



Berwick
ANGLICAN CHURCH

History of Christ Church Berwick Buildings, Windows and Displays



September 2012

BEGINNINGS

Anglicans living in the Berwick district first began meeting together for worship in the early 1860's.

In 1861 Berwick was proclaimed as a town site and the drawing up and adoption of the town plan in 1863 provided for the reservation of an area of land for the "Church of England". The land reserved was bounded by Church Street to the east, Palmerston Street to the north, and Elgin and Peel Streets to the south.

On 25 September 1866, a service was conducted by the Rev C L H Rupp at the Berwick Mechanics Institute – the sermon delivered was entitled "True Manliness". Following the service a meeting was conducted to consider the future of the Anglican Church in Berwick. The meeting agreed to appoint a number of persons as a managing committee of general church matters and established a building committee for the erection of a church building.

In the following month the *Melbourne Church News* dated 1 October 1866 reported – "*Berwick - an alteration has been made in the church services in this district. The fortnightly afternoon services, held hitherto in the German School house on the Harkaway hills, has been discontinued, and a fortnightly morning service substituted in the township, in the Presbyterian Church, the use of which has been kindly granted by the trustees.*"

Another decade passed before the church building was constructed on the south-west corner of Palmerston and Church Streets, the Foundation Stone being laid on 5 December 1876. Engineers from construction gangs working on the Gippsland railway assisted with the construction. The inaugural service was conducted by Bishop Moorhouse on Sunday 9 March 1877. The entrance porch and vestry were added a few years later.

In 1904, between the old church and the original vicarage a timber Sunday School was constructed – the Sunday School has been moved several times over the years and is now located at the rear of the present vicarage, up the hill from the new church.

The original vicarage (then known as the parsonage) was constructed on the south-east corner of Elgin and Church Streets during the period 1888 and 1894 – the exact time is not known due to the loss of records. It was used as the vicarage until 1951 when the new (current) vicarage was constructed.

After serving the Anglican community for 118 years the old church was deconsecrated and sold in 1995, following the establishment of the new Anglican Church located within the original land reservation and fronting on to Peel Street.

Stained Glass Windows

During the life of the old church a number of stained glass windows were installed in each case in commemoration of a person or event. As a condition of sale of the old church it was agreed that the stained glass windows could be removed and relocated in the new church's worship area. Each window was restored as necessary and installed in the new church.

The stained glass windows in the new church are (from left to right) -



- 1. St John** Following the death of Mr E A L Vieusseux, Principal of the Berwick Grammar School on 7 November 1917, the former students of his school contributed to the installation of the window depicting the Apostle St John.

2. Jesus Christ This window was probably the first installed in the old church.

3. St Paul This window was installed in the old church in 1939 to the memory of the Rev Alfred J Cole following his death on 22 November 1938. Rev Cole was Vicar of the church from August 1903 to April 1932.



4. Woman Installed in the old church following the death of Annie Lawry Griffith who died in 1927. The window is inscribed “*The heart of her husband did safely trust in her – Proverbs XXXI II*”

5. Jesus Christ “*The Lord is my shepherd – The good shepherd has led his people and fed them these hundred years 1877-1977*” This window was subscribed to by parishioners of the church

and erected to mark the centenary of the old church building in 1977.



Entrance Windows



Two other small stained glass windows relocated from the old church were installed in the south wall of the entrance foyer in the new church. On the left appears the symbol XP representing the first letters of the title “Christos” which is “Christ/King” and were used to form a symbol for Christ “Chi” pronounced “Kie”.

On the right the letters IHS are a monogram used in the middle ages representing the Greek word for Jesus: “Ihesus”.

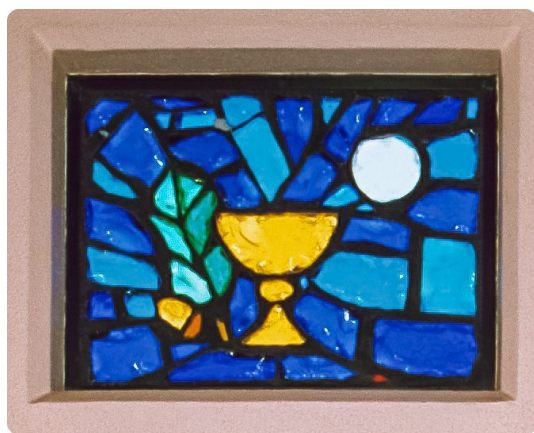


New Slab Glass Windows

When the new church was designed in 1993/4, the architects incorporated colourful slab glass windows in the design of the south wall of the worship area.

From left to right the slab windows depict –

- 1. Stylized Eucalypt with Hills** this window relates to the tying of the community of Berwick to the church. The symbols were taken from the logo of the City of Berwick, the local government body administering Berwick at the time of the church building and design program.
- 2. Fringed Lily** local plant used in the past as a food source by local indigenous people



- 3. Oak Leaf & Acorn with Cup and Wafer** the linking of the local church with the Eucharist (the former church logo included an oak leaf and acorn in recognition of the many oak trees in Berwick and in particular, the oak trees outside the old church in Palmerston Street).

- 4. Pink Heath** a symbol of the locality and the Victorian Region (Victorian State Floral Emblem)
- 5. Helmeted Honeyeater** a symbol of the locality. The helmeted honeyeater is one of the Victorian Faunal Emblems. Prior to the Ash Wednesday bushfires in 1983, the helmeted honeyeater was to be found along

the Cardinia Creek in the area between Berwick and Upper Beaconsfield.

CHRIST CHURCH MEMORIALS

During the period 1900 – 1941, a number of memorials – 7 in all, were erected within the church building commemorating the lives of a number of parishioners. Upon the sale and de-consecration of the old church building in the 1990's, the memorials were transferred for safekeeping to the new church premises, and have now been erected in a permanent display in recognition of their historic significance.

With the passing of the years it has been difficult to obtain detailed information regarding all of those persons named on the memorials. The following is what has been collected to date - it is hoped that we may be able to add to the information with further research.

Name Commemorated	Year of death	Material	Size(mm)
William a'Beckett	1941	Mosaic	720 x 430
William Oram Burd	1905	Brass	370 x 245
Marian Barker	1921	Marble	500 x 700
Alfred Cole	1932	Mosaic	400 x 260
Henriette MacKinnon	1910	Brass	550 x 550
Alice Olive Ogilvy	1903	Marble	600 x 540
Dorothy Vieusseux	1940	Marble	550 x 660

William Gilbert a'Beckett MA, LL.M Born in 1864. William lived at the "The Grange" property in Narre Warren North and owned a farm on the north side of a'Beckett Road known as "Kalora Park". He held a number of public offices including Berwick Shire Councillor, President of the Berwick Show Society in 1916/17, and was the first President of the Narre Warren North Tennis Club. William was supportive of the church taking services when necessary, he was a Lay Synod representative, and Guardian (vestry member) from 1884 – 1912. The records indicate that during the depression he arranged an "Old Time Night" entertainment to raise funds for the church. The memorial tablet to W G a'Beckett was unveiled in 1945.

William's father (W A C a'Beckett) had been one of the first settlers in the Narre Warren North area. He purchased a large house "The Grange" located in a'Beckett Road, Narre Warren North. The house was built in 1866. William AC (the son of Sir William a"Beckett, a Chief Justice of Victoria) represented the area in the State Parliament. William C made and donated the alter in the old church.





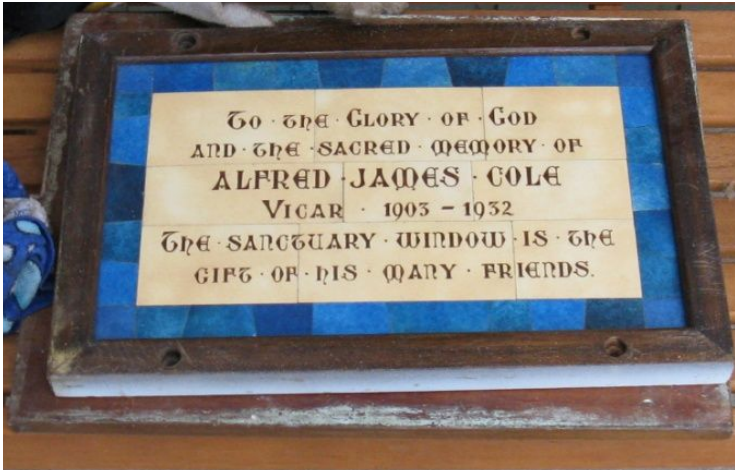
William Oram Burd
died at Harkaway on
12 May 1905.

Marian Barker The sister of the Principal of Berwick State Primary School, Alfred Barker. Marion (May) Barker was a Sunday School Teacher and associated with the Flower Show for many years. Marian died on 19 October 1921.



Her brother Alfred, a member of Vestry, initially lived in the school house on the south-eastern corner of Lyall Road and Brisbane Street (now part of Pioneers Park). Following his retirement the Barker family (Alfred, his wife and daughter Alice) moved to a new house further up Brisbane Street. Mrs Alfred Barker (Marian's sister-in-law) was a strong supporter of the church and led the Parish ladies in raising

funds for the installation of electricity to the vicarage in 1929.

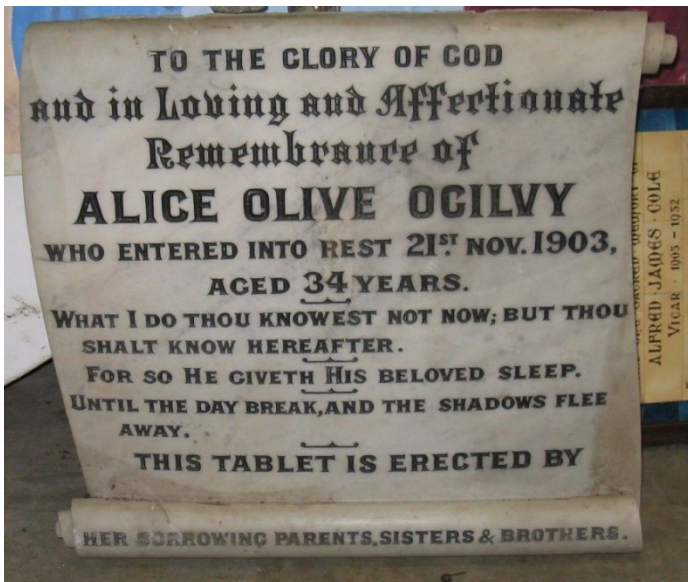


Alfred Cole The Rev Alfred James Cole was the Vicar of Christ Church, Berwick from August 1903 to April 1932 (28 years) – he died on 22 November 1932. A stained glass window was erected to

his memory in the old church in 1939.

Henriette May MacKinnon died on 24 January 1910 and was buried in the Berwick Cemetery. On her grave are the words “A loving mother”.





Alice Olive Ogilvy (wife of J W Ogilvy) was a resident of Berwick who lived at “Airlie” in Buchanan Road. Alice died on 21 November 1903 at the age of 34. Her husband’s family was part of the Ogilvy family from Airlie, Scotland (a

member of which married Princess Alexandra – cousin of the Queen). Alice Ogilvy met her death as a young woman as a result of the horse drawing her carriage bolting.

Dorothy Vieusseux who died on 9 March 1921 was the daughter of the Headmaster (Mr E L Vieusseux) of Berwick Grammar School which was located in the house on the south-eastern corner of Church and Brisbane Streets. Mr Vieusseux’s school and property were taken over by the Anglican Church following his death in 1917.



The war memorial and row of oaks in Church Street opposite the site of the former school commemorates the nine former students who fell during the Great War. Mr E

A Vieusseux is recorded as a secretary/treasurer of the Board of Governors (Vestry) of the church in 1883.

The Church Bell

Early records of the church note a bellringer Whitford Searle (son of Henry Searle) as “Honorary Bellringer to 1884” thus indicating that the bell may have been used by the church from its earliest years. The church bell originally hung from a pine tree in the grounds of the old church (the pine trees were removed in 1941). Young



church assistants would have the responsibility of ringing the bell prior to each service to summon parishioners to the church. Their other duty was to light the lamps in the church, a somewhat daunting task in the cold and dark of winter.

Following the death of two parishioners Jessie Traill and

William Johnson, a brick bell tower and adjacent memorial garden were established to their memory in the old church grounds – the bell tower dedicated to Jessie Traill and the garden to William Johnson.

Mr Johnson, who died on 19 September 1967, was born in Woodstock West, a small town located west of Bendigo on 18 February 1902. William was a Church Warden for many years.

Jessie Traill (1881-1967) was a well-known artist who lived at Harkaway on the south-west corner of Harkaway & Baker Roads. The story goes that she decided to become an artist when, at the age of ten, she met **Tom Roberts** painting on Black Rock beach, and they remained life long friends. Jessie attended *the National Gallery of Victoria Art School* and studied under a number of teachers including Frederick McCubbin. Jessie painted oils and airy watercolours, but she is best known for her etchings of industrial subjects, the new electricity plant especially the Sydney Harbour Bridge. During the First World War Jessie served as a nurse in France for three and a half years. Jessie planted the avenue of flowering eucalyptus on either side of Harkaway Road northerly from the roundabout at Harkaway, in memory of the nurses who had lost their lives during the war. She also sponsored migrants and was a generous supporter of worthy causes.

Miss Traill left a generous legacy to the church in her will. The bell was removed to the new church in 1995 and a new bell tower was erected in 2009.

Parish History:

A history of the parish written by Fred McCubbin (deceased, a former parishioner) has been published “*100 Years of Christ Church Berwick*” - it is no longer in print but is available in electronic form on the parish website.

For more information about current parish activities:

Corner Peel and Elgin Streets, Berwick.

Phone: 9707 1105

Email: info@berwickanglicanchurch.org.au

Web Site: <http://www.berwickanglicanchurch.org.au>

Sunday Services:

8:30am Holy Communion

10:15am Family Service

Midweek Service:

10:00am Thursdays – Holy Communion with Morning Tea