



# Baptist Archives and Family History: A Guide

## Understanding resources and services

### Baptist Church Archives, Queensland//Baptist Heritage Queensland

QB Centre, 53 Prospect Rd, Gaythorne Q 4051 Australia

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## Baptist Archives and Family History

The Baptist denomination is part of the Protestant movement within the Christian faith with its roots in the Bible and the 16th century Reformation. It originated as an organised movement in 1609 in Amsterdam and was soon established in England from which it spread worldwide. There are now at least forty-five million members globally grouped in about 170,000 churches in 124 countries. See <http://bit.ly/BaptistBeginnings>.

The Baptist Church Archives Queensland is the official repository of the Baptist denomination in Queensland, located at the QB Centre, 53 Prospect Road, Gaythorne, Q 4051 phone 07 3354 5600 [archives@qb.org.au](mailto:archives@qb.org.au). It is staffed on a voluntary basis. We have a rich collection of resources (digital and paper) that will assist with information and background details for people researching their ancestors with Baptist connections. The Baptist Archives is supported by Baptist Heritage Queensland, the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland.

For general information, we recommend our book, *Baptists in Queensland* (BHQ, 2013) \$5.00. As a guide to resources and procedure, see, *So, your ancestor was a Baptist in Queensland* (by Eric and Rosemary Kopittke) 1995, at a special price of \$2.00. We also have an online presence <http://dparker.net.au/barc.htm>.

### Baptist information

Material in the Baptist Archives provides general background on Baptist life in Queensland through its collection of church histories, family and personal biographies and denominational publications such as the news magazine published since 1881, and proceedings and reports of the denomination and its activities since 1877. There are many photographs of people and church groups which are indexed and many are digitised..

For particular information, refer to the denominational newspaper, *The Queensland Freeman* (1881-1888) and *The Queensland Baptist* (QB) (1889-present with some gaps), which often printed articles and photographs about prominent members and ministers. If a person was an official, such as a minister, a President or leader of some organisation, there may have also been biographical information printed in a Yearbook or Annual Report. Earlier issues of the national paper, *The Australian Baptist* (1913-1991), also

carried these kinds of articles, as well as a limited number of births, deaths and marriages entries. In addition, for a period there was a children's section where letters were printed from children of church families which often contained interesting information about the child and their family and their church and local activities.

Books, magazines and other publications that give a broad outline to the history and development of Baptist churches locally and beyond will give researchers invaluable assistance in giving the proper context for Baptist families and personalities. For more in depth information, the library of the Baptist theological institution, Malyon College is also on the same campus and is open to visitors [www.malyon.edu.au](http://www.malyon.edu.au).

**Privacy:** Materials in the Archives are subject to relevant privacy and access conditions.

### **Individual/family records: nature, quantity, quality**

The nature of our detailed family history resources is determined by our beliefs, and the quantity and quality is determined by our practices.

**Baptism:** We are a church that is based on the personal belief of its members. So baptism which is the sign and affirmation of faith in Jesus Christ, only takes place when a person is able to make an individual decision about it—typically in youth or adulthood, after which the person may become a member of the church. This means that infants and children are not baptised or christened, although some families and churches have an 'infant dedication' service. Therefore our baptismal records reveal nothing about children or their parents. Unfortunately, the records of baptisms are often very sparse, even if they exist at all. Usually nothing more than a name, date and location may be listed. Church membership records usually indicate the name of person, sometimes the date of admission or transfer or removal, and only rarely anything more, including address.

**Marriage:** In earlier days, ministers retained their own (government issued) Marriage Register, but more recently this is considered the property of the local church. Only some of these registers have found their way to the Baptist Church Archives Queensland. There is usually no other record created apart from the official papers. A prominent marriage may have attracted some local interest with reports in a local newspaper (available on Trove) or perhaps mention in the denominational newspapers.

**Death/Burial:** Some local churches which arose within the German speaking section of the Baptist denomination (mostly in the West Moreton area of south east Queensland) operated their own cemeteries; there are some partial burial records available for these churches, but other churches used public cemeteries and do not have any burial records.

**Local Records:** Another feature of the Baptist denomination is that its main focus is at the local level, rather than the central denominational organisation. Most local churches hold their own records, including membership, baptismal and marriage records. Those held in the central Archives are mostly from defunct churches and a few of the older churches which have deposited their early records there.

**Service Registers:** Baptists do not have the tradition of keeping a service register so there is no information available about regular and occasional services. The minutes of regular business meetings may sometimes contain brief references to baptisms and marriages. Local church weekly/monthly bulletins, where retained, may contain some relevant information.

**Extra links:** The Baptist Archives Queensland has access to other inter-state and overseas Baptist bodies which may be helpful in providing leads for tracing Baptist ancestors from other locations and information about people who have relocated during their life-times.

**Contact:** It is necessary to contact the Archives (see above) for an appointment. There are no set fees for service but donations towards the upkeep of the Archives are appreciated. Copying and postage expenses are to be reimbursed.

<b>A select list of publications</b>		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Postage</b>
<i>Baptists in Queensland - a Guide to their Life and Faith</i> , David Parker (ed.) (2013) 52pp ISBN 978 0 9578214 8 4 (Baptist Historical Series No. 1) 3rd	\$5.00	\$2.60
<i>Cameos of Baptist Men in 19th Century Queensland</i> , Mel Williams (1995)	\$5.00	\$2.60
<i>Fortitude: Dr Lang's Vision for Queensland and the United Evangelical Church</i> , David Parker & Angus Edmonds (1999) 52pp ISBN 0-9586622-9-0	\$8.00	\$2.60
<i>HACK: A Biography of the Life and Work of Rev Harold George Hackworthy MC MA 1891-1953</i> , R. W. (Bill) Hughes (2009), 122 pp. (Baptist Historical Series No 15)	\$15.00	\$2.60
<i>James Voller: Pioneer Baptist Minister of Australia</i> , David Parker (1997) 60 pages ISBN 0646339907 (Baptist Historical Series No. 4)	\$7.50	\$2.60
<i>Marburg Baptist Church</i> , Richard Scanlan and David Parker (2000) 40pp	\$7.50	\$4.50
<i>Minden, Tarampa and Vernor Baptist Cemeteries (Qld) Monumental Inscriptions</i> , Rosemary & Eric Kopittke (1996) 46 pp ISBN 0 9586622 1 5	\$11.00	\$4.50
<i>Pressing on with the Gospel: the story of Baptists in Queensland 1855-2005</i> (2005) edited by David Parker, with Les Ball and Stan Nickerson (Baptist	\$20.00	\$5.00
<i>Remember all the Way: a Century of Baptist History in Queensland</i> , David Parker (ed.) (1996) 50pp ISBN 0 9586622 2 3 (Documents of Queensland	\$11.00	\$2.60
<i>Something more than Gold - Baptists in Central Queensland 1862-2012</i> ,	\$15.00	\$5.00
<i>Strange Bedfellows: Rev. Charles Stewart Brisbane's First Baptist Minister and the United Evangelical Church</i> , 2nd Edition. David Parker (1998) 80pp	\$16.00	\$2.60
<i>Women who Made a Difference, Celebrating the contribution of 24 Queensland Baptist women to church, community and mission</i> . David	\$12.50	\$2.60

## Orders

BHQ Publications c/- 98 Yallambee Rd, Jindalee, QLD 4074.

Phone 07 3376 4339, Email [kopittke@tpg.com.au](mailto:kopittke@tpg.com.au)

Send payment (**cheques** payable BHSQ) to: BHQ, c/- 98 Yallambee Rd, Jindalee, QLD 4074

**Direct deposit at Westpac branch:** BSB 034-819 Account No. 003390 – Baptist Historical Society of Queensland

**On-line deposit:** BSB 704-913 Account No. 400040085 – Baptist Historical Society of Queensland

Please be sure to indicate your name and the purpose of the deposit as books