

The Link



The monthly newsletter of St. Andrew's, Brighton-le-Sands Uniting Church

Volume 1 Issue 6: October 2020



RAMBLINGS

We reach up to God, reach in to one another and reach out to the community

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It was with some trepidation that I included the cartoons in last month's The Link. But I am happy that many of you found them funny and no one was offended by my levity.

Alison and I have often wondered if God has a sense of humour and we have concluded that we think that he does, although I cannot find a scriptural basis for this. Humour is recognised as an amazing line of defence when coping with stress. Developing a sense of humour about life's challenges is a great place to start coping. A sense of humour will help us to build resilience to stress as well as improve our overall physical and emotional health.

It will also enable us to:

- ◆ Bond with others
- ◆ Look at things in a different way
- ◆ Normalize your experience
- ◆ Keep your relationships strong

Luckily, it's not too hard to develop a healthy sense of humour—but it does require a bit of practice. <https://www.verywellmind.com/maintain-a-sense-of-humor-3144888> talks about the ways to find the funny things in life and cope better with stress.

One of the more difficult things to accept seems to be black humour (also called gallows humour). Timothy and I got into trouble with Claire not that long ago over some black humour related to some current event (I forget what). But black humour has been long recognised as having therapeutic value. It is an accepted coping mechanism for emergency service personnel and the like (see, for example, <http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/id/eprint/28900/1/28900.pdf>). Even the extreme situation as a prisoner of war included humour as a coping mechanism. (Henman, L.D., 2001. Humor as a coping mechanism: Lessons from

Anyone else's car
getting 3 weeks to the
gallon at the moment ?

POWs. *Humor*, 14(1), pp.83-94.) From this reference you can see that there is a whole journal devoted to humour.

Laughter is widely promoted as the best medicine (Smith, M. and Delvin, D., 2001. *Laughter: The Best Medicine*. LibraPharm.). Perhaps the most famous exponent is Patch Adams (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patch_Adams) who was played by Robin Williams in a 1998 film "Patch Adams".

Another dangerous side to humour is easily illustrated . Some of you may recall the British TV series "Til death us do part" (1965-75) starring Warren Mitchell as Alf Garnett, a reactionary white working class man with anti socialist and racist views. It was satire and we were supposed to laugh at him but, unfortunately, there were those who laughed with him. Trivia fact: his screen son-in-law, Antony Booth was the father of Cherie Blair, wife of Tony Blair, UK Prime Minister.

Another problem with using humour as a coping mechanism is that it may make us appear to trivialise matters. So it needs to be shared with discretion. It may be enough to laugh to ourselves, but some of us cannot help but share!!

So that is my excuse for offering a little more help for you to cope with our present situations. I did think about some Trump humour, but I decided he's not really funny. I have a seemingly inexhaustible supply on current topics.

glad i didn't
waste my money
buying a planner
for 2020



Pre-Covid



During the Covid



And the winner is....



The LONG Journey

You'll notice that the Lectionary has now taken us to the book of Exodus.

Archaeologists and historians seriously question the historicity of the exodus story. As an historian, I am really interested in examining the evidence, and I certainly don't begin with the assumption that, because the Bible says something, it must be historically true. We know for

tion was to tell the story of Israel's journey from Egypt to Palestine, from slavery to nationhood, as it was remembered and as it had been interpreted. The story is not about history, but about God.

According to the Exodus account, the people of Israel spent forty years wandering around in Sinai before they were permitted to enter their new

land. It was a long journey, indeed a generational one, because the point of its length was that none of those who had set out from Egypt would be the ones rewarded by reaching the "land of milk and honey". And during that long journey, God was forming a nation. There was hardship, there were temptations, there was doubt and there was rebellion. Yet throughout the journey, God remained faithful. Looking back, God's hand on his people



certain that such is not always the case.

However that is not the point. The final form of Exodus which has come down to us dates from the period after the Jews had returned to Jerusalem following their release from the Babylonian captivity. What we have was carefully redacted, generations after the events which it describes, from at least two older source documents, one broadly "historical", the other "priestly". The inten-

tion was crystal clear.

Perhaps you've never thought about writing your own autobiography. Most of us don't, because we doubt that anyone would be interested. (We're probably right about that!) But if you do sit down to write your life's story, you'll quickly find that memory doesn't serve you well. Dates and details are lost or confused, whole chapters seem to have disappeared from the memory

banks, and authenticity is undermined by the clarity of hindsight, which sees in retrospect things that were not apparent at the time. Autobiographies – accurate ones – takes years of research to write, and frequently surprise even their authors.

Hindsight, however, while it may be the enemy of historicity, is invaluable in and of itself. It is only in retrospect that we can understand why we are who we have become, how we have been shaped by our background, our family, our education and the events of our life's journey. It is good to identify the forces that have contributed to making us the person we are.

For Christians, our life story is inextricably intertwined with God's working in our lives. Each of us has a different story, because God does not only work with particular types of people. For some of us, our journey with God began in Sunday School, and for others it began when we were adolescents or fully grown, perhaps quite "mature", adults. Some of us have had dramatic conversion experiences, others have come gradually to faith, and some can look back and not recall a time when they did not belong to Christ. I wonder what your experience has been as a growing disciple of the Lord Jesus. How did God shape you to be the Christian person you are today?

Different as our stories are, most Christians, when we look back, realise that there were one or several witnesses to Christ whom we encountered along the way, who were very important in helping us on our journey towards a mature faith. Perhaps they were parents, ministers, friends,

chance encounters, or even someone whom we never met but who wrote something that touched us deeply. Who were the important guides along your Christian journey? Give thanks for them often. By their faithfulness you have come to salvation in Christ.

If our own insight about our own life story, viewed through the crystal clear lens of retrospect and reflection, tells us how very important in our own lives have been willing witnesses to Christ, then we must take heed. So many of us are reluctant, these days, to talk about our faith. Granted we live in a world which claims to be ever so "spiritual", but which uses that term with extraordinary plasticity, and most certainly doesn't like being told that it is sinful. Modern spirituality is usually pragmatically self-serving. So yes, that makes bearing witness to Christ challenging, but it also cries out to us just how desperately the world needs to hear the gospel of Jesus.

As you reflect on your own life's "exodus" journey, and recall how God has acted in your life and how certain people have helped to shape you as God's servant, be encouraged to be part of the exodus journey of others whom you meet. If not you, then who will seek to ensure that they do not get lost in their endless journey through the wilderness of Sinai?

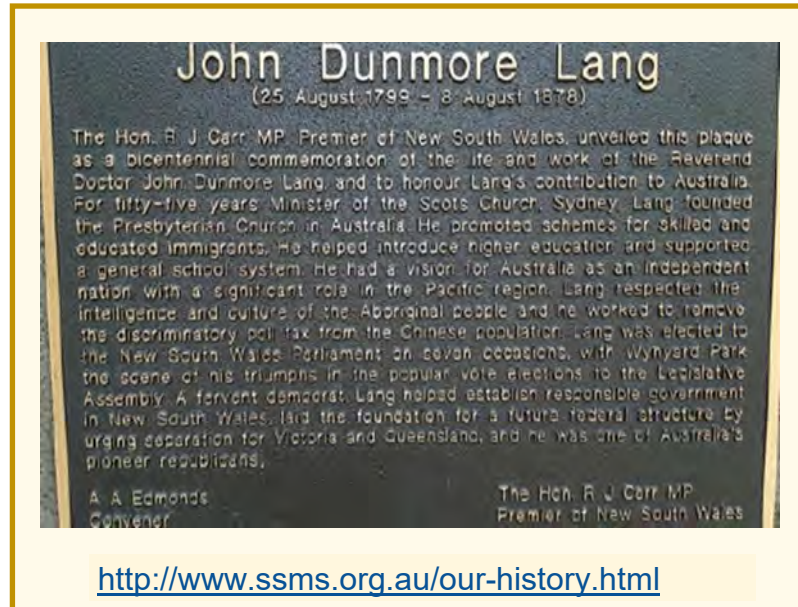
Alan Harper OAM

Background and history of St Andrew's Part 4

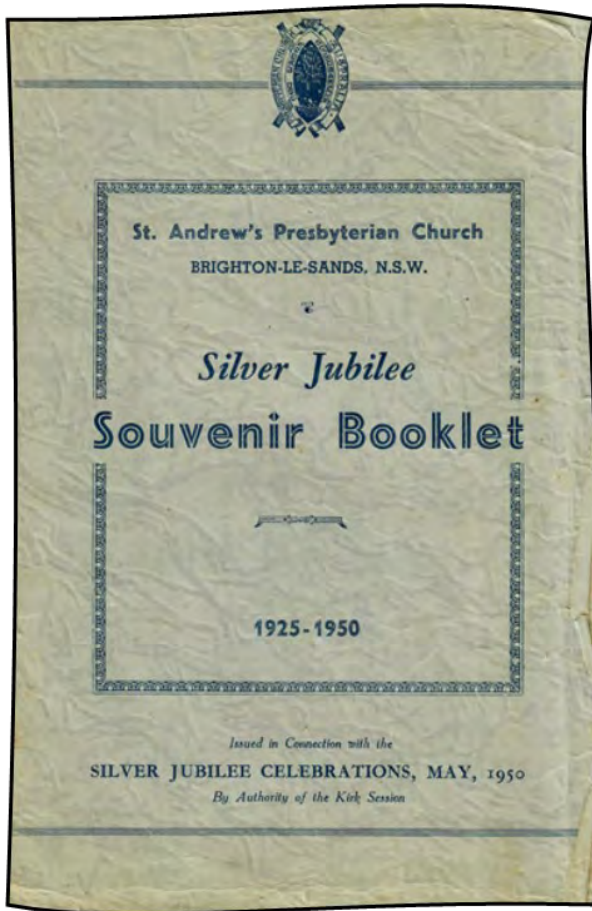
Presbyterians arrived in New South Wales on the First Fleet in 1788. John Hunter the captain of HMS *Sirius* was a former Church of Scotland minister. The first Presbyterian service delivered in New South Wales was in the Hawkesbury in 1803. The pioneer Presbyterians were about a dozen families of free emigrants mainly from the Scottish border. Each family received a grant of 100 of rich alluvial land on the banks of the Hawkesbury River near Portland Head. The first services were held in their homes and they built a church (for £400) in 1809. In 1823 the first ordained Presbyterian minister arrived, Rev Dr JD Lang. In 1824 he celebrated the first Presbyterian Holy Communion at Portland Head. There were 20 communicants. (<https://sites.google.com/site/historyofpresbyterianisminnsw/home/chapter-1>)

Members of the Church were involved in city missions and work with children throughout the 19th and 20th century - Sir James Burns, the wealthy founder of Burnside Homes, was a Presbyterian. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presbyterian_Church_of_Australia and <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/>).

St. Andrew's has a link to Clouston Memorial Presbyterian Church, Arncliffe, which we will explore later. This paragraph has been based on an anonymous document labelled as intended for the September 1969 Brighton newsletter. The first Presbyterian church in the St. George area, opened in 1887 in Bexley. In about 1893 a Sunday school was opened on the corner of Rocky Point Road and Stoney Creek Road, Arncliffe. Today the locals will say that Rocky Point Road is not in Arncliffe and stops in Kogarah near St. George Hospital and Stoney Creek Road stops in Bexley, joining Forest Road. What we now know as the Princes Highway



was, at the time, Rocky Point Road. However, I have been unable to identify that there was ever an intersection with Stoney Creek Road. The charge was sanctioned 1913 and the church rededicated as the Clouston Memorial Church on 29th November 1913. Thomas Edward Clouston BA DD (21 April 1848 – 26 August 1913) was an Irish-born Presbyterian minister and academic who came to NSW in 1881. He was appointed Moderator of the NSW Presbyterian Assembly in 1890 and elected Moderator of the General Assembly of Australia in 1906. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_E._Clouston). It was reopened and rededicated, the same year that he died. (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/12118422?q&sort=holdings+desc&=1580170476478&versionId=23915973>)



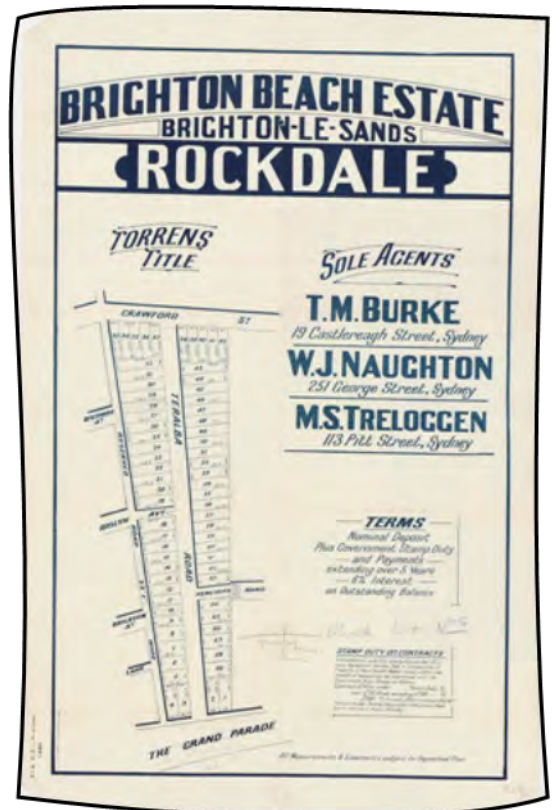
The next part of the history is taken almost entirely from the booklet that was compiled for the Silver Jubilee of St Andrew's in May 1950. Additional information from elsewhere is identified.

A Sunday School was established in February, 1924. It was held above a shop in Bay Street, owned by Mrs. McKenzie. Arrangements were in process to build a school hall; but in the meantime the Presbyterian children of the district were accommodated above the Bay Street Shop that was to prove to be the scene of the real beginning of our Church work in this district. The first Superintendent of that Sunday School was Mr. Donald Rankin, at that time a member of the Rockdale Church where the Rev. J. C. Milliken was Minister.

Two blocks of land were bought in Teralba Road in readiness for the prospective developments. Added note: The numbers are not recorded but it is assumed that these were 49 & 51.

From the advertising flyer of the time it may be seen that the cost of these blocks was £160 each. Blocks at the beach end were £238 10s and on Grand Parade they were £388. The purchase must have been between the date of this flyer, 17th April 1922 and May 1925.

Booklet courtesy of Pam and Charles Schofield.



Images courtesy of the State Library of New South Wales

By 1908 most of the streets in the immediate area and their names had been established and the land was for sale. There was a requirement that any building erected be worth at least £150 or £200 on Bay Street or Grand Parade. An agreement was entered into with the Methodist Church that for, ten years as from January, 1925, the Presbyterians should refrain from starting at Ramsgate and the Methodists would not open in Brighton. At this point the land in The Kings Road (as it was then named) was bought from the Methodist Church.



Image courtesy of the State Library of New South Wales

In May, 1925, a weatherboard building (the Morgan Simplex Portable Church) was assembled on one of the blocks in Teralba Road that was still owned by the church at this time. It was financed by a loan of £200 from the Church and Manse Loan Committee in respect of which the usual bond was provided by local men. Services were conducted by lay-preachers in this building. In October, 1925, this building was blown down by a cyclone. "Distributed it around the district". In the meantime, until the building was re-erected, the work of the church was carried on in the cinema in Bay Street loaned by a Mr. Quoye,. The church was not re-erected on the Teralba Road site, but on the Kings Road block of land. The old original, portable church, having had many repairs and several additions over the years, stood on this block until 1955 when the present hall and rooms was built. The original building was just a shell without porch or rooms but additions to the sides of the building were made by voluntary labour during the subsequent years. The £200 was repaid in full over a number of years and the Home Mission Committee met all the costs of re-erecting the building after it was blown down. Services continued to be conducted in this building through the services of laymen who kept the flag flying in rather trying and difficult times.

1924	Visiting ministers and lay people. The church was a Hone Mission Station
July 1927	Mr (later Rev) Keith Burton appointed Student in charge.
April 1929	Mr (later Rev) FM Druery appointed Student in charge.
March 1930	Mr SG Braidwood appointed Student in charge.
Period of lay-supply	
May 1931	Mr (later Rev) Alan A Dougan appointed Student in charge.
January 1933	Mr DG Leggett appointed Student in charge.
July 1934	Mr (later Rev) Archibald W Grant appointed Student in charge.
June 1935	Mr (later Rev) DM Harper appointed Student in charge.
January 1937	Mr (later Rev) AW Grant appointed for a second term.
January 1938	Mr William Walker, a home missionary, appointed. Died August 1938.
September 1938	Mr (later Rev) WM Walker appointed Student in charge.

The story was told that on one occasion the Committee painted the interior of the old weather-board church, spending many late nights on the task. As the condition of the old pews tended to spoil the general appearance of an otherwise excellent 'job,' some dark stain was purchased and hurriedly put on the pews on the Saturday. The assurance given by the business man from whom the stain was purchased that the stain would dry almost immediately, proved to be unreliable advice. Members of the congregation who arrived for the Sunday service were delighted with the new appearance that had been given to the old building, but were not so pleased when they found themselves 'stuck' to the seats.

The Church was rebuilt on the Kings Road property at ground level with a mound of sand between it and Kings Road. Getting to the church was said to be like walking through a railway cutting.



The church in 1925

During 1938 the present church building was constructed. The Congregation resolved to build the church on 23 February. This was approved by the State Assembly in May. The foundation stone was laid on the 8th October and on the 10th December the building was opened.

This all rather begs the question of was St. Andrew's the first church in Brighton. This first church certainly predates St. Thomas More's Catholic Church, which was founded in 1937. <https://www.thomasmorebrighton.org.au/history-of-church/>

Despite a morning searching, I have been unable to establish the dates of the two other churches. The foundation stone of St. Mark's Anglican church was laid just one week after the present St. Andrew's (I had a look this morning) so it post-dates, just, the first St. Andrew's but establishing if there was a church on the site before the present one has not been possible thus far. There is a written history of St. Mark's so I will have to visit the Library (not for loan). There was a small Congregational Church in Moate Avenue that was there until the late 80s or early 90s but I do not know when it ceased to be active. It was there when we arrived in Brighton in 1985. It was part of the continuing Congregational Church. See Schedule 5 of <https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1977-039>

That part of Moate Avenue (then called "The Avenue") was subdivided in 1912. So I cannot preclude the possibility that the church was founded before 1925.

Next month – the new church building.

Our Outreach

St Andrew's supports these activities, in particular

S

COOK MOOREFIELD COMBINED CHURCHES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD

Supporting Nick's ministry at these schools. Financial donations (tax deductible) to Alison.

NICK'S BREAKFAST CLUB AT JAMES COOK HIGH

(Please bring cereals (not Weetbix) and long-life milk.

THE KOGARAH STOREHOUSE FOOD MINISTRY

The Storehouse is distributing food parcels on Wednesdays and still needs food donations.

<http://www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au/>

To keep you abreast of what is happening, our Winter edition of the Kogarah Storehouse newsletter, *Storehouse Seasons*, can be found at <https://www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Newsletter-Winter-2020.pdf>. Some hard copies are available in the vestry during October.



LACLA-LET THE AFRICAN CHILDREN LEARN ASSOCIATION

Carry on collecting your 5 cent pieces for donation. Or, in these days of contact-less payments, leave a donation.



SAMARITAN'S PURSE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

<https://www.samaritanspurse.org.au/get-involved/ways-to-give/>



ACT FOR PEACE CHRISTMAS BOWL

<https://www.actforpeace.org.au/Learn/Why-we-are-here>



Prayer Points

The mission and ministry of our congregation.
 Worship leaders, preachers, musicians, readers, helpers, leaders, followers.
 Those affected by COVID-19, their carers and families. Those who have lost loved ones.
 Those still feeling the effects of the bushfire and floods.
 Those who are sick, sad or lonely
 The people of Beirut.
 Our own people especially Carolyn and Dennis Gates, Ruth Bird and the Gaitau family.
 To raise up people to work within St. Andrew's.
 Alan and Lauris Harper.

If you need pastoral care or know of someone needing pastoral care, please see the contact details in the side panel on the first page. If you wish an addition to this list, please contact Stephen Dain.

October Roster

Please arrange substitutes when you are not able to do your allocated time.

Communion Sundays—someone please bring bread

Date Oct	Colour	Preacher	Worship Leader	Musician	Bible Reader	Welcomer	Projector	Open close + Communion	Morning tea	God's Gang	
04		Alan Harper <i>(Visiting lay preacher)</i>	Alan Harper	Alison & Marques	Gordon	Charles/Harry/Dennis	Ese	Dennis	Pam & Charles	Shirley & Terangi	
11	White Sunday	Youth/Sunday school	Ese Enari	Arinona, Marques, Komiti, Sara-Belle	Youth/Sunday school	Charles/Harry/Dennis	Gordon		All parents	Children in church	
18		Meleane Siuhengalu <i>(Visiting lay preacher)</i>	Meleane Siuhengalu	Alison & Marques	Carolyn	Charles/Harry/Dennis	Stephen & Dennis		+	Terangi & Carolyn	Shirley & helper
25		HC Rev David Cox		Alison & Arinona	Mere/Siunipa	Charles/Harry/Dennis	Gordon		Dain Family	Ese & Marques	Children in church