. McKenzie, Revd. F. A. Darling, A. Noble, S. A. Osborne, D. Miller, G. Dun, Henry Love, George Wilson, A. H. Dryce, A. W. Pulsford, R. Furze, G. W. Campbell, Allan Baillie, F. Dibley, William Chisholm, A. K. McKenzie, W. Tait.

Present Session: S. R. Burnard, Peter Hoscher, W. F. Jack, D. Fergusson, E. J. McBean, L. W. Campbell, A. G. Campbell, E. C. McNaught, J. McDonald, N. Murray, R. Kirkpatrick, H. McFadyen, E. E. Wheat, C. Berry, D. Fraser, F. Watson, A. B. Wearne.

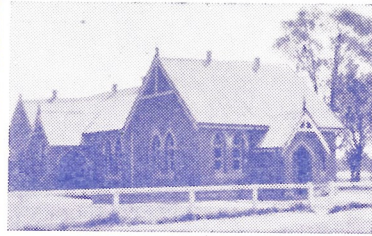


## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PROPERTY

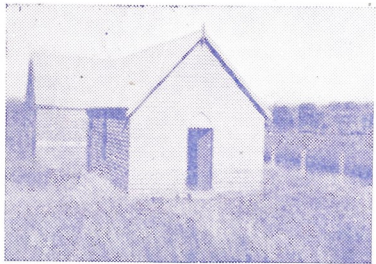
### PAST AND PRESENT



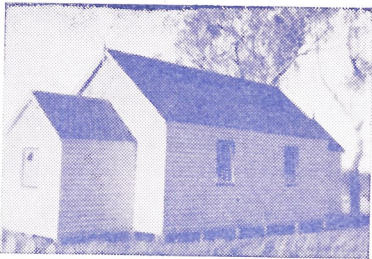
Original church built 1857,  
Byron-Vivian Sts.



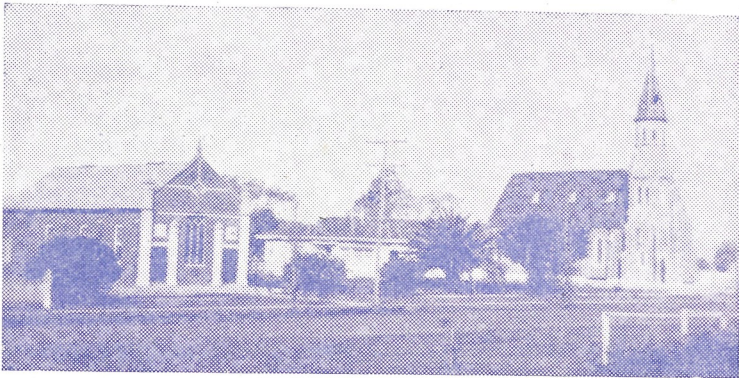
Presbyterian Hall, Ross Hill.  
Built 1909; added to 1927.



Erected at Nullamanna, 1903.



Erected at Oakwood, 1883.



1921

1953

1878

## PROPERTY

No history of St. Andrew's Congregation would be complete without mention of its property. To-day members are justly proud of their heritage and pay tribute to the foresight and courage that has provided a property equal to most Presbyterian properties in N.S.W. country centres.

### THE ORIGINAL CHURCH.

In the beginning, services were conducted in the home of Mr. Colin Ross. This apparently continued for a mere three years until a move was made to build a church on a Crown grant of 1 acre 3 roods 32 perches, Suburban allotment 6, dated 24th August, 1859. This is the date of the Title Deed but the actual building commenced earlier. This position was bounded by the McIntyre River, Vivian Street, and Byron Street, behind what is now the Central Hotel. The Trustees appointed were Angus Fletcher, William Wilberforce Fraser, Charles Campbell, Colin Ross, Peter McGregor, William Cameron. These gentlemen acted as Trustees on behalf of the Free Church of Eastern Australia (one hundred years ago, the divisions within the Church in Scotland were transplanted to Australia). The building erected on the banks of the McIntyre River was a timber structure and apparently built about the year 1857. It was the first church building of any denomination in Inverell. It was used by the Anglican minister from Bundarra and the Methodist minister from Armidale on their visits. In 1874 a move was made to sell the above property and to erect a new church "more in keeping with the strength of the Presbyterians." The site by the river was not considered suitable as it was liable to floods. Application was made to the Government and a new grant given. A private Act of Parliament enabled the Trustees of the original church to sell the land and apply the funds to the new church. The permission to sell was granted by Parliament, 7th June, 1878. A great deal of difficulty was experienced in the sale of this property because one of the Trustees refused to sign the Deed of Transfer! Equity law was threatened. The Title Deed of the first grant dated 1859 states the purchase price of the two acres as £15/12/- but it was sold in several blocks in 1880 for the Byron Street frontages £125 and the Vivian Street frontage £50. The old building before being sold for £50, 23rd August, 1880, was used by the Inverell Band, Good Templars, Druids, and sundry bodies. It is of interest to note that eleven cedar pews and cedar pulpit were removed to the Nullamanna Church and five of these pews are now in use in the Ross Hill hall, with the remainder still in the Nullamanna Church. The late John McGregor relates in his booklet of 1905, that the Revd. Dr. John Dunmore Lang, preacher-statesman, preached in the old church; also the Revd. Dr. R. Steel, of St. Stephen's, Sydney. The Revds. A. Cameron, T. A. Gordon and Dr. T. Stirton were the resident ministers who preached from its pulpit.

### THE PRESENT ST. ANDREW'S.

When a new site was mooted for a new church, the town of Inverell was



still only small. In fact, the site chosen and later granted by the Government was considered by some as being "too much on the outskirts of the town." The site as it now stands was granted in two lots. Lot No. 1, 1 acre, Vol. 325, Fol. 178, was granted 4th January, 1877, and Lot No. 2, 2 roods, Vol. 325, Fol. 179, on 10th May, 1877. The first lot had an area of 1 acre extending from Henderson Street to Granville Street and later the second lot of  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre was granted, which is the position now occupied by the tennis court, Manse backyard and rear of the church. As in the case of the original grant, the Title Deed to this grant is dated later than the actual building operations. The new Trustees appointed were Andrew Ross, James Campbell, James Jackson, Rae Gibson, John McGregor, and Thomas Mather. By this time the Free Church of Eastern Australia had been amalgamated with other Presbyterian Churches under title of the Presbyterian Church of N.S.W. Thus these gentlemen were Trustees acting on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of N.S.W.

The Congregation on Friday, 28th August, 1874, authorised a communication to be sent to the Trustees informing them of the Congregation's wish to sell the land in Byron-Vivian Streets, to apply the proceeds to building a new Church on a site which had been granted. On 20th November, 1874, the Committee of Management passed this resolution "that £50 be offered for an approved plan and specifications of a new church to hold 350 persons, cost not to exceed £2500 including internal fittings . . . the Secretary to furnish the designers with full particulars." Much more was envisaged in these minutes . . . such as gallery, tower, ground floor to accommodate 250 persons, etc. It was on 6th January, 1875, that the Congregation met to authorise the building of a new church. The meeting was chaired by Mr. J. J. R. Gibson. The members were most enthusiastic, over £1000 being subscribed at that meeting! A further £519 was gained from a bazaar held later during "show week." This proved to be a commendable start for the project. Mr. A. L. Ephinstone, architect of Sydney, was the successful candidate for the prize design. His offer to supervise the building was accepted. At first, no tenders came forward and modifications in the original plans had to be made in order to bring the cost within the limit set by the Congregation! It was on 21st September, 1875, that the first tenders were opened. These proved to be £4573; £5700; £4867; £4949! The congregation rejected these tenders as being too high! Again modifications in the plans had to be made! Again four tenders were received and on 27th February, 1876, a tender from Mr. Leeds was accepted.

Arrangements were made for the laying of the foundation stone for the 4th April, 1876, by the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Revd. Dr. James Cameron. Even after the foundation stone had been laid, difficulty arose over the sureties by the contractor and the Committee severed their connection with Mr. Leeds. Prior to this, the Committee had dispensed with the services of the architect and appointed Mr. Alex McIlveen, to be Clerk of Works, at a remuneration of £50! A new tender was accepted from Moore Bros., the work to be executed within 15 months of start. Records do not show the figure of this tender but it is noted from the minutes dated 18th June, 1878, that the total subscription to

the Building Fund was £2327 with disbursements for the new building £2294, and with liabilities thereof £1250. From this it can be assumed the new church cost in the vicinity of £3544.

The opening of the new church was arranged for Sunday, 16th May, 1878, at 11 a.m., by the Revd. A. Gardiner, of The Glebe, Sydney . . . but it was not ready for regular services until the following month, possibly Sunday, 20th June, 1878. The Sunday School was transferred from the old church by the river, and members of Committee "feared" for the beautiful cedar pews. The three chandeliers now hanging in the church are the original fittings; two of them cost £14 and the other £20. The bell now used was taken from the old church. Pews were rented on the basis of £1 per year for the middle pew; 10/- per year for the side pew and 5/- per year single sitting! The pulpit was centred on the eastern wall with the choir stalls at the western end. The insurance was fixed for £1200. The roof was of wooden shingles, which were replaced in 1910 with purple Bangor slates by Mr. B. M. Wade at the cost of £189/10/. It is of interest to know that in May, 1880, only two years after the church was built, the contractors were asked to fill up cracks in the walls with cement . . . indicating the tremendous pressure exerted by the black soil! In 1886, the foundations required serious consideration and much expense was involved. Again in 1925, the advice of two contractors was sought for the purpose of repairing extensive defects in the church construction. In 1927, this work was carried out by Mr. B. M. Wade, under the supervision of Mr. J. F. O'Connor, architect. The late Mrs. E. C. Body, whose love for St. Andrew's is well known, defrayed the cost amounting to £350. There has been no major repair work since, although in 1943, the church was painted interior and exterior, and again in October, 1954, at a cost of £330 to mark the centenary of Presbyterianism.

In 1929 the pulpit was removed to the side position to give balance to the eastern end of the church. The organ had been installed in 1927 and took up one third of the wall space. On the night of 15th January, 1931, a fire occurred in the vestry, which fortunately was prevented from spreading to the main building. Some damage was done. Mr. J. F. O'Connor, the local architect, presented to St. Andrew's the beautiful hymn board now in use. It has historical significance in that when the demolition of Scots Church on Church Hill, Sydney, was taking place, Mr. O'Connor brought a piece of cedar from the main north eastern door of Scots and made the hymn board therefrom! This was in 1931.

St. Andrew's has been richly endowed with memorial gifts and gifts without memorial significance. Beautiful stained glass windows adorn the church. A newly installed panelling has added strength and beauty to the sanctuary. Perhaps mention of the beautiful pipe organ may be excused . . . this was installed in 1927 as a gift from a bequest by the late Mrs. M. Turner in memory of her father, the late Mr. P. C. Campbell. It cost £1100.

No one will ever be able to assess the true value of the Church of St. Andrew. God is Witness to all that it has meant. Whatever we may say about it, Inverell is justly proud of its influence for good and prays that as it has served well



in the past so may it continue. The tall tower points the way for Man's aspiration . . . heavenward to God!

#### THE MANSE. No. 1. 1870/71: £600.

The Ministry of the Manse is only secondary to the Ministry of the Kirk! To provide a home for the Minister is the duty of every Presbyterian Congregation. This was realised by the pioneers of our Church, but when the Revd. T. A. Gordon came to Inverell as first minister in 1869 there was no Manse available. Mr. Colin Ross provided a home just above the bridge in Ross Hill as a temporary measure. The late Mrs. A. Campbell, of Inverell Station, gifted 10 acres of land to the Congregation for the Manse and glebe. There was no delay! The contract was given to a Mr. Ainsworth. A bazaar provided over £600, more than sufficient to cover the cost of the Manse. It was built on the hill overlooking the town, close beside the present cemetery. The date can be fixed as either 1870 or 1871. It was used until the coming of the Rev. J. Keith Miller in 1907. It was felt that it was too far from St. Andrew's and a move was made to build next to the church. Mr. Miller's residence for the time being was the brick house now standing on the corner of Henderson and Mansfield Streets and called "Hazelhurst." (The old Manse on the hill was later destroyed by fire).

#### THE MANSE. No. 2. 1908. £1310.

The new Manse on the Vivian Street property was proposed on 3rd July, 1907. On 6th November, the Congregation dealt with five tenders for a brick building 3500 square feet floor area, iron roof, nine rooms, with a long and spacious hall. The architect was Mr. J. F. O'Connor, and the successful tenderer Mr. C. Harris, both of Inverell. The tender was £1310. A mortgage of £400 was raised to complete the Manse. The foundation stone was set by Mr. P. C. Campbell on 19th February, 1908. Its dedication and opening was performed on 30th September, 1908. The following ministers took up residence: The Revds. J. K. Miller, T. F. Johansen, A. M. Stevenson, E. James, A. Edmunds, J. V. James, M. C. Mayes, and N. Monsen.

Over the years, this building developed serious fractures in the foundations and walls. A great amount of repair work was carried out from time to time. A serious mistake in its structure was the use of maltoid in the damp course. This deteriorated and consequently absorption of moisture into the walls made the dwelling an unhealthy place, particularly in cold and wet winters. As long ago as 1929 it had become apparent that the Manse was a liability . . . both financially and in health. Therefore the Congregation undertook the task of providing a more suitable dwelling.

#### THE MANSE. No. 3. 1953. £6250.

It was on the 11th June, 1951, that investigations commenced. The Congregation authorised the demolition on 24th September, 1951. The work involved in debating, planning and preparing for the new Manse was exhaustive. Finally, on 15th September, 1952, the Congregation approved the plans for a timber dwelling with tiled roof with floor space of approximately 1800 square

feet. Mr. R. Lockwood was the architect and Mr. J. Lauder and Son was the successful tenderer, both of Inverell. The contract price was £6250. Money values had altered considerably since 1908! Building operations commenced in December, 1952, and were completed the following June.

It was dedicated by the Moderator of the Moree Presbytery, the Revd. C. Yuill, of Moree, on 20th June, 1953. Thus the Minister, the Revd. Norman Monsen and family took up residence in the new dwelling. At the opening date there was only approximately £1000 owing towards the cost . . . which reflects the great generosity of the people. From among the many donors Mrs. I. Campbell donated £825, and the late Mrs. E. C. Body £500. The Manse was a triumph of trust, co-operation, generosity and goodwill among the office bearers and the Congregation generally.

#### THE ROSS HILL HALL, 1909.

The Ross Hill property, situated as it is on the corner of Andrew and Brown Streets, is placed in a most strategic position should the future demand two Presbyterian Churches in Inverell. The Deed of Transfer for this block of 3 roods 37 perches from the estate of Dr. Chisholm Ross was effected on 14th September, 1909. But in the previous year 8th January, 1908, the Congregation decided to build a small brick hall for Sunday School purposes. The foundation stone was set by Mrs. Colin Ross on Saturday, 27th March, 1909. It was opened on Wednesday, 23rd June, 1909, at 3 p.m., followed by a tea meeting and concert in the Town Hall. The total cost was £466. Mr. B. M. Wade was the building contractor and Mr. T. Hawkins supervised the building operations. Mrs. Colin Ross was largely responsible for raising the necessary funds.

The Sunday School commenced in 1909 with Mr. W. Main, an Elder, as the first Superintendent. The hall then built is now the front portion of the present enlarged building.

In 1925, the Committee of Management first considered the necessity for enlarging the hall. It was in 1927 that this was done. Mr. H. Ross, architect, of Sydney, gratuitously furnished the plans and specifications; Mr. J. W. Stocks supervised the additions in an honorary capacity; Mr. C. F. Nott, of Armidale, carried out the construction at a total cost of £1468/14/6. The dedication of the new portion was performed by the Presbytery of Moree and opened by Dr. Chisholm Ross on Wednesday, 19th October, 1927. The building is a credit to the Presbyterian Church and continues to serve the interests of community life by Sunday School instruction and the holding of church services. At times the Education Department has rented portion of it when the local school has been unable to accommodate all the scholars. The Hall was painted throughout in 1943 and further improvements were made in 1950 with the complete rewiring of the electric light system and a new front fence.

#### ST. ANDREW'S WAR MEMORIAL HALL, 1921.

It had long been apparent that the Congregation required a Church Hall to supplement the work done within the Church itself. With the cessation of the



first World War, consideration was given to a fitting memorial. This finalised itself in the form of a hall to be built and dedicated "in honour of the members and adherents of this Charge who served and in memory of those of their number who fell." The contractor was Mr. B. M. Wade, with the architects Messrs J. F. O'Connor and D. Ogilvie. The total cost was £2700.

The Moderator General, the Rt. Revd. James Gibson, M.A., laid the foundation stone on Saturday, 2nd October, 1920; at 3 p.m. It was opened by the Minister, the Revd. A. M. Stevenson, M.C., M.A., in November, 1921. The beautiful stained glass window was unveiled by Miss Helen Gibson in memory of her brother Mathew Rae Gibson, killed at Gallipoli.

This hall has been a tremendous asset in the life of St. Andrew's Congregation and any Presbyterian cause can be proud to possess such a fine and well appointed Church Hall.

#### NULLAMANNA CHURCH.

This small timber structure first stood at Airlie Brake and was erected during the Revd. Dr. T. Stirton's ministry. It was removed to its present site at Nullamanna in 1903 by Mr. B. M. Wade, who was paid the "princely" sum of £52 for the demolition and re-erection and painting. Mr. T. H. Scott gave the block of ground upon which it is erected. The cedar pulpit and some of the cedar pews there now were originally in the first church as situated in Byron-Vivian Streets. It was last painted in 1942 and in 1950 it was renovated and fenced.

It continues to be used for monthly services.

#### OAKWOOD CHURCH.

This church was built in 1883. Prior to this date, Dr. T. Stirton conducted services on the verandah of the Bannockburn Station home. Messrs G. Murray and G. Anderson (now living at Oakwood) can recall attending these services, with their parents at Bannockburn, which at the time was owned by Mr. G. A. Cruikshank. The church was built upon a Crown grant of approximately 1 acre in the village of Oakwood. A builder named Anderson erected the church as it now stands, with the exception of the lining. Mr. Andrew Murray fenced the property and gave the organ. Mr. Peter Murray became the first Sunday School Superintendent. The church was lined in 1908. At various times, maintenance work has been carried out. For instance, in 1930 repairs to the fence and the painting of the church was undertaken at a cost of £45. Then again in 1953, necessary minor repairs and the interior and exterior painting were done. This was by voluntary labour under supervision of Mr. F. Tait, of Inverell.

For many years it was the only Presbyterian Church for miles around and people from the other centres drove over in their drays, buggies, etc., to enjoy the fellowship of the Christian faith. All through the years, there has been a regular assembly of our people in this church to worship Almighty God.

#### NEWSTEAD CHURCH.

The Newstead Church was a structure of brick, built in 1860, by Mrs. Anderson, of Newstead Station. This was only six years after the coming of the

Revd. Archibald Cameron, to Wellingrove, in 1854. It is recorded in the official history of the Presbyterian Church of N.S.W., that Mrs. Anderson gifted this church and its cemetery to the Church. It was used regularly until 1909 when a fire destroyed it, leaving only the walls intact. Nothing was done to repair or replace apparently . . . for it now stands a picturesque ruin, covered by a creeper. Close by is the cemetery with its historical tombstones.

#### CARETAKER'S COTTAGE.

On the 29th July, 1885, it was agreed by the Congregation to erect a caretaker's cottage on the church grounds in Vivian Street. It was not to exceed £250. The position of the cottage was on what is now the tennis court. A photograph in St. Andrew's Church vestry shows the cottage standing close to the old time stables. In 1929 the cottage was sold for £119 and removed. The following year, 1930, the tennis court was built, with Mr. and Mrs. Colin Campbell giving the timber and netting. The court is still in use and in good order.

## THE ORGANISATIONS

The many activities associated with the Congregational life of St. Andrew's are the direct result of the enthusiasm and awareness of responsibility that the various organisations possess. Tribute to all is made, with the knowledge that in a short history, full justification cannot be made of the planning, the patience, the devotion and the courage of so many members and in particular, of the office bearers of the organisations.

#### THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

Inverell possesses fine property . . . the result of wise planning and care. Inverell has always endeavoured to provide an adequate stipend and the necessary finance to undertake replacements, repairs and general maintenance. This has been achieved. The present membership of St. Andrew's recognises the contribution made by past Committees of Management and would record its appreciation of those now active in the management of the temporal affairs of the Congregation. Some have served for many years. In addition to the present Elders the following are the members of the present Committee: Messrs M. G. Campbell, H. J. Campbell, A. B. Drummond, J. Jack, M. Readett, T. Clark, N. Hillier, A. McNaught, H. Poole, W. Simpson, C. Worgan, J. McIntyre, C. Fuller, W. E. Goldman and R. Duff.

#### THE WOMEN'S GUILD.

It is not attempted to establish the date when the Guild was formed, but it was somewhere between 1909 and 1921. During these many years, much sacrificial service has been given by members of the Guild in attending to the needs of the Congregation and the wider activities of the Church generally. Everyone salutes in appreciation all that has been done to date.

The present office bearers are Mrs. N. Monsen, President; Mrs. L. McAndrew, Secretary; Mrs. A. B. Drummond, Treasurer.



### THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

This Association was in existence at least as far back as 1909 and therefore has a proud record of service. Its attention is devoted solely to the missionary enterprises of our Church and its finances given for this purpose. At the present time it is one of the best branches of the W.M.A. in the country areas of N.S.W. The missionary zeal of this group of women has throughout the long history enriched the life of St. Andrew's. Appreciation is recorded.

The present office bearers are Mrs. N. Monsen, President; Mrs. A. K. McKenzie, Secretary; Mrs. A. G. Campbell, Treasurer.

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The work of teaching among children carries its own reward. No one can assess the value of teaching in Sunday School. The Sunday Schools associated with the Congregation have been in existence for a long time . . . possibly ever since the first church was built in 1857. The Ross Hill Sunday School commenced at least as far back as the opening of the Hall itself, 1909, with Mr. W. Main as Superintendent. Both Sunday Schools are very fortunate in possessing adequate buildings in which to carry on the teachings of our Lord. Many are the people who have contributed to this work in a personal way . . . in some cases for many unbroken years. We praise them and thank God for their devotion. The present Superintendents are Miss M. Wallis, St. Andrew's, and Mr. A. G. Campbell, Ross Hill.

### THE FELLOWSHIP ASSOCIATION.

Youth work within the Inverell Congregation had its origin many years ago and during this long course of time it has assumed various names. At the present, it is a very alive Fellowship Association with senior and junior groups. Acting as a link between Sunday School and Church membership, it carries on invaluable work. The basis of this work is the fellowship centred around the study of the Holy Bible. Members fulfil their obligations to the life of St. Andrew's in various ways . . . many are Sunday School teachers, some are members of the Committee of Management, a few are lay preachers, etc. Their witness is joyful and bright. The present leaders are: J. Jack, M. Readett, Miss N. Norris, J. McIntyre for the seniors and Miss M. Wallis for the juniors. Rev. N. Monsen, President; K. Buckley, Secretary; A. McNaught, Treasurer.

### PARENTS' AND FRIENDS' ASSOCIATION.

This group is associated with the Sunday School at St. Andrew's. It is quite a new venture, commencing last year, 1953. Its aim is to assist the Sunday School financially and to engender an interest in the work of the Sunday School among other parents and friends. It promises to do valuable work. Mrs. R. Charter, Secretary; Mrs. R. Fuller, Treasurer.

### THE CHOIR.

The Choir with an everchanging personnel over the long years of its existence, continues to give splendid service for the Sunday morning worship. Messrs A. K. Gilchrist and S. R. Burnard served the Church as choirmasters for many

years . . . at least dating as far back as 1909. Mr. Burnard, since 1936 until last year, when Mr. W. Simpson was welcomed as choirmaster. Encouragement has been given to members of a junior choir during the past two years to sing at the evening service in St. Andrew's.

### SUSTENTATION FUND COLLECTORS' COMMITTEE.

This Committee came into being as at present constituted several years ago during a difficult financial period. It now acts as an adjunct to the Committee of Management for the specific purpose of collecting Sustentation in the town area. The members are ably led by their office bearers. This important task is appreciated.

The present office bearers are: Mrs. E. J. McBean, President; Mrs. L. W. Campbell, Secretary; Miss G. Campbell, Treasurer.

### TENNIS CLUB.

The Church possesses a very fine tennis court. It was built in 1930 and has, through the years, provided spasmodically the means of enjoyment for many. The Club at present is not large in numbers but has managed efficiently the past few years.

The present office bearers are: Rev. N. Monsen, President; Mrs. A. McCumstie, Secretary-Treasurer.

