

A HISTORY OF ST JAMES CHURCH

at Alton Downs and West Rockhampton

1907 - 1990



First Edition¹ St James Day 2009

with the expectation of corrections, additions and other adjustment details to be undertaken in time for the 100th anniversary of the Dedication of St James.

Compiled by Canon Janne Whitehead

¹ Unless otherwise acknowledged, information in this document is taken from "The Church Gazette" of the Diocese of Rockhampton 1906 – 1914, 1954-1955 and from Parish Service Registers, Diocese of Rockhampton Archives.

PART ONE : A CHURCH IS ESTABLISHED

The Church Gazette of December 1906 reported, as part of the life of St Paul's Cathedral Parish and under the heading "Alton Downs", that the Rector, Archdeacon George Halford²,

"had spent two days visiting on the Downs visiting Church people there, and trying to ascertain how much support would be given towards the erection of a Church, and was very pleased with the generous response made by many of the resident farmers."

The Rector did not hesitate to open a building fund, and announced in the same Gazette article that two recent donations of £5 each from friends in England would be put towards the building of churches at Alton Downs and Stanwell.

Before the month was out, much had happened. It had been found that a sum of £100 was already in hand for a church building for Alton Downs, and a piece of land had been given by Mr Campbell Murray of "Fitzroy Park"³.



On Sunday 16th December 1906, a meeting was held in St. Paul's Cathedral Schoolroom after Divine Service, and unanimously decided that

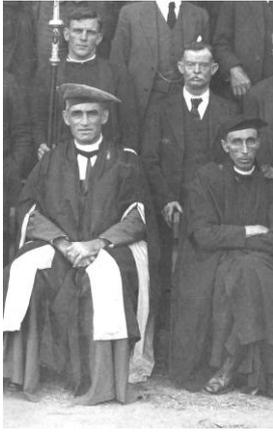
"A church of dressed hardwood, on the lines of the Anglican⁴ Church at Duaringa, be erected at once, on the site given for the purpose by Mr. Campbell Murray."

A building committee of three was formed, comprising Mr. Moore, Mr W. Hunt and Mr G. Williams, and this committee was given power to call for tenders immediately. The committee promptly met with the Rector and Mr R. Blank, and went through the plans and specifications, and before the end of the year, the parish was waiting only on the survey of land and the signing of the contract.

² Archdeacon George Dowglass Halford was Rector of the Cathedral parish from 1902 – 1907. He was Bishop of the Diocese from 1909 – 1920.

³ Modern aerial photograph shows the location of the donated land, near the corner of Ridgelands Road and Hunt Road, adjacent to the school which once stood beside the still existing school house; from Yvonne Llewellyn

⁴ Note the term "Anglican", not "Church of England", used here in 1906.



Building committee member Mr William Hunt was a great supporter of the church both local and diocesan, for many years, and is seen in these two photographs of the Synod of the Diocese. Left photograph: Synod of 1926 or 1927, with Bishop Crick, Archdeacon Rogers (seated) and Mr William Hunt standing behind, next to the Bishop's chaplain. Right photograph: Synod of 1928 – 1930, with Bishop Ash, Canon Kenny next to him, Mr William Hunt sitting on the grass far right, and the younger man sitting on the grass towards the centre identified as Mr Sid Pierce.⁵

On Sunday 20th January 1907, the foundation block of the newly named St. James' church Alton Downs was laid by Mrs Campbell (Mary) Murray, of Fitzroy Park, possibly following the precedent set in 1900 by the Bishop's wife, Mrs Dawes, in laying the foundation stone of St Mark's Allenstown⁶.

The Church Gazette of February 1907 reports:

“After service in the school at 2:30, at which the Rector preached on the motives that must underlie the building of a House of God, the congregation, some in buggies, some riding, some walking, proceeded to the site, where service was held. First a hymn, then a short preface directing the intention of the service, then as an Antiphon “My House shall be called the House of Prayer. Alleluia.” Then followed the Te Deum⁷, and the Antiphon again, the lesson from Ezra iii., 10,11⁸, versicles and Lord's Prayer, then prayer, and when all was ready, the block, which was suspended by a derrick⁹, was lowered into its place and Mrs. Murray shoveled earth into the hole and laying her hand upon the block said, “In the Faith of Jesus Christ, we place this block in the Name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Amen.” The Doxology¹⁰ was then sung and a procession formed, and all present marched around the block, laying their offerings on the block. The

⁵ photographs from Yvonne Llewellyn

⁶ from “A Short History of St Mark's Allenstown” by Archdeacon R.H.H.Philp, page 3

⁷ “The Song of the Church”, p.7 A Prayer Book for Australia

⁸ Ezra 3:10-11: And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the direction of David king of Israel; and they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures for ever toward Israel.” And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.” (RSV)

⁹ A lifting device composed of one mast or pole which is hinged freely at the bottom. It is controlled by lines (usually four of them) powered by some means such as man-hauling or motors, so that the pole can move in all four directions; a line runs up it and over its top with a hook on the end. (Wikipedia)

¹⁰ “Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.”

service concluded with prayers for all who have given of their substance towards the building, for protection of those engaged in building, and for the worshippers."

Work progressed quickly. Under the supervision of the building committee, Messers W. Hunt, R. Blank, Moore and G. Williams, the church was erected in less than eight weeks by Messrs. Cousins and Co.

The statement of receipts and expenditure, dated 31 March 1907 and printed below, lists:

Receipts: To Alton Downs Committee £44 1s 2d

Campbell Murray Esq £10, WOM £1 1/-, The Bishop's Auxiliary Fund £5 4/-,

Rockhampton District Mission Fund £3, Home Mission Fund Grant £10

Home Mission Fund Loan £100

Expenditure:

By Contractors £150 4/-, Transfer fee church site £4 5/6, Survey church site £4 4/-

Seats £8 15/-, Adverts 3/-

Credit balance £5 14/8

Receipts		Expenditure	
To Alton Downs Committee	44 1 2	By Contractors	150 4 -
Campbell Murray Esq	10 - -	Transfer fee Church Site	4 5 6
WOM	1 1 -	Survey	4 4 -
The Bishop's Auxiliary Fund	5 4 -	Seats	8 15 -
Rockhampton District Mission Fund	3 - -	Adverts	3 - -
Home Mission Fund (Grant)	10 - -	Credit Balance	5 14 8
Home Mission Fund Loan	100 - -		
	£ 173 6 2		£ 173 6 2

March 31st 1907

The new building was described in detail in the Gazette of April 1907:

"The church is built of tongued and grooved dressed hardwood, sheeted on the outside of the studs, and the dark grain of the wood looks very handsome. It is 34 feet long by 22 feet broad and is 13 feet high to the wall plate inside measurements.¹¹ At the east end there is a platform 8 feet¹² wide, with a rise of 6 inches, and on this the altar platform stands, rising another 6 inches. There are four good casement windows in each side wall, the sills of which are 4 feet from the floor, the ideal height for Church windows in this climate, and there are two windows on the east wall, on either side of the altar, and a louvre window in the gable above the wall plate. A small vestry is screened off on the north side just inside the west door, and there is a good porch at the west end. All the furniture of the Church was made by Mr. Cousins, and the farmers have put some good entrance gates."

¹¹ 10 metres long, 6.7 metres wide, 4 metres high

¹² 2.4 metres



Photograph of St James Alton Downs during the 1920's, as printed in "Fitzroy Flashbacks" compiled by Jenny Reeve and Rhondda Ward, 2004, originally provided by Marion Boles.

Credits for the erection of the building in such a short space of time were given firstly to the people "on the Downs", the building committee, and also to J. Handley, J. Sprague, W. Woodley, W.C.Booth and A. Findlater for "carting and other work".

Almost £50 towards the cost of the building were given during this period and listed in the Church Gazette:

Mr Campbell Murray £10; £5 each from Mr W. Hunt, Mr R. Blank, Messers F.J. Williams and Son; £2 2s from Mr R. Bond; £2 each from Mr C. Hoare, Mr R. Duncan,; Mr J.F.Moore, Mr W.C. Booth; £1 1s from Mr & Mrs J. Orr; £1 each from Mr J. Handley, Mr W. Walters, Mr Joseph Bond, Mr E. Adams, Mr W. Blank 10/6 from Mr J.C.Edgar; 10/- each from Mr C. Bennett, Mr F. Bond, Mr Jesse Bond, Mr A.P. Fodd, Mr G. Muns, Mr G. Baxter, Mr J. Sprague, Mr C. Leete, Mrs C. Rassmussen; 7/6 from Mrs W. Wells; 5/- each from Mr F. Campbell, Mr F.J. Hoare, Mr W.A. Hoare, Mr W. Wells, Mrs Grant, Mr J. Kalh, Mr J. Develin, Mr J. Foote, Mr S. Crook, Mr W. Yenn; and 2/6 from Mr W. Campbell.
Total £49, 3s 6d

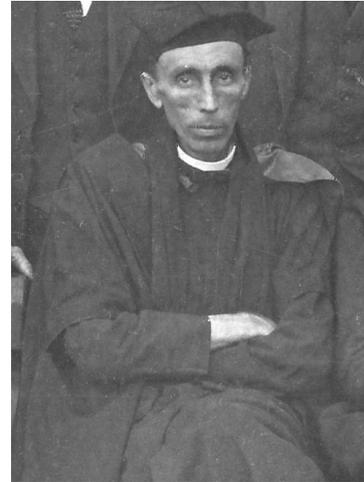
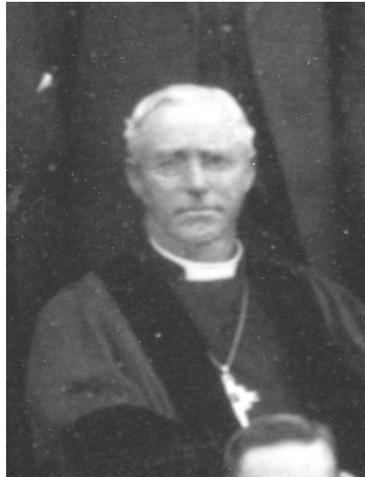
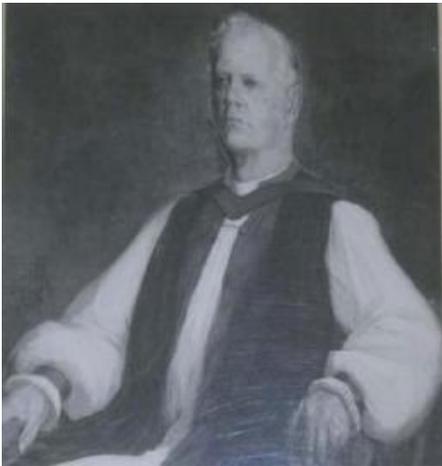
The Australian Bureau of Statistics states that £1 at the beginning of the twentieth century is approximately equivalent to \$100 at the beginning of the twenty-first century. At the time of Federation in 1901, the average adult weekly wage was £2 for a 50 hour working work. Basic household costs included a loaf of bread for 2 ½ pence, one dozen eggs for 1 shilling, rump steak 6 pence a pound, a pint of milk for 1 penny, a pound of potatoes cost a halfpenny, a pound of butter 1/3d, one pound of flour was 1 penny, a pound of sugar 5 pence, a pound of bacon 1 shilling, a newspaper a halfpenny, a man's cotton business shirt 8 shillings, a pair of ladies shoes cost 14 shillings, and a new bicycle £15. Within the church, £50 was considered a large debt and £5 a very generous donation¹³.

Very soon afterward, another £40 7s was received from the Bishop's Auxiliary in England, with amounts of £4 and £5 from individual clergy, £11 from St. Chad's Gateshead, and amounts between 1 guinea and £5 from other individuals.

¹³ From "Snapshot 1906", A snapshot of Life in the Diocese of Rockhampton by Canon Janne Whitehead, 2006

PART TWO: THE FIRST FEW YEARS

At the beginning of the year 1907, Bishop Nathaniel Dawes had been Bishop of the Diocese for 15 years¹⁴, Archdeacon George Halford had been Rector of the Cathedral parish (of which Alton Downs was a part) for 5 years, the Rev'd G. Herbert Rogers, was about to become Rector, and would remain so for the following 10 years, and the Rev'd Charles Lewin was Assistant Curate.



Photos: (from left to right) Bishop Dawes¹⁵; Bishop Halford¹⁶; Archdeacon Rogers¹⁷

The first service in the new church of St James, Alton Downs, was held on Sunday 17 March 1907, and was a celebration of a new beginning in the life of the faithful. The Church Gazette reported that:

"...the building was filled with a large congregation. The service was taken by the Archdeacon, who also gave the address, and the lessons were read by the Rev. G. Rogers¹⁸, Rector designate of the parish."

The topic of the sermon was "Worship" and the collection totaled £2 2/7. It was recorded, with the monthly services which followed, in the service register for the new church. During that first year, worship was also conducted by the Rev'd Sampson Stevens, Mission Chaplain based in Rockhampton 1907 – 1910, as well as the Rev'd Charles Herbert Lewin, and the Rev'd William Uphill, Assistant Curates at the Cathedral.

During the years 1909 – 1910, the Bishop visited the congregation several times, on December 26th for Litany and Holy Communion, then in the following January for Sunday School at 3pm, and in February and July that same year, for services of Evensong at 3pm. Holy Communion was celebrated only twice in 1910, in May and November, despite there being The Archdeacon or Bishop at almost all services. Communicant numbers were consistently low, normally being less than 10, in accordance with the worship patterns of

¹⁴ Bishop Dawes was the first Bishop of Rockhampton Diocese, serving from 1892 to 1908

¹⁵ From a painting held by the Diocese

¹⁶ From a photograph of Diocesan Synod taken 1928-1930, while Bishop Halford was serving as Chaplain of the Westwood Mission District; provided by Yvonne Llewellyn

¹⁷ From a photograph of Diocesan Synod taken 1926 or 1927, about 10 years after Archdeacon Rogers had finished at the Cathedral; provided by Yvonne Llewellyn

¹⁸ Archdeacon George Herbert Rogers was Rector of the Cathedral parish from 1907 to 1917

the time. The June monthly service in 1910 was Evensong at the regular time of 3pm, conducted by Mr William Hunt.

DATE	HOUR OF SERVICE	OFFICIATING CLERGYMAN AND PREACHER	TEXT	No. of Communicants	OFFERTORY		REMARKS
					OBJECT	AMOUNT	
1907						2 2 7	
March 17	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Worship			- 16 -	
April 21	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Light			1 0 11	Trisunday
May 19	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Eph. 11. 19-22			14 6	
June 16	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	1 Sam 3 ²⁴			12 11	1 st S. after Trinity
July 21	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	St Mark. 7 ²¹			14 11	xii
Aug 18	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Ps. 109			7 3	xiii
Sept 15	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Ps. 22 ⁶			1 4 8	xvi - incl. 10/11
Oct 20	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Dan 4 ²⁰			2 9	xvii
Nov 17	11 am	George Herbert Rogers	Micah 6 ⁶⁻⁸			9 1	
	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Calvary			3 6	Very wet
Dec 16	3 pm	George Herbert Rogers	Calvary			8 2	

During these years, the Cathedral Parish included the "District Churches" of St Marks, Allenstown, St Lukes Wandal Estate, St Clements Depot Hill, St James Alton Downs and St Johns Stanwell, as well as other congregations gathering for worship at Bouldercombe, Gracemere, Duaringa, Bajool, Pink Lily, Archer, Lionleigh and Mount Usher. North Rockhampton was a separate parish, and included Lakes Creek, Koongal and other areas.

To minister to these many congregations, spread over significant distances, the Cathedral had a significant team of clergy, all of whom at some stage have their name recorded in the service register at St James:

- Archdeacon George Herbert Rogers, Rector 1907 - 1917
- The Rev'd Charles Herbert Lewin, Assistant 1903 - 1907
- The Rev'd William Uphill Assistant 1908 - 1910
- The Rev'd Thomas Herbert Pitt Assistant 1910 - 1912
- The Rev'd Bertram Stanley Hammond Assistant 1911 - 1914
- The Rev'd Adrian Stokes Assistant 1911 - 1915
- The Rev'd William Edward Cargill Assistant 1912 - 1916
- The Rev'd Edgar Robert Streeten Assistant 1912 - 1915
- The Rev'd Arthur Augustus Fellows Assistant 1915 - 1917

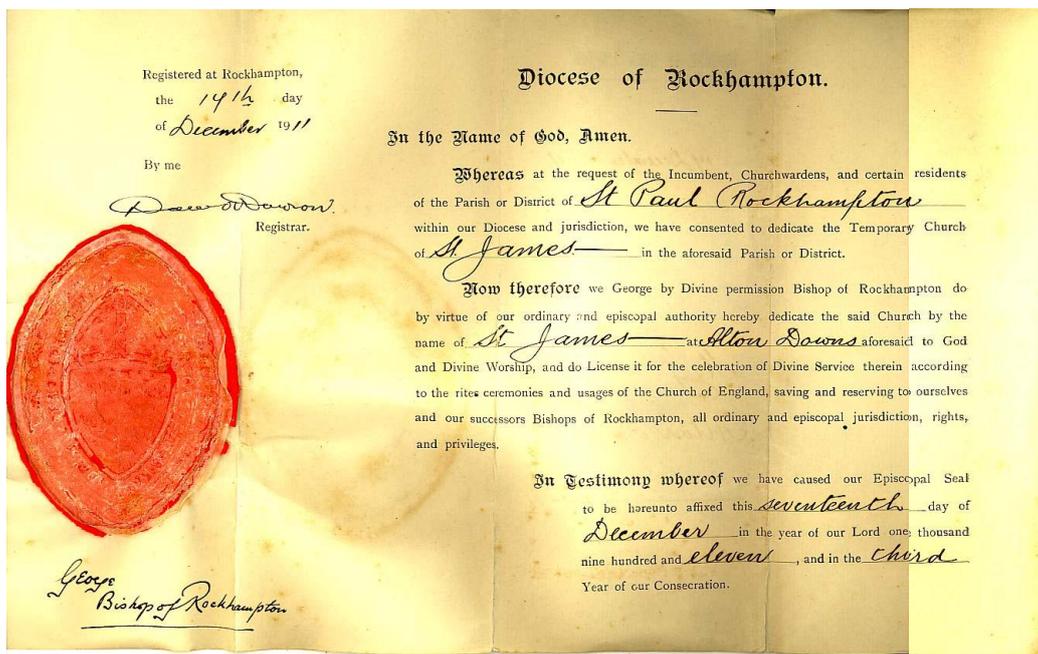
With children having little else to inform, entertain, socialize or educate, Sunday Schools were very popular generally, and often churches began from just a Sunday School, with regular adult worship developing later. Sunday School was held at St James every Sunday at 2pm, with Mrs Campbell (Mary) Murray teaching there for many years.

PART THREE: A SPECIAL YEAR AND TWO SPECIAL FAMILIES

The year 1911 stands out in the records of St James' Alton Downs, as the clergy and people prepared for the Dedication of the Church at the end of the year. Prior to the dedication, it was considered a temporary church, as indicated in the wording of the faculty below, with the service of dedication fully licensing it and setting it aside for the Celebration of Divine Worship. In preparation for this special service and the consequent new phase of worship and ministry, the congregation purchased a new organ, as recorded in the Gazette of October 1911:

The people at Alton Downs desired a new organ, so they bought the best they could procure a few weeks ago, and have already paid for it with special subscriptions. In the meantime their collections at service have not decreased by any means, but offerings upon special occasions to the extent of £3 have been sent in for the Home Mission Fund. Alton Downs deserves our best thanks, if only for a bright example of enthusiasm.

On Sunday 3 December 1911 at 3pm, a service of Confirmation was conducted at St James Alton Downs by Bishop Halford, the confirmees being members of local families: Walter Hunt, Maurice Murray and Alice Woodley. Then just a fortnight later, on Sunday 17 December, the 3rd Sunday of Advent 1911, at 11am, the church was dedicated by Bishop George Halford who had instigated the building of the church while Rector of the Cathedral Parish. There were 18 communicants and a collection of 19/4.



The building had been newly oiled and painted by the men of the congregation for the Service of Dedication, and a wooden font with leaden bowl had been placed at the west end. This font is still in use at St Lukes church, at the time of writing.

The early years of St James' church were intertwined with the Murray and Hunt families. Mr Campbell Murray and his wife Mary of "Fitzroy Park" gave the site for the church, near the corner of Hunt Road, which was named after Mr William Hunt of "Mylando", who attended worship at St James with his wife Lucy, five sons and two daughters for many years. The two families joined when Mr Fred Hunt married Miss Jean Murray. The photograph¹⁹ below shows the Hunt family after worship in 1928.



Left to right, standing: Mr Jim Hunt, Mrs Fred (Jean) Hunt, Mr William Hunt, Mrs William (Lucy) Hunt, Miss Lizzie Hunt, Mr Ernie Hunt, Miss Edith Hunt and Mr Walter Hunt. Front row: Mr Fred Hunt and Edith his daughter, Mr Edward Hunt and Joan, pictured together with Mr Eric Linde a server at St Lukes, and Master George Crook²⁰.



Miss Lizzie Hunt was the organist at St James for years and was described as "a saint, full of the spirit of Christ, and never grumbled, despite her illness and pains". She died from an unidentified illness at the age of 49. Her brother Mr Frederick Hunt of "Allambie" is pictured at the 1948 Synod of the Diocese. He married Jean Murray in St James church at Alton Downs. After his death in 1981, a Home Communion set was given to the church in his memory.



Another son Mr Walter Hunt (back right) in later years purchased the school building as a church hall and paid for its transport costs. He continued to live in the old family home at Alton Downs, and worship at St James, even after the building had been relocated to town²¹. He died in 1975.

Mr Frank Murray, son of Campbell Murray, planted a tree many years later, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Alton Downs State School, as the oldest living pupil.

¹⁹ photographs of the Hunt family provided by Yvonne Llewellyn

²⁰ George Crook was the younger brother of Augustus Lawrence; both children attended Alton Downs school.

²¹ information from "A Brief History of St James" compiled by Betty Mackay for the 75 anniversary of its dedication in 1986.

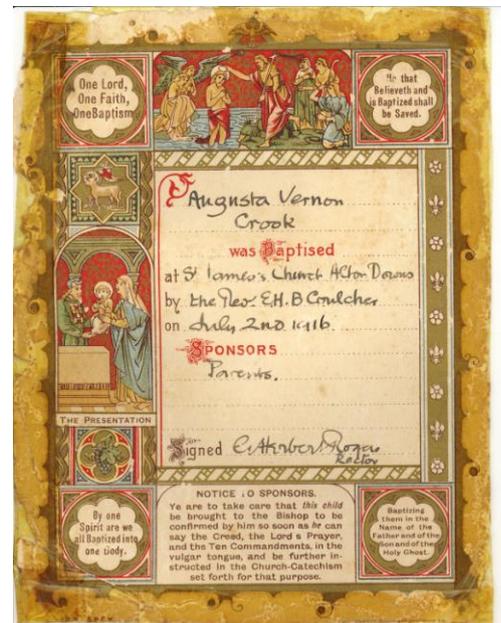
PART FOUR : THE DECADES PASS

Following the dedication of the church in 1911, the regular pattern of worship as recorded, was Holy Communion with Address at 11am on the first Sunday of the month, and Evensong with Address at 3pm on the third Sunday of the month. These services were conducted by any of the team of clergymen then attached to the Cathedral Parish, Archdeacon George Herbert Rogers, the Rev'd Adrian Stokes²² and the Rev'd William Edward Cargill²³ and The Rev'd Edgar Robert Streeten²⁴.

The Christmas service for the year 1911 was on Wednesday December 27 at 11am; in 1912 on Monday December 30 at 11am; and in 1913 on Sunday 21 December at 11am.

The first wedding to be held in the new church was that of Miss Marion Murray, daughter of Mr Campbell and Mary Murray, as she married Mr William Orr in May 1913. Miss Murray had been a pupil teacher at Alton Downs school and was teaching at Dolma Scrub at the time of her wedding. A bible was presented by Archdeacon Rogers to the couple on their wedding day²⁵.

Many were Baptized at St James over the years, including members of the Murray, Hunt, Butcher, Lawrence, and Crook families. Some members of these families were also Confirmed at St James while it was still at Alton Downs. Pictured is the Baptismal certificate²⁶ of Augusta Crook, who later married Henry Lawrence²⁷.



Wandal parish came into existence in 1925, and St James then came under the care of its clergy who were based at St Lukes. The first Vicar was the Rev'd John Spencer Booth, who served 1925-1926.

The church was repaired after a hurricane hit in December 1932²⁸.

²² The Rev'd Adrian Stokes was assistant at the Cathedral from 1911 to 1915

²³ The Rev'd William Edward Cargill was assistant at the Cathedral from 1912 to 1916

²⁴ The Rev'd Edgar Robert Streeten was assistant at the Cathedral from 1912 to 1915

²⁵ letter dated 5 December 1986 written to Betty Mackay from Miss Phyllis Orr, daughter of Marion and William, and granddaughter of Mr Campbell Murray

²⁶ The Baptising priest, Rev'd Evelyn Holt Bohun Coulcher, was a member of the Bush Brotherhood of St Andrew, serving in Clermont and Springsure at the time of the baptism.

²⁷ Henry Lawrence was ordained Deacon at St Lukes Wandal in 1960 and served there until 1992. His daughter Yvonne Llewellyn has played the organ at St Lukes for many decades and continues to do so.

²⁸ From "Fitzroy Flashbacks" by Jenny Reeve and Rhondda Ward, 2004, page 52

Bishop Fortesque Ash²⁹, visited St James early in 1935 for a service of Holy Communion with 7 communicants. An offering of £2 1/6 was recorded. The section of the Synod photo shows Bishop Ash seated with Rev'd Jones, Vicar of Wandal Parish³⁰ at the time, standing at back far left, wearing an academic hood with his cassock.



Bishop James Housden³¹ was at Alton Downs on 22 December 1949 to confirm 7 people. The photos show Bishop Housden at a Diocesan Synod, and the Rev'd Tully Firth³², Rector at the time.

The final page of the Service Register for the Alton Downs location is badly damaged, and actual dates of services have disappeared. It would seem, however, that the monthly schedule from past years continued. Worshipping numbers were small, and Communicant numbers even smaller.

The decision was made to relocate the building to Rockhampton.

²⁹ Bishop Ash was Bishop of the Diocese from 1928 - 1946

³⁰ Rev'd Richard Llewelyn Alfred Philipps Jones was Vicar of Wandal parish from 1926 - 1936

³¹ Bishop James Alan George Housden was Bishop of the Diocese from 1947 - 1958

³² The Rev'd Tully Firth was Rector of Wandal parish from 1947 - 1950.

PART FIVE: THE MOVE TO TOWN

In 1955, when the Rev'd Ambrose May was Rector of Wandal parish, and the Rev'd John Hayward³³ was Assistant Curate, St James' church building was moved from Alton Downs to 232 North Street Extended, opposite the Crescent Lagoon State School.

The "Church Gazette" of 1954 announced that a meeting of West Rockhampton Parishioners would be held on Monday 28th June in the Scout Hall at 7pm, to discuss the transfer of "the Alton Downs Church building to the site opposite the Crescent Lagoon School". At the meeting, a "very keen and enthusiastic committee" was appointed to work for the removal of St James to town:

Mr Ross Kenrick is the Hon. Secretary of the Committee and Mr E. O'Sullivan, Treasurer. Some of the ladies have formed themselves into a committee for the purpose of raising funds, and interest in the project is mounting rapidly.

While awaiting the arrival of the church building, the Scout Hall apparently served as a meeting place for various church gatherings. In September 1954 a meeting was held in the Scout Hall and a branch of the Women's Guild for West Rockhampton was formed, with Mrs McIntosh³⁴ as President and Mrs Hall as Secretary. The ladies soon came up with innovative and practical ways for raising the needed funds, the first of which was to set up a Monday Tuck Shop on the church site opposite the Crescent Lagoon School, with a "nicely balanced lunch" on sale for the school children.

The men's team began looking for workers for the various tasks of work to be done, and Mr Walter Cunningham undertook to remove the roofing iron, roll it, and then replace it after the removal of the building. As part of the continuing preparations, on Saturday 11 December 1954 at 3pm, there was a Stump Capping Ceremony officiated by the "Lord Bishop of the Diocese".

The summer of early 1955 appears to have been one of significant rainfall, as the Gazette of May 1955 reports:

Now that weather conditions are favourable and the Alton Downs Road in better repair, we hope that the church building will be moved and erected on the West Rockhampton site within a few days. The patience of the members of the Building Committee and others in West Rockhampton has been sorely tested, and it is a help to know that the feeling of frustration has been tempered by the enthusiasm of Mrs Hall and her helpers at the Tuck Shop.

The following month, the Gazette reported that

Mr Wes Newton, having mastered almost unsurmountable difficulties, now has the Alton Downs building on the blocks at West Rockhampton.....and It will only be a matter of days now before Mr Coningham can go ahead with the replacement of the roof.

³³ Mr John Henry Charles Hayward, as he was called even after ordination as was the custom of the day, was Assistant Curate in Wandal parish from 1954 - 1956

³⁴ Confirmation Classes for West Rockhampton children were being held at the home of Mr & Mrs McIntosh, Jardine Street, on Friday afternoons at 3:45pm.

The move of the building was an opportunity for revitalization of many of its furnishing and furniture, and the Ladies Guild was soon preparing a "fine array of church linen". It is believed that the Hunt family gave a new altar cloth at this time³⁵. The reredos was also given by members of the Hunt family, in memory of their parents William and Lucy, who were instrumental in the building and life of the church while at Alton Downs.



The Gazette of August 1955 reports:

At last the building is standing on the blocks, and has been re-roofed. Some one stole ten sheets of iron from the pile. Hope it's not a case of "Iron entering the Soul". Operation electric light is underway, and operating painting and fencing is to take place this weekend.

Mr Roy Cowie installed the lighting.

During this settling period, the building was referred to as the St James' Church Hall, and weekly Sunday School classes at 9:30am, under the Rector's name, are the only events recorded in the service register. The Sunday School had an enrolment of 75.

Then at a 3pm celebration on Saturday 22 October 1955, Bishop James Housden re-dedicated the relocated church, and at 8am the next morning, Holy Communion was celebrated. Weekly services of Holy Communion at 8am continued for the next few years, followed by Sunday School at 10am.

³⁵ from the memory of Mary Lodwick (nee Hunt)

PART SIX: A VIBRANT LIFE

The Rev'd Ambrose May finished his years as Rector of the parish in 1956, and the Rev'd (Canon) Philip Boulsover³⁶ commenced, with his first service recorded on Sunday 3 June 1956. He continued weekly Communion at 8am, with Sunday School at 9:30am. Assistant Priest Rev'd George Shaw³⁷ also conducted worship at St James. Average numbers of communicants in the late 50s were from 3 to 13, with only a few more people in attendance at worship, and average collections were between £1 and £2. But during the 60s, average numbers at weekly Communion increased to 20 – 35, and Easter Day 1963 had a congregation of 70 for an 8am Sung Mass, with other similar sized congregations on other Sundays through the years.

Bishop Theodore McCall³⁸ celebrated service on Sunday 7 June 1959, and again on Christmas Day 1960 at 8am, and on three more Sundays before Easter the following year. Other clergy who conducted worship at St James during the early sixties were the Rev'd Clifford John Brown, Rev'd Cyril Moller, Rev'd Paul Gribble, all parish assistants, Rev'd Henry Lawrence³⁹, honorary parish deacon, and the Rev'd JBR Grindrod, at the time Rector of North Rockhampton.

Congregational life was strong during those years. Photographs⁴⁰ below show a GFS group including Dell Saxby (leader), Cheryl & Sonia Smith, Valerie, Heather McIntosh, and Joyce Watts, who worked under the tuition of Mrs Val Gribble; and a group of servers with Canon Boulsover.



A new vestry was added to the rear of the building in 1962, with great interest from parish assistant Rev'd Cyril Moller. Plans were drawn up by Mr Brian Bulman and work supervised by Mr Kevin Dinsdale⁴¹.

In 1965, the Alton Downs School building was brought to West Rockhampton as the gift of Mr Walter Hunt, to serve as a church hall. It was dedicated on 5 April 1965. The building itself, the removal costs and many of the tables and chairs for use in the hall were the gift of Mr Hunt. The Guild purchased a piano for the hall.

³⁶ The Rev'd Philip John Boulsover was Rector of the parish from 1956 – 1967.

³⁷ Rev'd George Peter Shaw was assistant in the parish from 1958 - 1960

³⁸ Bishop Theodore Bruce McCall was Bishop of the Diocese from 1959 - 1963

³⁹ Rev'd Lawrence conducted a service of Mattins at St James on 3 September 1961.

⁴⁰ supplied by Joyce Watts, daughter of Ethel & Jack Deane

⁴¹ from "A brief history of St James" by Betty Mackay



The service register indicates that Sunday 23 July 1967 was Canon Boulsover's last service at St James, and the photograph below is believed to have been taken that morning:



JUNE 1967. AFTER SUNDAY MASS, THE CONGREGATION OF ST JAMES' WEST ROCKHAMPTON WITH PARISH PRIEST REV'D CANON P.J. BOULSOVER (1956-1967)

Readers of this paper who are able to identify any of those in this photograph are asked to contact the author. It is believed that Lil Cocker, Molly Evans, Olga Evans, Gus Lawrence, Cheryl Smith and Heather are part of the group. Joyce Watts is on the far right, standing next to her father Jack Dean, and the server between the priest and crucifer is Ted Watts, Joyce's son.

During the period of interregnum towards the end of 1967, worship at St James was led by Rev'd Tom Rogers, Rev'd Tom Hall Matthews⁴², Rev'd Charles Perry⁴³ and Bishop Donald Shearman⁴⁴.

⁴² Rev'd Thomas Bartholomew Hall-Matthews was assistant at the Cathedral from 1967-1969

⁴³ Rev'd Charles Henry Perry was Priest in Charge at Wandal during 1967

⁴⁴ Bishop Donald Norman Shearman was Bishop of the Diocese from 1964 - 1970

The Rev'd (Canon) Rob Philp⁴⁵ conducted his first service of worship at St James on Sunday 8 October 1967 with an 8am Mass. During 1969, he was assisted by the Rev'd James Prosser⁴⁶ and the Rev'd Alan Lamb⁴⁷. During the 1970's worship at St James was also conducted by Rev'd Bruce Worthington⁴⁸, Rev'd Graham Perry⁴⁹ and Bishop John Grindrod⁵⁰.

When the new St Lukes church was completed in 1971, the altar from the old church was taken to St James. This altar and a crucifix was blessed by Bishop John Grindrod on St James Day 25 July 1972. After St James was closed, this altar returned to the new St Lukes, where it was modified by Mr Llew Llewellyn to fit the building.



The last service conducted by Canon Philp on Sunday 1 February 1981 was attended by his brother, the Very Rev'd David Philp, Dean of Townsville, as preacher, as well as Canon Ken Raff, at that time Registrar of the Diocese⁵¹, and often celebrant at St James. They are pictured below with (then) Mr Owen Buckton⁵² and an unknown server.



Parish life continued for another decade, under the leadership of Rev'd John Parton, Rector from 1981 – 1985, Rev'd Doug Edmonds, Rector from 1985 – 1989. During 1986, the 75th anniversary of the Dedication of St James was celebrated with a worship service at 6:15pm conducted by Bishop George Hearn⁵³, and followed by a parish dinner at the Duthies Leichhardt Hotel. The Rev'd Gil Linden⁵⁴, was locum for part of 1990 and the Rev'd Stephen Redhead began as Rector in 1990⁵⁵.

⁴⁵ Canon Robert Henry Haldon Philp was Rector of the parish from 1967 - 1981

⁴⁶ Rev'd James Arthur Prosser then conducted the Anglican Far West Aerial Ministry as priest-pilot 1970

⁴⁷ Rev'd Alan Lamb was assistant curate in the parish 1969 - 1970

⁴⁸ Rev'd Bruce William Worthington was assistant curate from 1969 – 1972

⁴⁹ Rev'd Graham Henry Perry was assistant curate from 1972 – 1974

⁵⁰ Bishop John Basil Rowland was Bishop of the Diocese from 1971 - 1980

⁵¹ Canon Ken Raff was Registrar from 1972 - 1988

⁵² Rev'd Owen Maxwell Buckton was honorary assistant in the parish 1985 - 1988

⁵³ Bishop George Arthur Hearn was Bishop of the Diocese from 1980 to 1996

⁵⁴ The Rev'd Gilbert John Linden was honorary assistant in the parish from 1988 to 1990

⁵⁵ The Rev'd Stephen Redhead was Rector from 1990 to 1996.

PART SEVEN: FINAL DAYS

Most of those who will read this first edition of this historical account of St James church will have been personally involved in its life, and especially at the time of the closing of the church. These people will have their own feelings, opinions, memories and mementos, so it is not the intention of the author to here give a detailed account of the final days of St James, but to end this first edition with a simple statement and photographs.

The church of St James', West Rockhampton, was closed on Sunday 2 December 1990, in a service of Thanksgiving, conducted by Bishop George Hearn, together with the Rector, Rev'd Stephen Redhead, and attended by Honorary Deacon Rev'd Barrie Harvey⁵⁶. Mrs Dorothy Rosenberg was the Eucharistic Assistant, Mrs Yvonne Llewellyn the organist, Intercessions were led by Mrs Olga Evans and Mrs Betty McCann, readers were Miss Michelle Rosenberg, Miss Jean Cameron and Mrs Shirley O'Sullivan, and flowers were arranged by Mrs Ethel Deane.



⁵⁶ The Rev'd Barrie Harvey has been honorary assistant in the parish from 1989 to the present day.

POSTSCRIPT

Just more than century after the first stone was laid for St. James' church at Alton Downs, the building, now standing in North Street Extended, Crescent Lagoon, was again advertised for sale for \$309,000 in the Rockhampton Morning Bulletin. Titled "Chapel of Dreams", it was described as

" a beautifully renovated residence, a two bedroom home with character and charm, featuring tongue and groove walls and polished floor, open plan lounge and dining room with very high ceilings and a potential to renovate the loft."

The second edition of this history, to be prepared for the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the church in 2011, will be able to correct, re-word, add or remove those parts of this account which are in need, and then, hopefully, be able to stand as a reasonable history of St. James for the benefit of the Diocese. Readers are invited and encouraged to send information and materials to the present Rector of the parish. Copies available on DVD and as a PDF file.

Canon Janne Whitehead⁵⁷.
St James Day 2009

⁵⁷ Canon Janne Whitehead has been Rector of Wandal parish since 2004