

THE CHURCH ON THE HILL

The First 150 Years of the
Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist
Norton Summit



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The authors of this book and the congregation of St John's Church acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which the church stands - the Kaurna and Peramangk people. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land; our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing, and our hope that we may in future walk together in harmony in the spirit of reconciliation.

We Honour the Elders and people of the past, present and future.

CONTENTS

Foreword

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC
Governor of South Australia

Foreword

The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith
Anglican Archbishop of Adelaide

Introduction

The Reverend John Venus

- Chapter 1 – Norton’s Summit or Sutton’s Summit?
- Chapter 2 – The Hon. John and Isabella Baker of Morialta
- Chapter 3 – The Baker Women
- Chapter 4 – The Manor Church
- Chapter 5 – The Font
- Chapter 6 – The Windows
- Chapter 7 – The Bell Tower
- Chapter 8 – The Music
- Chapter 9 – The Vice-Regal Chapel
- Chapter 10 – The School House and Rectories
- Chapter 11 – The Bishop and the Canon
Bishop Augustus Short and Canon Alfred Honner
- Chapter 12 – Prominent People of the Parish
- Chapter 13 – Mother’s Union and Other Groups
- Chapter 14 – From the Registers: Baptisms, Weddings and Burials
- Appendix 1 – List of Priests
- Appendix 2 – List of Wardens
- Appendix 3 – Gifts and Memorials

Title page: St John’s Church sits atop the hill overlooking the township of Norton Summit. Photograph c.1898 when the Scenic Hotel was owned by the Adelaide-based brewers John Primrose & Company, Unicorn Brewery (1883-1903). A coloured image by Kelly Bonato, A Colourful History – Adelaide SA. Photograph by William S. Smith; Original image SLSA PRG 733/308

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I also thank the Staff of the **State Library of South Australia** for going out of their way to help with sourcing records of the past.

Source of Photographs – abbreviations used:

SLSA – State Library of South Australia Photographic Collection

ETHS – East Torrens Historical Society Photograph Collection

JWV – photographs by Rev'd John W. Venus

FOREWORD

Her Excellency The Honourable Frances Adamson AC Governor of South Australia

Congratulations to St John's Anglican Church Norton Summit on its 150th anniversary, a significant milestone by any measure.

In conveying my best wishes, I am Honoured to continue the church's connections with the Vice-Regal office in South Australia.

Just as Holy Trinity Church on North Terrace enjoyed the title of 'The Governor's Church' due to its proximity to Government House, so too St John's Norton Summit came to be known as the 'Vice- Regal Chapel' because of its association over the years with the mansion at Marble Hill.

We can imagine the pride and excitement in the district when the locals heard in 1878 that a new Vice-Regal summer residence was to be built on top of the hill, with its commanding views of the ranges and plains.

The church, with its gothic architecture and magnificent octagonal tower with its own position at the top of a hill, was within walking distance of the mansion. Some Governors did indeed walk the four kilometres along the winding road to attend church. A special Vice-Regal pew was even kept reserved at the front of the church, standing sentinel for their arrival.

His Excellency Sir William Jervois and his family first occupied Marble Hill in 1879 and subsequently, he, then succeeding governors and their families, were often seen about the district. They all quickly became part of community life in their summer breaks, attending harvest gatherings and cherry-picking working bees, out riding, or holding parties for the local children at Marble Hill.

Church records indicate that Governors at times conducted services, His Excellency Sir George Le Hunte doing so twice in 1908, and His Excellency Sir Winston Dugan doing likewise in the late 1930s.

The Governors' wives - and they were always wives - supported the church groups by contributing their time or making donations. Several gifts and memorials were given to St John's by Governors' families and still occupy a position of pride today.

The magnificent eagle lectern was given to the church by His Excellency Sir Malcolm Barclay Harvey and is now a treasured reminder of former days. Church records show that in March 1940, Sir Malcolm was accompanied to St John's by the then Governor-General of Australia, Brigadier General Sir Alexander Hore-Ruthven, Baron Gowrie.

Lady Tennyson gave the church the priest's desk and Lady Dugan gave the reredos, an ornamental screen that stands behind the altar, in memory of her mother. The screen sadly later suffered termite damage and had to be removed.

The more or less continuous Vice-Regal association with the church unfortunately came to an end with the divesting Black Sunday bushfires on January 2, 1955, which left Marble Hill in ruins as part of a conflagration which ravaged much of the Hills region, but the association was renewed in 1997 when His Excellency Sir Eric Neal and Lady Neal attended the 125th anniversary celebrations.

A church plays an important role in community life. It is a place to worship, celebrate milestones in life, give thanks for good fortune, find solace in adversity and draw together as a community in faith. St John's has been fulfilling that role for the Norton Summit community throughout its history.

I congratulate The Reverend John Venus on his passion for poring over records and capturing the St John's history. While some church records are sadly missing, this book captures much of the past and tells the story of this prominent part of Norton Summit life. It will evoke many cherished memories.

Rod and I wish the parish well for its 150th anniversary celebrations and convey our best wishes for its longevity in serving the community well into the future. Long may it be the church on the hill.



Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to a holy temple in the Lord.

Ephesians 2:19-21

FOREWORD

The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith Anglican Archbishop of Adelaide

When my predecessor Bishop August Short consecrated St John's Church on the first of January 1873 he had been the Bishop of Adelaide for twenty-six years and was seventy-one years old. He had worked incredibly hard to see the Church of England in South Australia develop and had consecrated numerous churches around the state. By my calculation between Bishop Short's arrival in Adelaide in 1848 and the consecration of St John's, fifty-eight churches had been dedicated and/or consecrated in South Australia. Bishop Short may not have presided at all those services but he would have done so for many. This was a period of very significant growth for the colony and the Church.

Each of those church buildings was unique in design and context but shared two things in common. They were all buildings set apart for worship and prayer for individuals and congregations, and they were visible signs both of the presence of God in a community and the recognition of that presence by a community.

While the presence of God is constant the reality is that the recognition of the presence and reality of God ebbs and flows. This history, 'The Church on the Hill' makes very clear the struggles through the one hundred and fifty years to engage the local community in the life of the church.

Despite the challenges a way was always found, and worship continues at St John's Sunday by Sunday. This is due to faithful and generous people but also to the faithfulness of God who continues to love the whole creation and yearn for its flourishing.

Part of celebrating a significant milestone like a sesquicentenary is looking back, and we certainly do that with St John's. Part of this milestone is also looking forward. While we cannot know the details of the future, we know the faithfulness of God and God's ultimate aim of heaven and earth being joined. Faithful people in each generation have caught the vision of this future and carried forward the witness of the church.

My hope and prayer is that this will continue. The Christian hope is such good news for all people. The message of God's love, the peace that faith in Jesus Christ brings and the motivation to good that the future we pray for in the Lord's Prayer provides are powerful and positive.

Chances are that the future will be as challenging as the past but the fact that St John's is still standing, is kept in good repair and hosts worship each week should encourage us to face the future with optimism, trusting in the God we love and serve.

I thank the Reverend John Venus for his ministry at St John's and his preparation of this history. I am sure like myself, those who read this little booklet will find it informative and positive. Good preparation for the next 150 years!

INTRODUCTION

Approximately forty years ago, during the nineteen eighties, Bishop Keith Rayner wrote these words regarding the church of St John the Evangelist at Norton Summit: *‘St John’s church is a building of considerable architectural merit. It deserves not only to be preserved but to be the centre of a strong and vigorous church life. It is all too easy to take for granted the heritage we have received from our forefathers. I hope that the consciousness of this heritage ... will stir the members of the church in that district to a renewed determination to make St John’s a vigorous and growing centre of spiritual life’.*

In writing those words Bishop Keith has clearly defined a broad definition of the church. Of course, it is a building but as he clearly notes it is also, perhaps even more importantly, the people. As this year of 2022 marks the 150th anniversary of the construction of the building it has been fascinating to search back through the old records and observe the comings and goings of so many people and the waxing and waning of the church community’s fortunes.

It began as a very special and favoured place of Christian worship, coming into existence through the good graces and generosity of the Hon. John and Mrs Isabella Baker who in 1871 gave an acre of hilltop land adjoining their property *Morialta*, for the site of its construction. Building proceeded over a period of about three years until it neared completion during 1872, except for the upper portions of the bell tower. Bishop Augustus Short consecrated the church for worship on Wednesday the first of January 1873. It is remarkable to read the list of donors who gave everything that was required to enable services in the tradition of the Church of England then to commence. Whilst many were people living and working on the land in the hills there was also a good number of very well-known names associated with the early settlement of South Australia. Fund-raising functions were held in Adelaide organised by members of the city’s society. Since that time and until this year of 2022 twenty-seven priests have served God and the community in this church.

As the decades passed considerable changes took place in the hills district and in the city of Adelaide down on the plains. When St John’s was first established the village of Norton’s Summit was very much a local rural centre. Before the advent of the motor vehicle travel was limited to horseback or horse drawn carriages and so was not as instant or easy as now. For those first decades of the church interaction between the city and hills towns was largely confined to what was necessary as in business. Roads were really bullock tracks and subject to the vagaries of seasons; wet and boggy in the winter and dry, rough, hard and dusty in summer. That changed as roads improved and later the electric tramway made it across the plain to Magill at the foot of the hills.

The demographic of Norton Summit, as it became, has gradually transformed from a very local community which gleaned its living from the land to what could now be termed a dormitory suburb where people live surrounded by the beauty of a rural environment but work in the city. This also changed the community attending the church. Sadly, in this twenty first century interest and attendance from the local hills community is very low, in fact basically non-existent. We are grateful that modern transport has made it possible for people to attend from parts further afield and thus maintain at least something of the vitality of the congregation and its example to a wider community. Low attendances are nothing new. The old minutes record many references to low attendance at services and even Vestry meetings, with one comment

made in the 1930s that ‘...the weather could not be considered an excuse’ for the meagre attendance. The depression of the 1890s had its effect on Norton Summit. Many families left the hills and at the height of the depression, the total yearly budget of St John’s amounted to a mere £45.

There is, as Bishop Keith hoped, ‘*a renewed determination to make St John’s a vigorous and growing centre of spiritual life*’. A new memorial garden has been established, the church building has been restored with renewed stonework pointing whilst other work and plans are afoot to convert the rectory into a Spirituality and Retreat Centre for the whole Diocese of Adelaide.

So, whilst we now celebrate the great milestone of 150 years of a beautiful little stone English church, it is the people who comprise the congregation who will bring Bishop Keith’s hopes into fruition.

It has been a mighty privilege to research and preserve something of the history of this place. I pray that the spirit of inclusivity and welcome, coupled with an outwardly focussed vision of care and love may carry this church forward for many more generations as it bears witness to the all-encompassing love of God as the world witnessed in the life of Jesus the Christ.

The Reverend J. W. Venus
November 2022



St John’s Church and Scenic Hotel, c.1910

CHAPTER 1 - Norton's Summit or Sutton's Summit

Norton's Summit, so aptly described as the little Adelaide Hills town on the top floor with exquisite views, is a settlement almost as old as the State of South Australia but its beginnings as a village were modest. The township developed on land owned by William Thomas Sutton in the 1850s. Nearby properties were those of Charles Giles at *Grove Hill*, and the Norton and White families. By 1868 the township comprised several homes, a store and Sutton's licenced shop that was to evolve into the aptly-named Scenic Hotel.

Settlement became more established in the 1870s. William Sutton had several buildings constructed, the most enduring of which was the still-dominant Scenic Hotel. Another landmark took shape at this time - St John's Church of England. With its octagonal bell tower, the church enjoys a commanding position on a knoll above the hotel. Gradually the town developed to include stores, a blacksmith, baker, butcher and a school or two. The timing of the town's major development matched the growth of Richard Vaughan's East End Market, which provided a boost for the local hills fruit and vegetable growers.

The village is today known as Norton Summit. In 1991 the South Australian government amended the Geographical Place Names Act to remove the possessive 's from all place names in the State, so Norton's Summit became Norton Summit. So how did it come about that the name was attached to this part of the Adelaide Hills in the first place?

Robert Norton and William Sutton were the first of the hills dwellers to settle in the vicinity of the summit of the ridge which runs basically north- south and is the top of the first westerly tier of the ranges immediately above the suburb of Magill. The hills, because of their geological formation, were first named 'The Tiers' and the early settlers in the area, 'Tiersmen' who were mainly timber cutters.



Norton's Summit township in c.??? - Scenic Hotel (left), St John's Church and District Council of East Torrens' Council Chambers (right - built in 1902-03)

In 1840 Messrs Sutton and Norton set about clearing the forest of eucalypts, shrubs and undergrowth preparatory to establishing their productive lands as they sought to settle on the land and develop permanent gardens, the produce of which they intended to sell in Adelaide. Initially neither man realised the other was labouring nearby. It was reported that Robert Norton was the first person to drive a team of bullocks up the 'horrendous final portion of Giles' Hill' to Norton Summit but until the 1850s the popularly accepted name for the area was Sutton's Summit. Eventually, so the story goes, the name Norton's Summit was decided by the toss of a coin between the two pioneer settlers after much friendly rivalry.

Although there remains some shadow of doubt around the veracity of this story, (it is a 'good yarn') it is evident that the pioneers who followed Messrs Sutton and Norton succeeded in establishing productive gardens and orchards in the lush, fertile valleys to the east of the main ridge. They soon formed a closely-knit little community, sufficiently remote from the plains and town of Adelaide to establish a separate identity and community life of their own, yet close enough to have good access to the fruit and vegetable markets down in Adelaide on which their livelihoods and existence depended.

The nucleus of the summit village was Sutton's wineshop and store, later to become the Scenic Hotel. This was built at the top of the steep track which wound its way up from the plains at Magill following the course of the Third Creek and along which Robert Norton had driven his bullocks. The present 'Old Norton Summit Road' has simply replaced that old track. A little later a blacksmith, post office and general store came to the town. Later again came a public school and a small meeting hall where the East Torrens Council could meet and local people gather. The little settlement quite reflected the sense of an old English village from whence these pioneering families had come.

Mrs Lucy Maymon Hines (1870 - 1948) who as Miss Pizey was organist and Sunday School teacher at St John's church recorded the earlier story of the Reverend Thomas Playford who was a pioneer Baptist missionary to all the hills districts and who first brought the Gospel to Norton Summit. In Robert Norton's rough home of split Stringybark logs and mud in the first valley east of the summit, known as Grassy Flat, Playford preached to the pioneers as early as 1843 and eight years later the first little Baptist chapel was built of stone and land was set aside for a cemetery. The base of the old chapel and two graves are still visible.

It was not until some thirty years later that construction of the Church of England (St John's) was begun around 1870, to be basically completed at the end of 1872. This was built on land given for the purpose by The Hon. John Baker, holder of extensive tracts of land he had named *Morialta*.

In present times the suburbs of the city of Adelaide have spread out across the plains and extend into the base of the ranges below this ridge. It is currently a six-minute drive up the old road, now properly formed and bituminised, which follows the Third Creek valley from the suburb of Magill to Norton Summit, and an easy twenty-minute drive from the city centre.

CHAPTER 2 - The Hon. John and Isabella Baker of *Morialta*

Woven into the early history of many districts of South Australia are the stories of strong Christian pioneers, men and women who demonstrated their faith with a generosity in keeping with their means and community standing. A few built a church entirely at their own expense, usually on their own land, later giving it to the Diocese. Others guaranteed a priest's stipend, endowed a church, or paid for beautiful stained glass windows or donated the necessary furniture and ornaments.

Sometimes the most practical help came from those who founded a church by giving the land, then seeking subscriptions and donations from the community, for this then involved the ordinary people, and the new church became the concern of the broader community rather than of the one individual.

After receiving some gifts and donations from his more influential friends, John Baker strove for several years to establish St John's church by seeking the involvement of the people of Norton Summit. Then, on the crest of the range and adjoining the tiny nascent village near his home, he gave the land on which to build the church.

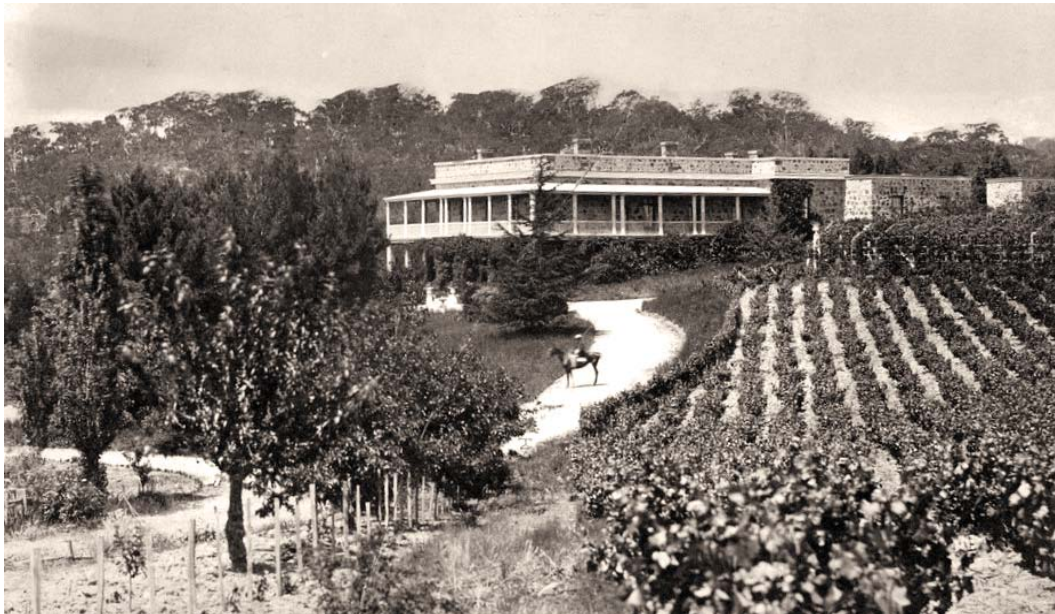
The Hon. John Baker, M.L.C., J.P., F.R.G.S., was born in Ilminster, Somerset, England, on the 28th December 1812. He immigrated to Tasmania, where on 7th June 1838, he married Isabella, daughter of George Allan, of Allan Vale, a property on the Tamar River near Launceston. After an initial brief visit to South Australia in 1838, Baker returned with his wife in 1839 to settle permanently in the colony. The couple eventually produced twelve children, two of whom died in infancy, not an unusual event in that time. Beginning as a merchant based in Hindley Street, Baker branched out to become later a leading pastoralist and later eminent politician. At the time of his death in May 1872 he controlled many extensive pastoral properties ranging from the Murray lakes and Coorong through to the northern pastoral regions of the colony. By 1860 he held more than two thousand square miles of country ranging from Streaky Bay in the west



Isabella Baker and Hon. John Baker of *Morialta*, Norton's Summit

to the New South Wales border in the east. Additionally with his partner, Jacob Hagen, he shared in a reported two thousand tons of 'good ore' from the Montacute copper mine.

His local political career began in 1855 when he was elected as representative for the district of Mount Barker. He left the parliament when he was defeated in the election of 1861 in between two trips back to England but was re-elected to the Legislative Council in 1869. He has the distinction of holding the office of Premier of the then colony, later after Federation in 1901 state, of South Australia, for the shortest time: twelve days (from the 21 August until 1 September 1857).



Morialta homestead, c.1890 with part of the *Morialta Vineyards* in the foreground. (SLSA)

Set high above the falls of what is now the Morialta Conservation Park is the area once known as Fourth Creek Estate where in the early days of the colony pioneer pastoralist Price Maurice established a fine herd of Angora goats. Maurice had arrived in South Australia as early as 1840 and became well known as a successful pastoralist with properties around the colony; but this more unorthodox venture near Adelaide apparently had limited success, for some years later John Baker was able to secure the land on which to establish his extensive country estate.

Baker established *Morialta* (occasionally referred to as *Morialta Station*) in 1847 on 2000 acres (approximately 810 hectares) immediately to the north of the nascent village of Norton Summit and constructed a large home with extensive formal gardens, orchards, and vineyards. Solid stone outbuildings housed a fine stable of horses and kennel of hounds as befitted an English country gentleman. The Bakers named their estate *Morialta*, a name derived from the local Kaurna language and meaning 'ever flowing water', referring to the adjacent flowing spring-fed waterfalls and stream named Fourth Creek. These extensive and quality developments established John and Isabella as the 'Lord and Lady of the manor', firmly set in the traditions of old England. *Morialta* homestead was a grand building described as a mansion. It consisted of two stories with 17 main rooms and accommodation for servants in an extensive attic floor. A number of large, solid outbuildings were constructed in the valley behind the main house. These still exist, now State Heritage listed and have been carefully restored by

private owners. Unfortunately, the old house has not fared so well. In 1924 it was sold by the Baker family to the Federated Protestant Children's Homes Incorporated and named the Morialta Protestant Children's Home. Following this change of ownership and use as an institution the house underwent architecturally inappropriate changes resulting in the destruction of its aesthetic elements. It is now almost impossible to recognise as the once elegant home of the Bakers.

Placed as it was on the brow of the hill adjacent to the little village of Norton's Summit with extensive views down through the Fourth Creek valley and across the plains to the distant St Vincent's Gulf, the Baker residence became one of the principal social centres of Adelaide during the 1850s and 1860s. Prominent among the house guests were Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, who was entertained there in 1867, and in 1887, long after John Baker's death, the young Dukes of Clarence and York.

The Hon. John Baker was a man of many interests, mainly pastoral and political. He has also been described as 'a pillar of the church'. In 1855 he became Trustee of St George's Church Woodforde, now part of Magill, where the family regularly attended services and maintained a private pew. It is related that during the 1860s he expressed the hope of establishing a church on raised ground near his home *Morialta*. This aspiration eventuated and the beginnings of St John's Church were begun in 1870. During the next two years whilst the church was under construction John Baker's wife Isabella and daughter Elizabeth Anstice (Bessie) conducted the first Sunday School lessons for the local children in the attic area of their home. The women continued their intense interest and support for the church well after it was officially established.

Among his many other interests John Baker became involved in the South Australian Volunteer Rifles in which he eventually rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He also involved himself in all facets of the turf, the so-called 'king of sports'. In his stables he held two imported stallions and eight thoroughbred mares. As an aside, the early history of St George's church Magill has recorded that the Reverend (Rev'd) E.K. Miller, Rector of St George's from 1855 until 1863 had occasion to be grateful to his well-heeled parishioner Price Maurice who presented him with a beautiful two year old chestnut, the offspring of Maurice's racing mare 'Kitten' and the Hon. J. Baker's steeplechaser 'Forlorn Hope'. This generous gift kept the worthy clergyman well horsed for many years.

Morialta remained the home of the Baker family for some fifty years after Hon. John Baker's death. The family interest and support of the church of St John happily continued so long as there were Baker family members resident at *Morialta*. The eldest son, Sir Richard Chaffey Baker, an even more distinguished citizen than his father, the third son Mr John Baker, and brother Mr Allan Baker, the fifth son, all continued to demonstrate great interest in the welfare of the church which their parents had established on the hilltop above the *Morialta* homestead.

The Baker family were not alone in their support for the church. Woven into the history of many districts of South Australia are the stories of strong Christian pioneers, men and women who demonstrated their Christian faith with a generosity in keeping with their means and community standing. The Angas family built a little church on their *Collingrove* property in 1874, first as a Congregational chapel but in 1911 it was dedicated to St Faith as an Anglican church. The Dutton family did likewise; St Matthews Anglican church at their station *Anlaby* near Kapunda is a beautiful red brick

Federation style building, constructed with the help of a major donation from the Dutton family in 1896 after the drowning of their 16-year old daughter Ethel in 1892.

The Hon. John Baker died on 18th May 1872, when St John's had taken firm shape but was still incomplete internally. Sadly, he did not live to see the consecration of the church on New Years' Day 1873, a project he had done so much to bring to fruition. He was buried as an Honoured and well-respected parishioner and prominent citizen of South Australia in the family crypt in the grounds of St George's church, Magill. In May 1955 the St George's Parish Council minutes record comments by the Rector that the Baker crypt had fallen into a state of disrepair. Further notes state that, '...sadly in the 1960s because the stonework had deteriorated so badly and no descendants could be found, it was decided at the time to demolish and fill it in'. So, the vault was demolished and filled in to provide additional car-parking spaces. It currently exists buried beneath the carpark with only a nearby plaque identifying the family burials it contains, including that of The Hon. John Baker. It seems shameful that such a well-respected and prominent member of colonial Australian society, a Premier, and founder of St John's church, Norton Summit, should remain, together with members of his family, in what is basically an unmarked grave beneath a car park.

Interestingly the congregation at Norton Summit was consulted by a letter from the rector of St George's Magill as to their position regarding the imminent demolition. St John's vestry at its annual meeting of 1964 resolved that: 'This vestry feels that St John's church is a fitting memorial to the Bakers and we have no objection to plans of Magill parish'. Perhaps one day the matter might be remedied and the old vault restored.



CHAPTER 3 - The Baker Women

Isabella Baker

John Baker married Isabella Allan (24 July 1819 - 6 April 1908) on 7th June 1838 at *Allan Vale*, Tasmania, her family property. She was a daughter of Isabella and George Allan of *Allan Vale*, Launceston, Tasmania, and later *Allan Vale*, near Geelong, Victoria.

Due honour must be given to Mrs Isabella Baker for her untiring work towards the establishment and ongoing success of St John's church. It is recorded that she supervised the completion of the construction after her husband's death on 18th May 1872, although there is no doubt that she would have been a vital part of the project, together with her husband, before his final illness. There is also no doubt that she was a generous sponsor during this time to assist with the final expenses. Isabella continued to work in St John's until in 1876, when some four years after her husband's death, she departed for England in company with two of her daughters, Elizabeth Anstice (Bessie) and Isabella Morrison.

Elizabeth Anstice (Bessie) Baker

Two of the Baker daughters, Elizabeth Anstice (Bessie) Baker and her elder sister Isabella Morrison Baker, also proved to be remarkable women. Elizabeth is described as an intellectual and social activist. She played the organ in St John's for services, '...although, according to her sister Margaret, her skills were not very advanced, teasing references being made to hymns accompanied by single notes picked out by one hand'. She also worked with her mother to teach local children, first in the Bakers' own home in the great attics of Morialta, then at the new church. Elizabeth is described as 'small in stature, with fine features and expressive, dark eyes [and] elegantly simple in hairstyle and dress'.



Elizabeth Anstice Baker

Elizabeth was received into the Roman Catholic Church in Paris in December 1877. She returned to Adelaide in 1879 but revisited Europe in 1881, by which time her mother Isabella had also joined the Roman Catholic Church. This abandonment of the Anglican church proved to be very disturbing for the congregation at Norton Summit, and at the St John's Easter Vestry meeting on 22 April 1881 the following was resolved, '...that this vestry desire to record their hearty sympathy with Mr Honner on the occasion of Mrs and the Misses Baker elocation to the church of Rome and desire to convey to Mr Honner our deep sympathy and their entire confidence that no action of his either in school or doctrine has in any degree been instrumental in this lamentable secession'.

Stephen Downs, writing in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* in 2005 wrote of Bessie Baker, 'From early adulthood she had been committed to the alleviation of poverty, both material and spiritual. She either provided or found accommodation, counselling and financial support for many women in need. Baker initiated the migration to Adelaide in 1883 of the English Dominican Sisters. That year, with financial support from her mother, Baker established Adelaide's first Catholic hospital, in Strangways Terrace [North Adelaide] and managed it and its successful school of nursing from 1884'.

The hospital she established is Calvary Hospital, its work continuing to this day at

Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide. It is now owned by parent corporation Little Company of Mary Health Care (or *Calvary Health Care*) which, in 2006, acquired Calvary Wakefield Hospital in central Adelaide, Calvary Central Districts Hospital in the Elizabeth area and Calvary Rehabilitation Hospital at Walkerville. Due to these acquisitions, the original hospital is now known as Calvary North Adelaide instead of Calvary Hospital Adelaide. In 2020, a new 12 storey, 340-bed hospital was opened in the City of Adelaide. It cost \$300 million and is the largest private hospital ever built in South Australia. It has replaced the Calvary Wakefield and the Calvary Rehabilitation Hospital at Walkerville. It is imagined that Bessie Baker would be immensely proud if she could see the now mighty contribution her original energy brought into being.

After she moved to England in 1901 Bessie set out a record of her spiritual journey in a book entitled *A Modern Pilgrim's Progress*. In it she revealed her frustrations with Anglicanism and her attraction to the Roman church. She accepted the philosopher Immanuel Kant's ideas that religion and morality must have their foundation in reason. To quote once again Stephen Downs, 'Elizabeth Baker maintained broad, intellectual interests throughout her life, read widely and wrote journal articles on a range of topics, especially the reconciliation of religion and science, seeking to promote modern ideas. She actively supported women's suffrage, both in Australia and England. In her mature years, as a voluntary helper of the Catholic Missionary Society, she worked to spread the message of the Church in England and Wales. With other members of the Catholic Women's League, she gave aid to refugees from the war in Belgium. After contracting influenza, she died of influenza on 16 October 1914 at hospital in Kensington, London. She was buried in the churchyard of St Thomas, Fulham'.

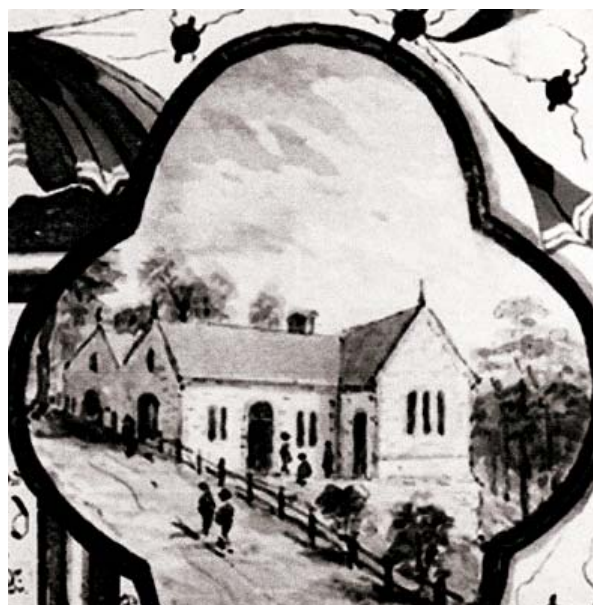
Bessie's remarkable life and service to the church and society was expressed by her friend Joanna Barr Smith in a letter to Isabel Ross (Bessie's niece) in December 1914: 'And she was living and working for others to the end. I would have known she would have died like that, even if I hadn't been told'.¹

Isabella Morrison Baker

It is known that Isabella Morrison Baker donated funds for the building of the schoolhouse adjacent to the church in Norton Summit. This was duly built and then dedicated by the Dean of Adelaide the Rev'd Alexander Russell in November 1876. It was later used as a residence for the teacher at the church school and then by the incumbent priest.

Isabella, along with her sister Elizabeth, later settled in London, converted to the Roman Church and joined the order of Sisters of Mercy. She devoted the remainder of her life to serving the poor and underprivileged of London. Isabella died on 22nd March 1926 in Holborn, London.

The *Adelaide Register* of 18 January 1929 contained the following report: 'The removal of Miss Isabella Morrison Baker was a great loss to the parish and the district. She was a woman of deep religious convictions, and kindly charity. On

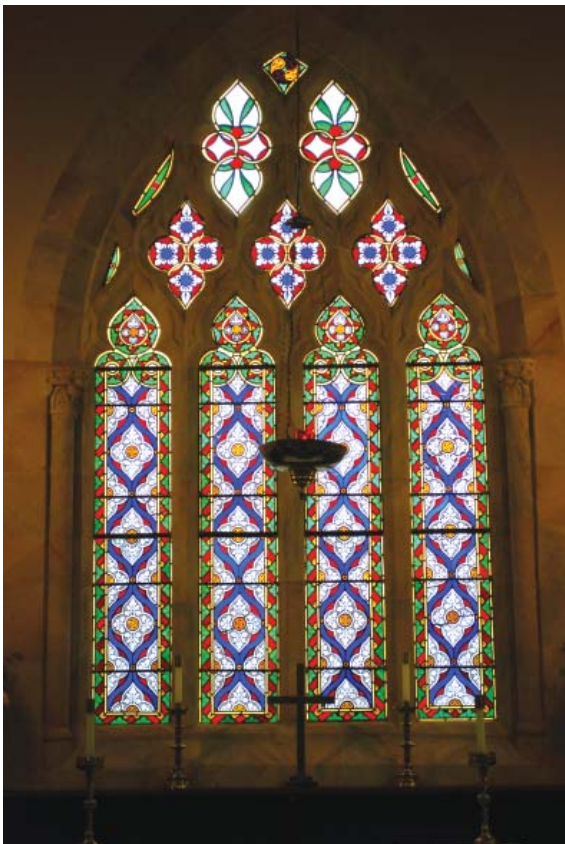


¹ Quoted in 'Three Women of Faith' by Margaret Press, RSJ (2000). Wakefield Press, Adelaide.

her arrival in London, she attached herself to the great slum parish of St. Albans, Holborn, then under the charge of the famous Father McConnochie, and worked among the poor until her death on March 22, 1926. She resided in a little flat at 37 Brook Street. Crèche work was her chief interest, and many of her old Adelaide friends and relatives found her looking after 30 to 40 infants, who tumbled about on a huge sanitary mattress in the middle of the crèche floor, surrounded by a railing of fine wire. She was deeply loved and respected by her poor, whom she devotedly served until her death at the age of 83 years'.

A lady of independent means, she left an estate in excess of £12,000. She also bequeathed £200 to the Bishop of Adelaide for the purpose of providing two stained glass windows for St John's church in memory of her parents, the Hon. John and Isabella Baker.

Isabella's bequest seems to provide for two windows in memory of her parents, but a mystery has become evident because there are actually four windows installed in the nave, two on each side. Whilst two are indeed dedicated to the memory of the Hon. John and Isabella Baker, the other two are a memorial to their son, Sir Richard Chaffey Baker and his wife Lady Katherine Edith (née Colley). Sir Richard died on 18th March 1911, aged sixty-nine years, and Lady Edith predeceased him on 26th September 1908. No mention of the installation of these windows appears in church records and so, in the absence of any other documentation it can be assumed that all arrangements and costs for the four were met by the executors of Isabella Morrison Baker's Estate.



CHAPTER 4 - The Manor Church

*The Lord is in His Holy Temple.
Let all the earth keep silence before Him*

Habakkuk 2:20

Maurice Stephen Fisher was a journalist for the *Chronicle* and *Advertiser* from 1934 until 1962, writing under the *nom de plume* 'VOX'. In 1953 he interviewed the rector of St John's, the Rev'd Douglas Stewart-Fox '... who would tell me about the 80th anniversary of his charming little Gothic church, the vice-regal rural church. Mr Stewart-Fox, who came from a Staffordshire diocese four years ago, is delighted with the English setting he works in; he calls St. John's the manor church, the Bakers the lords of the manor, who gave the land, linked up with the inn, the store and the English type of landscape'.

Such was the association with the Baker family that the construction of the church began before the land was transferred either to John Baker or the Lord Bishop of Adelaide. The exact arrangements are not known but on 6 October 1871 the site for the church was transferred from William Thomas Sutton, gardener and butcher of Norton's Summit to John Baker M.L.C. of Morialta.²

On 4th October 1871, the *South Australian Register* reported: '... looking from Hindley or Rundle Street towards the hills a very prominent object is the unfinished church at Norton's Summit'. The observation is interesting because now the trees

that have been planted during the last one hundred and fifty years preclude the church being observed from the city. Early photographs do indeed reveal the church standing alone on what seems to be a fairly bare piece of ground. The newspaper report goes on to say, 'The church, when finished, will be one of the prettiest in the colony, and the view from it is splendid, overlooking the town, the plains and the gulf'.

St John's church indeed proved to be a building that was above the average standard for churches in colonial South Australia. Its style is described as Gothic Revival. Whilst it was built to a simple ground plan, its superior design and stonework with elaborate carved embellishments set it apart as an excellent example of a traditional English



St John's Church sits atop the hill overlooking the township of Norton Summit. Photograph c.1898 when the Scenic Hotel was owned by the Adelaide-based brewers John Primrose & Company, Unicorn Brewery (1883-1909). Photograph by William S. Smith: SLSA PRG 733/308

² Following John Baker's death in 1872, ownership of the land passed jointly to Augustus [Short], Lord Bishop of Adelaide and Mrs Isabella Baker. It was held by the Baker family following her death in 1908 and on 20 July 1910 passed to the Right Reverend Arthur Nutter Thomas, Lord Bishop of Adelaide, and Elizabeth Anstice Baker of London. The church property was finally vested in The Synod of the Church of England in the Diocese of Adelaide Inc. in 1973.

village church. Examples of the stonemason's skill can be seen in every part of the exterior. In this twenty-first century it would be practically impossible to find people who possess the skill and the patience to work raw stones by hand and achieve such fine results. This building comes from an age when workmen took pride in their work and were prepared to spend the time to achieve perfection in their profession. Their work was intended to last for many generations and that has proved to be so.

The architect of St John's was Benjamin Boothby (1831-1883), the eldest son of Judge Benjamin Boothby who was controversially removed from office as second judge in South Australia in 1867 after years of argument and differences with the government of the day. It seems the Boothby family were friends of John Baker, as one Boothby son

was appointed executor of Baker's affairs. Engineer as well as architect, Benjamin Boothby is perhaps best known for his connections with the Adelaide to Glenelg railway. He was superintendent of the construction during 1872-73. He then managed the railway until his retirement in 1879. Boothby provided the plans for the church without charging a fee obviously due to the friendly connections between the two families.



Norton's Summit from Giles' Hill road, c.1923. Three Sutton family houses and the Scenic Hotel are seen in the photograph with St John's Church on the rise at rear left. Photograph by William Yeatman, Third Creek; ETHS Collection/Jenice Chapman

Messrs Henry Brown and Henry Thompson were awarded the contract to construct St John's. Brown and Thompson were also well known as builders of some of the more important public buildings in Adelaide during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The firm was responsible for such buildings as the Mitchell building at the University of Adelaide, Mortlock building of the State Library and the General Post Office, amongst others.

The Register News-Pictorial of January 1929 recorded that the stone for the building was brought by bullock cart from the gully at Morialta Falls. This statement is deemed to be problematic as no record of quarrying at the falls can be verified. There are the remnants of two small quarries actually on church land and it might be surmised that here was the source of at least some of the stone. A more reliable comment, made at the time of the departure of the Pizey family from Norton's Summit, states that Mr Pizey donated the building stone from his quarry off Third Creek Road.

Construction of the church took at least three years. There is no trace of a foundation stone, nor can any references be found regarding one. The exterior, according to one press report, was complete some twelve months before the consecration date of first January 1873 but the interior was still in what was described as 'a very rough state'. Fundraising for the building had commenced much earlier, perhaps as early as 1866 when John Baker had sought funds, not only from the residents of Norton's Summit but also from some of his more influential pastoral and political friends. With construction

continuing over such a long period, it seems likely that the project was not flooded with donations, so the necessary funds took a long time to accumulate. This could explain why the church, otherwise so well finished, was roofed in corrugated iron, the tower left unfinished until some ten years after consecration and simple bench pews installed. The area around the church was never properly developed or landscaped and the approach road up the hill, now named St John Road, and the carpark area around the northern side of the building were not sealed until 1975.

The Adelaide Register made the comment that ‘...as this is almost the only Church of England in the Mount Lofty Ranges, it may be expected that the exhibition in aid of its Building Fund will excite both interest and sympathy among those belonging to the Episcopal Communion, and that a large attendance will amply reward the ladies and kind contributors for their trouble and expense’. The report refers to a floral exhibition and sale of plants and flowers which was held in the Adelaide Town Hall. Donations of plants and flowers were forthcoming from ‘...all the celebrated gardens in and around Adelaide’. There seems no doubt that the Adelaide community really got behind John Baker and contributed greatly to the establishment of St John’s church.

The first impression when viewing the church is a feeling of permanence. It sits solidly on its hillcrest, the solid stone, now mellowed and stained by decades of rain and sun, shows comparatively little deterioration for its age. In August 1997 the State Heritage Authority entered the church building on its register.

In 2020 the church stonework was repointed under the supervision of a professional heritage architect using the identical composition of the original mortar at a cost of approximately \$50,000. As the building is State Heritage listed a grant of around \$20,000 was received from the South Australian Government.

A comment has been made that the octagonal bell tower with its unusual cap seems, when seen rising above the trees, to add an almost Germanic castle effect to the otherwise distinctly Gothic style of the building. Traditionally, the towers of small English churches have served two purposes, that of porch and also to house the bell or bells. The tower is usually sited in the centre of the western wall or sometimes even as a tower porch on a sidewall of the nave. St John’s tower, however, serves only as a belfry as the small entrance door is in the base of the tower outside the main building of the church. Its position is such that it acts as a sort of massive buttress to the church proper on its south-westerly corner.

The traceried windows and stepped buttresses help impart a very English village church appearance whilst the solid grey stonewalls seem to be almost part of the hilltop site. This impression is not as strange as the sandstone was quarried nearby and dragged to the site by bullock team.

There are two doors to access the church. The principal western door sheltered by the stone porch and a door on the northern side opening to the side vestry. Both doors are flanked by foliated capitals supporting the portal archways, another English





touch. The many hand carved drip mouldings protecting the doors and windows terminate in a variety of foliated or flowered clusters, more evidence of the stonemason's skill, whilst the front porch moulding is adorned with quite recognisable head carvings representing The Hon. John Baker and Bishop Augustus Short. It would have been interesting to have known the thoughts of Bishop Short when he arrived at the church for the consecration service and observed, at the main entrance to the church, the juxtaposition of his 'portrait' in stone with that of the late Hon. John Baker. John Baker had earlier become part of Adelaide's Unitarian Christian Church and was for a time treasurer. On 23rd December 1856 he had laid the foundation stone of the church building in Wakefield Street opposite St Francis Xavier's Cathedral. It is understood that Bishop Short was definitely not in favour of this connection.

Still more careful and skilful carving is evident in the windows, particularly the intricate tracery of the great eastern window and the mullioned nave windows with their stepped surrounds. So well has this work been carried out that very little movement or cracking has occurred.

The interior measurements of the nave are fifteen and a quarter metres (50 feet) long and approximately eight and a quarter metres (27 feet) wide. This seems quite a generous size for what is described as a small church. The chancel archway, with pillars of natural stone adorned with further leaf decoration, forms an attractive frame to the great eastern window behind the altar. These two features are the principal adornment to the interior design.

The open boarded roof is of heavy scissor beam design, all stained a dark colour to simulate oak. The short upright wall posts supporting the great crossbeams could be an indication that a slate roof was originally intended. With construction continuing over such an extended period, it seems likely that funds were limited and could explain why the church, otherwise so well finished, was roofed with corrugated iron.

The interior walls have been rendered, damp proofed and painted. For many years the interior of the church was painted plain white until in 1997, after consultation with the South Australian Heritage Branch, the church interior received a grand restoration in

preparation for the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary celebrated in September of that year. The walls and sanctuary were repainted in the original colours of 1872 and when the original frieze designs were discovered under the layers of old paint, they were hand copied and reapplied. The transformation was spectacular and returned the church into a very beautiful, warm and welcoming place.

The seating is of quite austere design comprising simple wooden bench pews with nine each side of a single central aisle. The floor is bare wooden boards only covered by a runner of deep blue carpet down the length of the aisle and two carpet rugs in the space between the front pews and the altar rails. Heating is provided by electric elements installed under most of the pews in 1975. These were given by Mrs Doris Allmond as a memorial to her parents John William and Flora Makings of Ashton.

The annual vestry minutes of 3 May 1919 record that 'The chairman (Rev'd J J Emery) also referred to the gift of a litany desk by Mrs J Baker which has been dedicated as part of the furniture of the church'. This desk is still in the church and bears the inscription 'Given by MCB 1919'. It has not been possible to determine the identity of 'MCB', but it is assumed to represent one of the Baker family. The problem is it has not been possible to relate the initials with any member of that family. Another small mystery!

At a special Vestry meeting held on 19 January 1924 the following notes were made 'The chairman brought forward information he had gathered in accordance with instructions from last Annual Vestry meeting as to the best method of lighting the church.

After discussion it was decided not to obtain any plant that had been offered - but to obtain 2 hanging (double) and 2 bracket lamps from Harris, Scarfe & Co. The former at £6 each and the latter at £3/7/6 - on the motion of Mr R Moulds and seconded by Mrs A Hank. The lamps purchased were American Coleman 'benzine' fuelled and with cotton mantles. A library chair, which folds to morph into a set of steps, was used to facilitate the lamplighter. The chair is still in the church.

The *Adelaide Observer* of 17 November 1928 reported that the roads have been cleared and poles set up, starting through Piccadilly through Ashton on to Norton Summit. It was expected that light would be available early in the New Year. The lamps remained



Interior of St John's, c.1932. Two Coleman lamps were installed in the church in 1924 and remained in use until 1934; they were replaced by electric lighting. Photograph by Connie Gepp: ETHS Collection NSP328.



in the church even after the electricity was connected to the area in early 1929. They were finally removed in 1934. As seems usual in church affairs it took some time for the decision to install the electric light to be made. A comment was made in the minutes of the Annual Meeting of April 1930 that ‘...electric light layed [sic] on the church was deemed undesirable considering that we were having only one evening service per month’. However, the electricity eventually appeared and the Annual Vestry meeting held on 14 May 1934 was told, by the Rev’d Wood in his report, of the convenience and general satisfaction derived from the electric light ‘...although it had not improved the poor attendances at the evening services’. Not much changed for, at the annual meeting the following year, he again ‘...spoke of poor attendances especially at evening services and he wondered whether it had been worthwhile getting electric light put on except for weddings, of which we had had only one’.



In 1998 a paschal candle stand was designed by Mr Denis Noble in the style to match the eagle lectern given by Sir Malcom Barclay-Harvey in 1945. The candle stand was given to the church by the Venus family in memory of Mr G E Venus (1901-1996).

In October 2020 the Archbishop, the Most Rev’d Geoff Smith, issued a faculty giving approval for the establishment of a memorial garden for the interment of ashes at St John’s. This project has taken a long time to come to fruition due to bureaucratic delays and difficulties in obtaining contractors; however the infrastructure was finally completed at the end of 2022, just in time for the celebration of the 150th year of the church.

The story of St John’s is certainly a chequered one. There have been times of vitality and growth of the congregation only to be contrasted with times of meagre support and financial stress. There have been times when there was no priest ministering to



the parish and it was left to the laity to organise services using Lay Readers and retired or semi-retired priests to conduct the Eucharist. In January 1994 responsibility for the parish was placed in the hands of the Rev'd Andrew Wurm, priest in charge of St Martin's Campbelltown as Locum Tenens, with the Rev'd Andrew Mintern appointed to St John's as Assistant Curate. This arrangement continued until August 1996 when the Archdeacon, the Venerable Conrad Paterson, announced that the ministry arrangements will change and St John's must consider an alternative way forward.

The parish was eventually connected to the parish of Stirling where the Venerable John H Stephenson was priest in charge. The newly ordained Deacon, Barbara Paull, was appointed as assistant Curate and came to live in the rectory, ministering to the parish of Norton Summit whilst still maintaining a level of commitment to the Stirling parish. Sixteen months later, in May 1998, Barbara Paull was transferred to become Assistant Curate to the Venerable Conrad Paterson at St David's church, Burnside and the Rev'd Alan Linton was appointed to become part time priest at Norton Summit. The Rev'd Linton led the parish until he retired.



Then, in early 2004 a covenant was drawn up between the parishes of Norton Summit and St Edward the Confessor church at Kensington Gardens. It was agreed that the two parishes would share the costs of a priest. The Rev'd Tim Sherwell, priest at Kensington Gardens and now also Norton Summit then shared the ministry with the Lay Readers of both parishes.

In October 2009 Ms Dawn Colsey and Mr John Venus were ordained Deacons by Bishop Stephen Pickard in St John's church and took up roles assisting Tim Sherwell, Dawn at St Edward's and John at St John's. In December 2010 both were priested by the Most Rev'd Jeffery Driver, Archbishop of Adelaide in St Edward's church, and assumed the leadership of their respective parishes with licences as local non-stipendiary priests after Tim Sherwell had moved on to another ministry. This continued until the Rev'd Dr Joseph Chung was appointed priest in charge of St Edward's, which finally closed in April 2019. Dawn moved on to assist at St Aidan's church Payneham whilst The Rev'd John Venus remained as non-stipendiary priest at Norton Summit, assuming the role of 'priest in charge'.

CHAPTER 5 - The Font

The baptismal font has an interesting history. It was purchased by the Baker family whilst the church was still under construction and is a beautiful piece of ornately carved stonework from Paris. The wooden cover is adorned with the coat of arms of the Baker family complete with the motto 'Carpe Diem' (*seize the day* or *make good use of the present*) and the date of 1872. The arms portrayed on the font are undoubtedly those of the Baker family, they do not exactly match the description of the arms of Sir Richard Chaffey Baker, granted to him by the College of Heralds. It has been suggested that Sir Richard's arms were slightly altered at the time when his knighthood (KCMG) was conferred in 1895.

As an aside it is interesting to note that the Bakers also donated the font in St George's church at Magill as a thank offering for the deliverance of Prince Alfred from an assassination attempt whilst he was visiting Sydney. They were well acquainted with Prince Alfred, as he had been their guest at *Morialta* homestead in 1867.

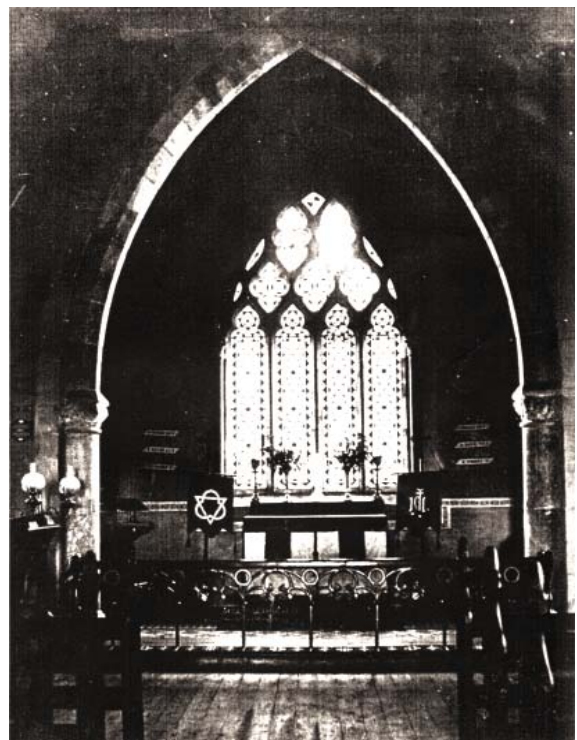


CHAPTER 6 - The Windows

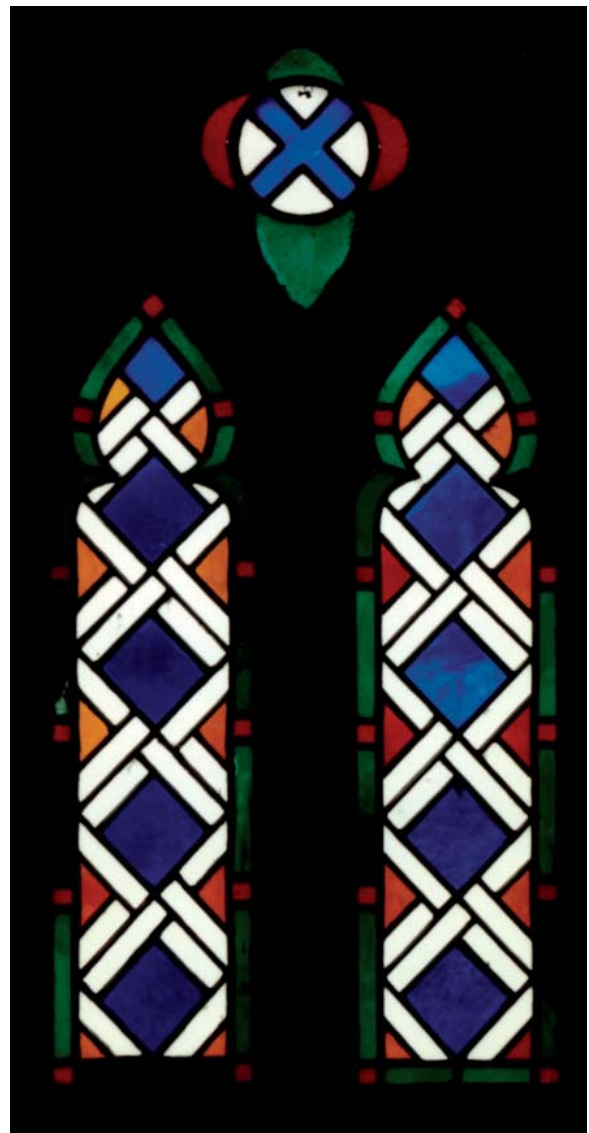
As previously mentioned, the nave is lit by seven stained glass windows, three on northern and four on the southern side. It is easy to see that there are two distinct styles. The two at the western end and the one at the front (eastern end) on the southern wall are non-pictorial, are made in a less refined style than the central four and appear to be original to the 1872 construction of the building. The four picture windows were not installed until about sixty years after the originals. Whilst the window openings are all identical, the non-pictorial lights are made from plain coloured glass which has been cut and set in straight geometrical patterns. Colours used are blue, green, orange, red and white.

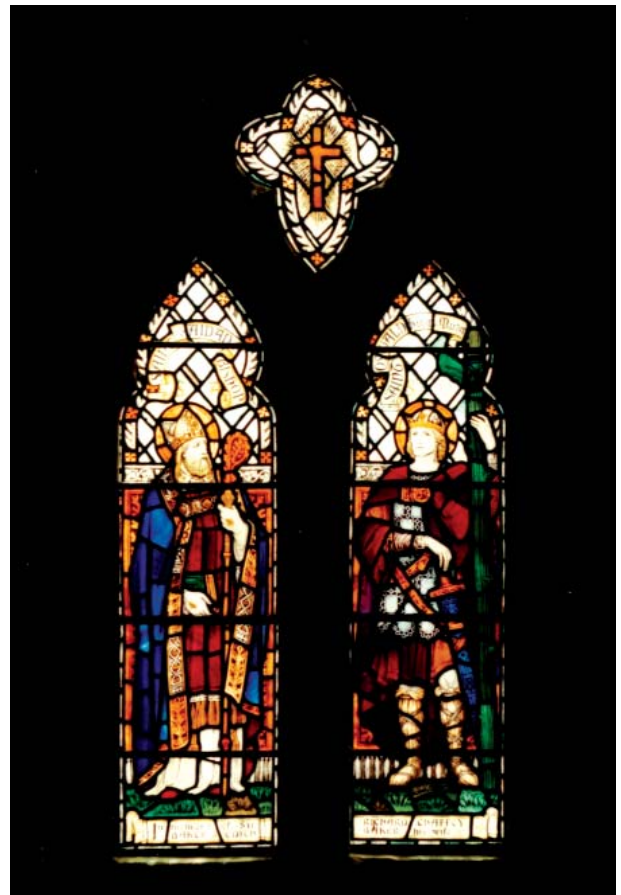
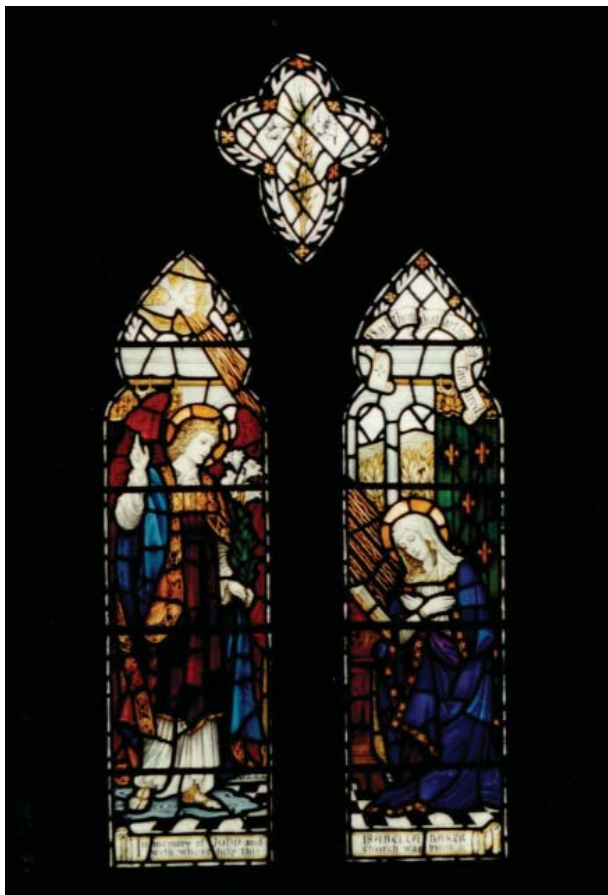
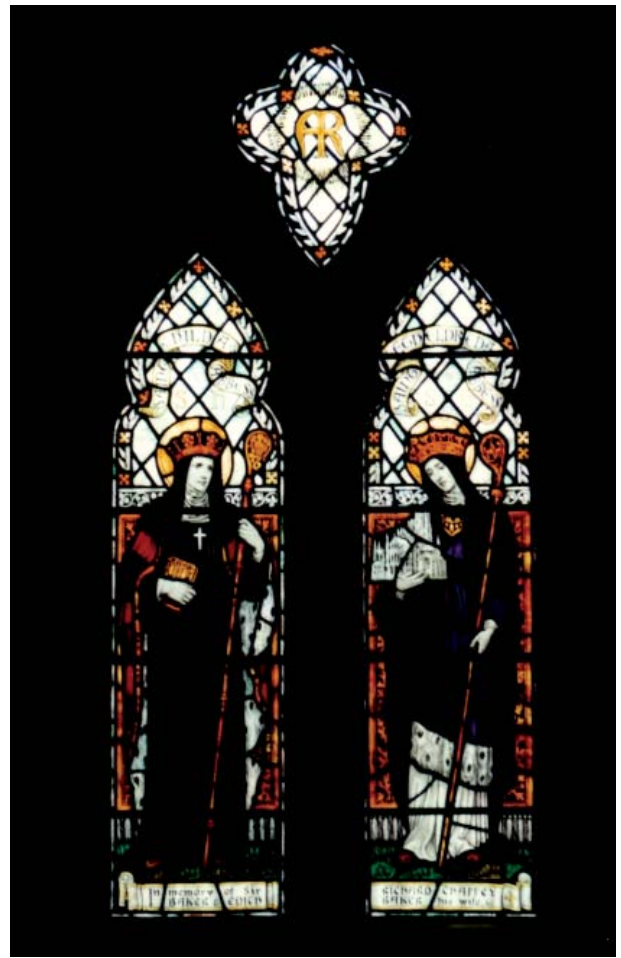
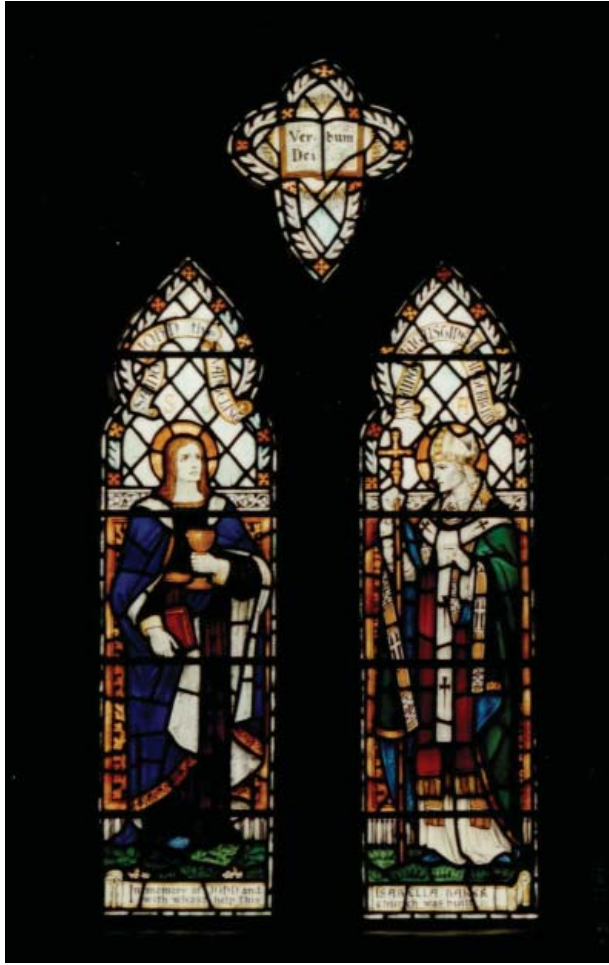
The window on the south-eastern corner is particularly interesting, as it has painted symbols relating to Christ's passion. In one panel is painted a tower with a crowing cock on top, a reference to Peter's denial of Jesus as told in the gospel of John chapter 18, verses 25-27. This is coupled with a multi-thonged whip and a stalk of wheat with a full head of grain. It is imagined that these images relate to the scourging of Jesus by the Roman soldiers and a reference to the gospel of John chapter 12, verse 24, 'Truly, truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit'. Additionally, there is a depiction of a coat, possibly a reference to Jesus' garment that the soldiers drew lots to possess as it was made from a single piece of cloth and was indivisible. The light that pairs with the first depicts the cross and beneath that a panel showing a ladder, three nails and a hammer, which images obviously refer to the crucifixion. At the top of each panel there are the Greek letters of *alpha* and *omega*, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet and a reference to Revelation chapter 1 verse 8, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty'. At the bottom of each panel are the words, *Jesus* and *wept*, a reference to the incident related in John chapter 11 verse 35, when Jesus learned of the death of his friend Lazarus. The small light above and central to the two panels, is constructed with a circular hinged disc opening for ventilation, and displays the letters *IHS*, an abbreviation of the Greek for the name *Jesus*.

This window with its symbols is fascinating and could be the source of deeper contemplation. Sadly, no records can be found relating to it, so it is impossible to do other than imagine the reasons behind its inclusion in the original construction. Could it have been a memorial window included by his widow Isabella to the memory of the Hon. John Baker who had died in the May prior to the church's completion? We will probably never know; it remains another mystery surrounding St John's church, along with the apparent lack of a foundation stone and a date for the commencement of construction.



Interior of St John's showing the sanctuary or great eastern window. It was given to St John's Church by Heinrich Ludwig Vosz, a noted glazier of Rundle Street, Adelaide. The photograph is early 1940s after the ceiling lamps had been removed. It shows the brass altar rails in front of the altar installed in 1923 in memory of Alexander Smith.





The remaining four windows are the memorial picture windows which are beautifully crafted and dedicated to the memory of the Baker family. They were installed in 1929 and then dedicated By Archdeacon John Stoward Moyes at a service on 18th August that year.

The two windows dedicated to the Hon. John and Isabella Baker depict the annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in one and Saint John the Evangelist coupled with Saint Augustine in the other. The remaining two, Honouring Sir Richard and Lady Edith, depict in one window St Aidan, bishop, and St Oswald, king and martyr, and in the other St Hilda, abbess and St Etheldreda, abbess. All are Anglo-Saxon saints associated with Northumbria. There is no record as to who chose the images and nor their relevance to the church or the Baker family, with the exception of the image of St John the Evangelist, the church's patron saint. Relevance aside, they add a large degree of colour, richness and beauty to the church.



At the top of the western wall and high above the main doors a lovely rose window has been incorporated into the original construction. Similar to the two original nave windows it is made of red and green coloured glass. It casts beautiful, coloured patterns of colour around the church when the afternoon sun shines through.



Lady Baker (Edith) and Sir Richard Chaffey Baker KCMG, QC

The great east window is comprised of four lights with intricate tracery and a spectacular use of colour. It carries no images of people or biblical themes. It was given by Heinrich Ludwig Vosz, a most successful and highly regarded businessman in Adelaide, dealing in paint and glass. His business in Rundle Street was the forerunner of the well-known brand of Dulux paints. During Vosz's lifetime the firm only acted as glaziers, but three years after his death in 1886, an artist, J.F. Williams, was employed, and the firm began to accept stained glass window commissions. Since Vosz left no surviving family, the firm passed to the employees, although it continued initially to operate under the original name. It was renamed in 1915 after one of the employees, Albert Ernest Clarkson, as part of the anti-German feeling from the war. Clarkson became the first Secretary and Manager and later became Chairman of Directors in 1922. As other smaller firms closed, Clarkson Ltd began to dominate the local scene.

In the late 1990s it was apparent the sanctuary window in St John's needed urgent attention, as it seemed to be in danger of collapse. After all, it had stood well for almost one hundred and thirty years. A well-known Adelaide stained glass artist, Cedar Prest, was engaged to renovate the window at a cost exceeding \$11,000. She removed the four lights one by one and rebuilt them. When all were reinstalled, the window was ready to face another century of bringing beauty and colour to the church. An application for a grant was made to the government which was not forthcoming but a generous donation of \$10,000 was given by the Don and Pauline Causby of Norton Summit towards the cost with a direction that no plaque acknowledging the gift was to be placed in the church. However, when compiling a history of the church it no seems a proper time and place to acknowledge their generosity.

CHAPTER 7 - The Bell Tower

The octagonal bell tower was incomplete at the time of consecration in 1873 and was not completed until 1882 for a cost of sixty nine pounds and ten shillings (£69/10/-) due to the caution of the building committee in permitting work to proceed only when the necessary money was in hand to pay for it, so St John's church was entirely free from debt when the building was eventually completed.

Tenders were called for the construction of the tower in March 1882 by the architects, Messrs Beresford, Bowen & Black of Pirie Street, Adelaide. It was reported at the annual vestry meeting of 1882 that a bazaar had raised about fifty-seven pounds (£57) and a contract had been negotiated with Mr Reuben Scrase of Ashton for completion of the bell tower for the sum of £69/10/-. Reuben Scrase, bricklayer, in company with his wife Elizabeth, had arrived in Adelaide on the Gosforth in December 1865 from Brighton in Sussex. The church secretary later reported that 'work is progressing satisfactorily' and the tower was duly completed later in 1882. A carnival day was arranged to celebrate the final completion of the church and tower with a bazaar, tea meeting and concert presented by the choir of St Paul's church, Montacute.

The bell was a gift from George Fife Angas, recognised as one of the most important people associated with the foundation of South Australia. Born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1789 he arrived in Adelaide in 1851. He was widely known and respected as a successful merchant, banker, landowner and philanthropist. Angas was an *English Dissenter*. The Dissenters, later called Nonconformists, were English Christians who had separated from the Church of England. This difference in church affiliation did not prevent Angas from supporting John Baker and the new church at Norton Summit by donating the bell to be installed in the new tower. George Fife Angas did not live to hear his bell ring however as he died in May 1879.

The stone tower is capped with a wooden 'belfry' and roof. In early 1977 Mr E A (Ted) Eling of Glenside was paid \$266 for repairs to the interior of the tower and then again in November 1978 a large amount was spent on further restoration of the tower and in addition, some repairs to the church building and roof. By the turn of the twenty-first century the wooden slats at the top of the tower were again in need of restoration and painting so work began to restore and repaint in March 2008.



CHAPTER 8 - The Music

It is recorded that the first harmonium was given by Mr A Forster. As there was no one with that name in the congregation it can be surmised that the donor was Anthony Forster MLC (1813-1897). He would have been known to G.F. Angas and John Baker as when he came to the colony in 1841, he worked as agent for George Fife Angas until 1844. He became a sheep farmer at Greenock, also proprietor of the *SA Register* and *Adelaide Observer* newspapers. He served in the South Australian colonial parliament from 1855 until he resigned in 1864 when he returned to England and married. When he died in Essex in 1897, he still had interests in South Australia so it was his agent who arranged the sizeable donation of the harmonium. This is a typical example of colonial Adelaide society and also friends in England gathering around the Baker family and generously stepping up with donations when approached. A report of a meeting in 1873 mentioned 'a hearty vote of thanks' being carried and '...expressing in the strongest terms the obligations under which the congregation lay to Mrs. Baker for the energy and munificence she had displayed in the erection of St. John's Church, not omitting to mention other friends in England and the colony who have helped'. There are a few notations in the records during following decades mentioning repairs and also replacements of the instruments but lacking any detail.

Miss Isabella Baker was the church organist until she left for England in 1876 when Mrs Lucy Pizey took her place as organist and Mr Septimus Pizey became choirmaster, positions they held until they left the district in 1882.

The next instrument for which there are detailed records was bought by public subscription in 1975 as a memorial to Mr Ivan Moulds. It was an Estey reed instrument and is recorded as being somewhat complex, as it possessed two manuals and pedals and was designed to be powered by foot or a hand lever attached to the bellows, so an



electric motor was installed which not only made the life of the organist much easier but also considerably improved the performance of the organ.

In March 1998 Mr Deane Miller of Summertown was appointed Director of Music for St John's. In June 1997 the church received a most generous gift from Mr Miller in the form of a 270-pipe chamber organ. This is a unique instrument and was built in Melbourne by master organ builder, Knut Smenge, sometimes recognised as Australia's finest organ builder. The instrument in St John's is one of only three organs by Smenge in South Australia; the other two are much larger instruments and are located in the Church of the Epiphany, Crafers and the Lobethal Lutheran Church. The chamber organ has its case made from Tasmanian Blackwood with a Mahogany music desk and trim. As a small chamber organ, it has only four stops and five ranks of pipes. It is reported to be a beautiful instrument to play.

In 1994 Mr John Peddler donated a carillon which was originally installed at the Ashton Uniting Church. This was installed in the bell tower but unfortunately it is not often played, as people with the necessary skills are not easy to find.

Then in November 1998 Mr Miller purchased on behalf of the church a magnificent Yamaha grand piano for \$11,500. The church was able to repay the debt over a period of a few years and the instrument now adds greatly to the musical potential of St John's.

In 1999 the Parish Council formed a small committee and the *Norton Summit Music Society* was born. During the next few years concerts were held in the church, usually on Sunday afternoons and brought much pleasure to many people. The income received from these concerts went towards repaying the cost of the Yamaha grand. Unfortunately, people moved away and the few instigators of the Society left found the effort too much to continue and so the Norton Summit Music Society faded into history. However, the church has gained a magnificent heritage of two beautiful musical instruments.



The new organ was installed in 1997. This unique instrument was built in Melbourne by master organ builder, Knut Smenge, sometimes recognised as Australia's finest organ builder.

CHAPTER 9 - The Vice-regal chapel

Just as Holy Trinity Church in Adelaide enjoyed the title of *The Governor's Church*, so too St John's came to enjoy the title of *Vice-regal Chapel* because of its close association during many years with the occupants of the nearby Marble Hill vice-regal summer residence. A vice-regal pew was reserved for the governors and their families. Sadly, this happy association came to an abrupt end on 2nd January 1955, known as 'Black Sunday', when the Marble Hill mansion and all the outbuildings were destroyed in a raging bushfire. The occupants at the time, Sir Robert and Lady George, were fortunate to escape with their lives by sheltering with their staff members against an earth bank under wet blankets.

Fire has always posed a threat in the Adelaide hills during the hot and dry summer seasons. In March 1908 the *Adelaide Advertiser* reported on a blaze that came close to destroying both the *Morialta* homestead of the Baker family and also the school room and house at St John's. The article is quite graphic in its detail. It reads in part:

'The dense undergrowth of briars and broom fed the flames, and the whole neighbourhood was quickly enveloped in smoke... The crackling of the immense flames as they leapt high into the air could be heard by the school children at their lessons, and the schoolmaster (Mr Osborne) sent the boys of the fourth and fifth classes to render whatever aid they could. The fire leapt the drive which leads to Sir Richard Baker's residence and did a lot of damage to the laurel hedge and other ornamental shrubs, and quickly travelled to the vicinity of the Sunday-school and residence connected with St. John's Church, Morialta. Here the undergrowth and saplings were very dense and it needed tremendous effort on the part of the fire-beaters to save the property. The fire blackened the sides of the walls. The furniture belonging to the place was taken out on to the roadway for safety, but the fuel which fed the flame burnt out, and by strenuous efforts the school building and the residence were saved. Several telegraph-poles were destroyed'.



The relationship between St John's church and the Vice-regal families was important. *Morialta* was a favourite place of respite for the governors and their families, especially during hot summers on the Adelaide plains, which could be very oppressive without the later comforts of air-conditioning.

In 1877 British military engineer and diplomat Lieutenant General Sir William Jervois arrived in the colony as Governor. He found the quite modest Vice-regal country residence provided at the Government Farm in Belair to be too small so he very soon proposed the construction of a new and grander building at Marble Hill. He was instrumental in securing government expenditure, and personally oversaw the selection of the site and directed the design process. The first stone was laid on 18 July 1878, and the structure was completed and furnished in late 1879. The Jervois family stayed at *Morialta* during the construction of Marble Hill and regularly attended services at St John's.

The hills people were very proud and pleased when they learned of the development at Marble Hill and it transpired that the Jervois's and succeeding vice-regal families were often to be seen around the district, in reality as members of the local community. They were to be seen at harvest gatherings, cherry picking, or simply riding around the district. They also hosted picnics and parties for the local children at Marble Hill.

But the majority of Vice-regal families enjoyed the property and many became closely attached to St John's church as regular attendees and participants. It is recorded in the vestry books that on a number of occasions the Governor would read a lesson or even, on occasion, the service.

Adelaide newspapers were fond of relaying little items of news of the Vice-regal occupants of Government House. The front page of the *Express and Telegraph* newspaper of Monday 24 February 1908 declared that '...his Excellency the Governor and Lady Le Hunte set an example in the matter of attending divine worship which many would do well to copy. Our correspondent says that they are among the worshippers at St. John's Church Morialta, every Sabbath afternoon. Sir George himself usually walks the entire distance of four miles which lies between the viceregal residence of Marble Hill and the pretty little Anglican Church at Norton's Summit. The exemplary practice followed by the highest lady and gentleman in the State is much to be commended'.



The Vice-Regal residence at Marble Hill, 1879, shortly after the completion of the residence. SLSA B 3094

Another example of this reporting spoke eloquently of the Governor preaching in the church. The article reads:

‘Our Norton’s Summit correspondent writes: The residents of the Hills districts felt highly favoured and delighted on Sunday afternoon when his Excellency the Governor, in the absence of the rector, the Rev. A. Honner, conducted divine service at St. John’s Church, Morialta. The occasion was made even more interesting from the fact that it was harvest thanksgiving Sunday, and the seating capacity of the picturesque little hills’ church was taxed to its utmost. The problem of ‘How to get the people to church’ was solved. His Excellency acquitted himself- admirably, and a beautiful service was carried out without a hitch. ... and it was considered that nothing but innate modesty prevented the Governor from donning the usual clergyman’s surplice’.

Other distinguished visitors were the Governor-General Lord Dudley and his wife Rachael, the Countess of Dudley, in January 1909. The Advertiser of 25th January reported that they ‘spent Saturday and Sunday at Marble Hill, and attended divine service at the Anglican Church at Norton’s Summit’. Lord Dudley acted in an executive role during his three-month stay in South Australia. He travelled expensively during this time and indulged his passion for cricket whenever he could. He was, by all accounts, a genial, popular man.

Happily, the reports were not confined to the Vice-regal men. The *Express and Telegraph* of Tuesday 17 April 1906 proclaimed: *Lady Le Hunte Is Church Organist*.

‘His Excellency the Governor and Lady Le Hunte were amongst the worshippers at St. John’s, Morialta, on Good Friday, and also on Easter Sunday. The organist (Mrs. Honner) and several members of the choir being away at Encounter Bay for a holiday, Lady Le Hunte courteously offered to officiate at the organ during both services. The beauty of the Anglican service is greatly enhanced by the music, and Lady Le Hunte proved herself to be quite equal to the occasion, and went through the service without a hitch, while the Governor himself lent substantial aid with the singing. The church was beautifully decorated with white chrysanthemums and ivy, and Lady Le Hunte’s kind action was much appreciated by the rector and congregation’.

The governors’ families have contributed in many ways to the life at St John’s, not just by their regular attendances. In particular, some of the Governors’ wives supported the church with time or money, and from the turn of the 20th century, several gifts and memorials were received from the vice-regal families.

Lady Tennyson presented the priest’s desk and an Adelaide newspaper reported that on a Sunday morning in July 1903 a dedicatory service was held when the rector, Rev. A. Honner, preached. He referred to Lady Tennyson’s kind action, and of her wish to show her thankfulness to God for all the great blessings she had received during the time she had worshipped with them. She had offered this beautiful gift in grateful remembrance of the happy time she had experienced. The desk, which was made by Messrs. James Marshall & Co., is a great ornament to the picturesque church. It is made of polished oak, and has two beautiful lamps attached, which were made in the State. The brass mountings and fixings were also manufactured here. The desk bears the following inscription ‘Presented to St. John’s Church, Morialta, by her Excellency Lady Tennyson. In grateful remembrance, 1899-1903’.

Lady Dugan gave a reredos in memory of her mother Mrs Applethwaite Abbott, in February 1939 and Sir Malcolm Barclay Harvey gave the lectern, a carved wooden eagle,

in 1945. At the annual Vestry meeting of May 1945, a minute of thanks and appreciation was recorded as thanks to the Governor for his 'beautiful lectern'. Sadly in 1958, £60 needed to be spent to eradicate an infestation of termites and the reredos had to be removed due to the irreparable damage caused by the insects but the desks and the lectern remain in good order and regular use.

In 1976 Mrs Doris Allmond presented the church with a processional cross to celebrate the 81st anniversary of the Mother's Union.

Mr David Kew was a tenant in the rectory in the years 1990-91. In 1989 he used the rectory shed to make three new pews under the patronage of the Pellew, Cranwell and Bishop families. The pews were dedicated in January 1990. The 'Bishop pew' was dedicated to the memory of William James Bishop O.B.E. (1893-1967) and Hilda Grace Bishop (1895-1986), whilst the 'Cranwell pew' commemorated Arthur Edward Cranwell (1898-1984) and Mary Esther Cranwell (1899-1975). The 'Pellew pew' is simply marked as being donated by the family.



The altar and carved timber reredos (to the rear of the altar) donated in 1939 by Lady Dugan, wife of Sir Winston Dugan, Governor of South Australia.

[reredos 'rer-a-däs; fr. MF *arrere* behind + *dos* back]

CHAPTER 10 - The School House and Rectories

Beginning around the time the church was built Bessie and Isabella Baker conducted Sunday School classes for the local children in the great attic area of *Morialta*. The two girls apparently made the school and lessons so attractive that the roll of attending children grew very quickly. When lessons were finished the children marched from the *Morialta* homestead to the church via a private back road to attend the service.

This was considered an interim measure until proper facilities could be built at the church and so Isabella Baker assumed the responsibility for the construction of a stone schoolhouse and hall adjacent to the new church. Tenders were called in April 1875 by the architect, Percival E. Hart, and the foundation stone was laid in October of that year. The four-roomed house and large schoolroom/hall cost Isabella around £1200 which was a very considerable amount in those days. The building was duly erected and in November 1876 the Very Rev'd Alexander Russell, Dean of Adelaide celebrated the dedication. It was reported that '...to Honour the opening a free luncheon was provided by the church people, followed by the customary toasts of the day, The Foundress of the school, the bishop and The Teacher. After the benediction service at 3 pm, several addresses followed, making what must have been a long, probably tedious afternoon, but the evening was made lively with the first of many entertainments in the new room'.



Norton's Summit township, mid-1930s. At rear: St John's Church, rectory (completed 1928) and the schoolhouse (dedicated in 1876). In the foreground are Sutton's butcher's shop and house, Scenic Hotel and Council Chambers (centre right). ETHS Collection

Isabella's generosity was described as a gesture by the rich towards the poor and perhaps somewhat cynically, 'God has made many poor so that the rich can be saved'. A cynical view of 'The poor' was something the Baker ladies never contemplated. It is clear that they used their wealth generously and in a genuine outpouring of their deeply held Christian faith. For these women Christianity was not simply paying lip service to a set of beliefs or to an organisation such as the church. Both these women devoted their lives to the service and assistance of poor people. In a letter from the slums of London where she later lived and devoted her life to helping the people, she

stated that she had given the building as a memorial to her late father, The Hon. John Baker.

Until 1908 when the Norton Summit State School was built, the hall served as both day school and church hall, with the Sunday School lessons supervised by Miss Lucy Pizey and Miss Isabella Baker.

Mrs Elizabeth Honner, wife of Alfred Honner, the Rector of St George's Magill and St John's, temporarily resided in the schoolhouse during the week to teach at the day school until a resident teacher was appointed. Unfortunately, by 1905 the inferior workmanship of the construction of the schoolhouse/ hall had become evident with serious cracks appearing in the walls. Once again it was the Baker family to the rescue. Sir Richard Chaffey Baker, the eldest son of the family and by then practicing law in Adelaide and residing at *Morialta*, paid for the necessary repairs.

After Canon Alfred Honner died in 1909 the Rev'd Arthur W. B. Everitt was appointed the first rector of Norton Summit and Montacute in 1910. The schoolhouse became the rectory despite its obvious shortcomings in both size and state of repair. It had become obvious that a replacement would have to be provided and so in 1914 a new rectory fund was established but little progress was made in building up funds. Everitt had resigned in August 1911 and returned to England so it was the Rev'd Frank Sewell who tolerated the inadequate accommodation until in May 1914 the Rev'd J. Emery became the incumbent. By 1920 with no advance being made to raise funds for repair or replacement of the house, the living conditions of the rector had become so



Norton's Summit township, 1938. At rear: St John's Church, rectory (completed 1928) and the schoolhouse (at centre right, partially hidden by trees). In the foreground are blacksmith/motor mechanic, Sutton's butcher's shop and house, Scenic Hotel and Council Chambers (centre right). ETHS Collection

unbearable that he could contain himself no longer, and the church council received a very frank statement and report insisting that urgent action be taken.

The Annual Easter Vestry meeting held in the schoolroom on Monday 10th May 1920 proved to be somewhat controversial, as at the end of the meeting the Rev'd Joseph Emery gave the congregation the benefit of his frank opinion of the accommodation in which he was expected to live. His statement was an explanation for his resignation as priest in charge. The matter of the inadequate housing had been discussed for a number of years as the minutes verify. Emery noted that although he had been happy in his ministry at Norton Summit the condition of the rectory accommodation was '... not only inadequate and uncomfortable, it was also a serious handicap to any further development of the life and work of the parish'. The parish was reminded that back in 1914 a promise was made to build a suitable rectory. Then the first world war intervened and up to the early part of 1919 he had been able to rent private accommodation nearby but this arrangement had been cancelled as the property had changed hands and was no longer available for rent. Out of a sense of duty he persevered hoping that soon after the end of the war energy would again be directed to replacing the rectory. He was to be disappointed. It was now 1920 and he notes that '...there seemed to be a disinclination to attempt anything in the near future ...' therefore he '...could not carry on as priest in charge under the existing conditions without the prospect of a breakdown'.

It is interesting that when confirming the minutes at the next Easter vestry in May 1921 the Rev'd John Coles made margin notes that 'this clause objected to'. He, along with other members of the congregation, obviously dis-approved of Emery's outburst. The minutes of the 1921 meeting make it clear that this was a highly controversial matter as an objection was also voiced by Mr Alex Smith, People's Warden. The minutes were eventually passed but '...subject to an objection and protest against the clause marked'. It must have been a difficult time for Joseph Emery, as in addition to his complaint regarding the house he raised the matter of the means of transport provided for his work in the parish. He noted 'Moreover, the time had come when the parish should consider the provision of some better means for the priest in charge, of travelling about from one centre to another. The push bicycle must go!' Go it eventually did, but not until 1927 when a Buick car was bought for sixty pounds, the cost being divided between the churches at Norton Summit, Uraidla, Lenswood and Montacute. At his last service, which was Evensong on 12 September 1920, Emery preached on the text Luke 12.49, 'I came to bring fire to the earth and how I wish it were already kindled!' A number of suggestions could be put forward as to the inferences intended by this choice, perhaps ranging from the simple need to find a warm place, to, as fire is a symbol of judgement, it could be conjectured as to whether he had the congregation or the old crumbling house in mind.

It seems that Mr Emery's outburst and resignation did have some positive results, as the stipend for Rev'd Coles was raised by £10 to £62 per year and the construction of a kitchen and back verandah on the rectory was begun at a cost of £119. It was noted that '... the greater comfort that would be the result ...could not be doubted'.

The question of the old schoolhouse and accommodation bubbled along for a fair part of the 1920s. So, in time honoured church fashion committees were formed, funds and assistance sought and the present rectory was finally built in 1928. The foundation

stone was laid by the Dean of Adelaide, The Rev'd George William Young on 25 August 1928 when an inscribed silver trowel was presented to him by Mr Milne Scott (secretary of the building committee). The completed house was blessed by Bishop Arthur Nutter Thomas on 9th December.



The new rectory (above) was built by Mr A. C. Allmond of Summertown to the plans made by architects Messrs Kenneth Milne, Evans and Russell. The rector at the time was Rev'd Samuel Turton Longman, who with his wife and son Guy must have been very pleased to have such pleasant new accommodation. Sadly, he and his family were not to enjoy the house for a long period because he died at home of a stroke on Tuesday morning 19th November 1929.

A newspaper report stated that, '...Since the scheme of raising funds for a new rectory had been started, the congregation, through socials and concerts, had raised £510. This effort had extended over seven years. The sum of £200 had been received as a gift from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and a similar gift from the Bishop's Home Mission Fund. A loan of £100, free of interest for five years had been made by Mr C. Schultz, and Mrs Schultz had made the same offer. Mrs Herman Hank had also loaned £50. Other smaller gifts from parishioners were included in the £510. This made a total of £1,160/10/-, which was only £63 less than the contractor's price... The Rev. J Coles said 'it was pleasing to look back over years of hard work to see the culmination of the effort. He was glad to be associated with the ceremony'.

The building committee comprised The Rev S.T. Longman (Chairman), Messrs. L. Moulds (treasurer), Milne Scott (secretary), R. Moulds, W. Wightman, W. Watkins, Herman Hank, Alex Smith, C. Jennings, J. Trevenan, H. Baum, O. Caldicott, A. Wotton, E Samwell, and J Makings.

The old schoolhouse and hall stood for many years after its abandonment as a hall and Sunday school, classes of which had been transferred to the church. Perhaps the shortage of accommodation during and after the second world war prolonged its life, for it was not demolished until 1956, fifty years after it was first reported to be in bad condition.

When demolition was finally achieved the need for a venue for the Sunday School and other social events was addressed by the purchase of two transportable buildings from the Commonwealth Government which had been part of the township at Woomera. In November 1962 Keith (Sandy) Taylor, operating his family's bulldozer, cleared the area where the old building had stood and pulled the two transportables into position at a cost of £24. The District Council of East Torrens followed up by granting permission in February 1963 for '...the erection of Sunday School halls'.

In December 1962 the congregation was discussing the methods to join the two buildings and expressed a hope that the finished structure would be usable by 28th April 1963 when a major event was scheduled to take place, a 'Back to Morialta' day. It appears to have been a near thing because only ten days before the event they were still making internal alterations to create a better kitchen and a counter between the kitchen and the main hall area. The 1964 balance sheet shows the sum of just over £27 being paid to local electrician Mr Quentin Newland for connecting the power to the new hall. So, from when the replacement of the old condemned schoolhouse and rectory was first mooted in 1914 it was not until April 1963 that a replacement finally eventuated in the form of two asbestos clad transportable buildings relocated from Woomera.

The 1958 termite infestation seems to have been a major financial problem for the church. By 1964-65 a restoration fund had been set up and in November 1965 a major restoration of the church was underway. The damaged reredos was removed, windows repaired, the aisle and sanctuary were carpeted and new lights installed. The church interior was also repainted. Costs totalled £484. This expenditure resulted in the synodal assessment and other major mission contributions not being paid in 1967. There was then a period then where the parish did not have a resident priest.

After the Rev'd John Collas left the parish in 1966 the rectory underwent necessary major renovations and was then rented out with the proviso that the rental was to be paid directly to the church office to defray the loan of almost \$1200 made by the Home Mission Society that enabled the repair work to be undertaken. Mr Robert Bickford rented the rectory commencing in September 1967 for \$13 per week.

CHAPTER 11 - The Bishop and the Canon

Bishop Augustus Short

On Wednesday 1st January 1873 Bishop Augustus Short consecrated the newly completed St John's church to the Glory of God. Augustus Short was born on 11th June 1802 at Bickham House near Exeter, Devon, England, third son of Charles Short, barrister, and his wife Grace, née Millett. He was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford and was ordained priest in 1827. On the 10 December 1835 he married Millicent Clara, daughter of John Phillips of Culham House, Oxfordshire.

In 1845 Short was given the choice of either the Adelaide or Newcastle diocese. He chose Adelaide and on 29 June 1847 was consecrated bishop in Westminster Abbey. The family arrived in Adelaide in the *Derwent* on 28 December 1847 during a particularly hot period in the middle of the Australian summer. Bishop Short recorded in his diary that, 'The intense heat at the period of our landing, the thermometer in our bedrooms at Government House being 95 degrees...'. Tragically this heatwave brought about the death of their one-year old daughter Caroline Augusta who succumbed just seven weeks after arriving and became the first burial at the newly consecrated St George's Church, Magill. Bishop Short remarked that '...she has fallen a martyr to the cause in which we embarked'.

As a high churchman Short frequently clashed with his predominantly Evangelical flock and with the province's Nonconformists.

On Wednesday 1st January 1873 he attended at the newly completed St John's church at Norton's Summit and consecrated it to the Glory of God. It would have been interesting to know what passed through his mind when he saw the two stone carvings that embellish the archway of the front porch. The one on the left is instantly recognisable as the face of the bishop, whilst the other represents the Honourable John Baker. Baker was not present at the service on 1 January 1873, as he had died the previous May before the church was even completed. There is no record to be found as to the identity of the person who came up with the idea to permanently record the images of Short and Baker but one has to suspect Baker's widow, Isabella who was responsible for overseeing the completion of the church after her husband's death.

John Baker had become involved with the Unitarian church, which was formed in Adelaide in 1854, with a church building being established in Wakefield Street, opposite the Roman Catholic Cathedral. Bishop Short was opposed to any denomination which posed a threat to his efforts to build the Church of England in his new diocese and resented what he saw as the forces working against 'his' Church in the colony. In a letter written in 1851 he exclaimed 'The people are republican and Dissenting in their 'tone of thought' and Dissent was 'powerful & hostile'. So, although John Baker had died some seven months prior to this day, here the bishop was reminded of him and his affiliation with a group whom Short opposed so vehemently.

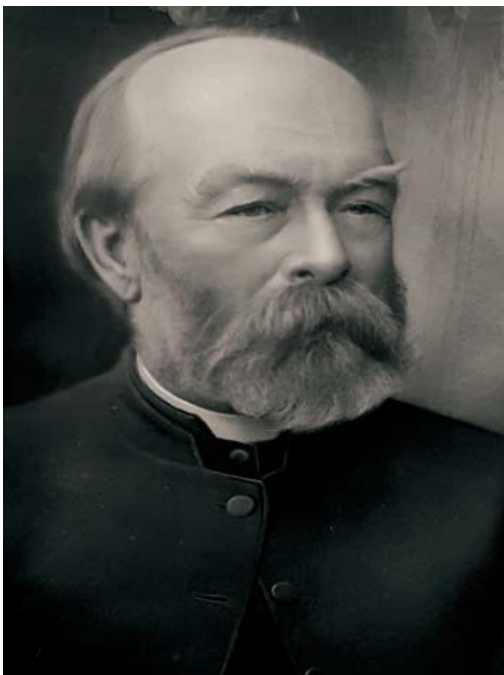


In November 1881 failing health compelled him to resign his see, but he dedicated St Barnabas Theological College and on 6 January 1882 celebrated his last communion service in the cathedral, leaving for England that day. He lived quietly in London until his death on 5 October 1883. He was survived by his wife, three of their five sons and four of their five daughters.

Short successfully accomplished the immense task of building up the Church of England in South Australia. His Tractarian churchmanship was divisive, but it proved to be a firm basis for the Church and imparted to the diocese of Adelaide its distinctive character.

The Reverend Canon Alfred Honner

On Saturday 11th September 1909 the *Adelaide Advertiser* reported the death of the Rev'd Canon Alfred Honner in his 76th year. On Monday 13 September the newspaper published a more comprehensive report, indicating the 'widespread regret' at the news. Although nominally Rector of St George's Magill, Honner had oversight of three other



churches including St John's which he served diligently for 37 years. It was reported that '...his delightful Irish humour and happy friendly manner endeared him to all his church folk'. He, along with wife Elizabeth and other family was buried in the cemetery at St George's church Magill. At a special Vestry meeting held 20 December 1910 it was reported that funds totalling £6.10.3½ were available to produce and install a brass plaque in St John's Church. The wording was agreed upon and so the tablet to perpetuate the name of Canon Honner was duly erected early the following year. It remains a feature of the church to this day.

Alfred Honner was born at St Pancras, London, sixth son of the late Major Robert Honner. The Honner family connection with the British army extended back for centuries. Alfred received his main education in France, originally aiming for a career in medicine. He proved to be a talented sportsman. He arrived in Adelaide together

with his wife, Elizabeth (née Swindley), in 1867 and was ordained there in 1869. His first parish was St Mary's, South Road and in 1872 he took charge of the Parish of St George at Woodforde (later Magill) which incorporated the churches of St Martin's Campbelltown and St John's Morialta (later Norton Summit). Later in the 1880s the church of St Paul at Montacute was also included in the group. Honner was the first priest to lead the church of St John the Evangelist at Norton Summit.

It was reported that in addition to ministering to his extensive parish he '...occupied the pulpit at St John's Church every Sunday afternoon'. His last service was conducted at St John's on the afternoon of 5 September 1909. The newspaper went on to describe his last few days following that service; 'His audience little thought that they were listening to his well-loved voice for the last time. He complained of not feeling well, and upon arriving at his home at Magill he went to his room and never left it again'.

It was reported that he was a much-esteemed member of the Anglican clergy and possessed the rare ability to make friends with all levels of society.

As was the case with many families of that period the Honners were beset with illness and tragedy. Alfred and Elizabeth had five children most of whom did not reach old age. Robert died of cholera in the Magill parsonage in 1874 at six years and Elizabeth died in 1882 at only two days old. Augustus reached thirty-three years and worked at the Broken Hill mines as a secretary in the office but suffered a stroke and died there suddenly in June 1903, leaving a widow and son of only six weeks of age. Charles enlisted as a trooper in the South Australian unit of the Imperial Bushmen's Corps and was subsequently killed in the Boer war. Augustus Thomas Robert Archibald Honner was born in May 1870 when Alfred and Elizabeth held the tenure at South Road, St Mary's. He followed his father's proficiency for sport and later played football for the Magill and Norwood clubs.

It is difficult in this twenty-first century to imagine the difficulties that beset a country priest of the nineteenth who had the responsibility of not just one but four widely dispersed churches. Alfred Honner initially travelled by horseback between his home at St George's Magill to St John's Norton Summit, St Martin's Campbelltown and St Paul's Montacute. In early October 1880 the *Adelaide Observer* reported on a meeting of the Norton Summit church community in the St John's schoolroom, held the previous month and convened to discuss the heavy burden imposed upon their priest. The paper recorded Rev'd Honner's comments and wrote, 'Mr Honner took occasion to express the pleasure it afforded him to meet his congregation in this social manner, and expressed regret that his labours were so arduous, and the districts over which he officiated had so rapidly increased during the last three or four years, that he could not visit his congregation so systematically as he could wish. At the same time, he was always at his post on Sunday and the Thursday evening services, and then he should be glad to be made acquainted with any matters affecting the welfare of his church and congregation'.

Rev'd Honner was quite evidently an honest and humble man, a true servant of God. He absented himself from the meeting 'leaving the matter in their hands without the restraint his presence might lay them under'. It was Proposed by Mr Robert Norton and seconded by Mr Charles Jennings 'That this congregation deeply sympathizes with Mr Honner in the difficult position in which he is now placed, and they wish to assure him that the efforts now being made to obtain for him clerical aid should be accepted by him as an earnest assurance of our desire always to retain his services amongst us'. The meeting unanimously agreed to seek the assistance of a curate. Immediate steps were taken to obtain guarantees from those present and the whole community for the necessary funds. A warden from the Magill church expressed support for the project.

Rev'd Alfred Honner's work and ability was rewarded in 1907 when he was appointed Honorary Canon and member of the Greater Chapter of St Peter's Cathedral in Adelaide.

There is little doubt that Rev'd Honner was very highly regarded, even loved, by his congregations but that did not prevent him running foul of the Bishop on occasion. Bishop Short wrote Alfred Honner a chastising letter in June 1874 during which he complained that '...he was appalled to discover ... that the Rev'd Alfred Honner ... had donned a stole of unusual decorative colour' at the fifth anniversary service of

the laying of St Peter's Cathedral foundation stone (June 1869). Apparently, his chief objection lay not so much in the display of individual discretion by Honner but was '...chiefly on the grounds that such a departure from the orthodox represented 'party badges', the display of which '...tend to separate the clergy from each other'. Short went on to write, 'It has always been my desire to avoid interference with freedom of opinion and Ecclesiastical practice of the clergy, but as Bishop I cannot but view party division in our small brotherhood of clergy as a serious evil'. The Rev'd Michael Whiting notes in his book, *Augustus Short, The Early Years of a Modern Educator, 1802-1847*, that when leaving England to assume the position in Adelaide, Short was mindful of what lay ahead: he, as the bishop, would be responsible for bringing to a colony of the Empire the form and order of his English Church. In this he was not romantic or even idealistic; his approach was much more utilitarian and pragmatic'. So it is evident that he was not willing to tolerate any casual variations.

Following Rev'd Honner's death in 1910, St John's Morialta and St Paul's Montacute first attempted to achieve parish status independent of Magill. Since then, the Adelaide Hills' church district has comprised various combinations. Lenswood, Montacute, Norton Summit and Uraidla have all combined at times for numerical strength. The first parish priest for the combined hills districts and the first resident priest at Norton Summit was the Rev'd Arthur B. W. Everitt who served the hills community from 1910 until his resignation and return to England in 1911.



Norton's Summit township, late 1930s. Mrs Ethel M. Miller was licensee of the Scenic Hotel from 1938 until 1944. At centre is Sutton's house and butcher's shop and at left on Lobethal Road is Tonkin's Norton Summit General Store. ETHS Collection/Brian Causby

CHAPTER 12 - Prominent People of the Parish

Over the long period of 150 years many people have contributed to the Church of St John, Norton Summit, in many varied ways. It is impossible to record or even attempt to acknowledge each individual who has given money, expertise and time. Some remained faithful to the church for their entire lives while others were more transient. The old minutes clearly record some priests' frustrations towards people who did not regularly attend services, whilst comments were made regarding parents who sent their children to Sunday School but never were to be seen at services themselves. In the midst of this moving crowd there were, and always will be, the islands, the rocks, which remain solid and are always to be relied upon to give support and leadership.

A few names of people such as these stand out from the early days. One notable would be Mr Septimus Verinder Pizey who operated a quarry down in the Third Creek valley and was very prominent in the early days of St John's. Despite the fact that his name does not appear on the list of wardens, Septimus Pizey, perhaps more than any other layman, had considerable influence on early church life. He was a true leader until his departure from the district in 1883. Sunday School superintendent, lay reader, choir master, chairman of the popular concerts and evenings in the hall, his influence would have touched the lives of scores of children and adults. In a 'letter to the editor' of a church paper in 1879, he delivered a stinging rebuke to the clergy and officials of St Peter's Cathedral for their lack of organisation in conducting a children's service in the half-completed cathedral. He complained of scant and off-hand treatment towards the hills' children after their long tiring trip by wagon from Norton Summit.

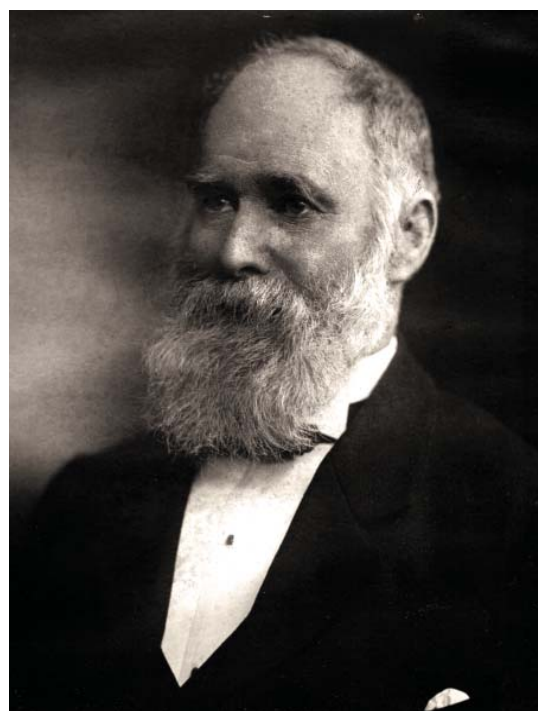
His daughter Lucy Pizey, later Mrs Lucy Maymon Hines, was a very dedicated teacher in the Sunday School, in company with the Misses Elizabeth and Isabella Baker. It has been noted that the descriptive writings of Lucy Pizey proved to be one of the few records of early life in the district.

The work of Mr Alexander Smith of *Willow Leigh*, Norton Summit, was always held in very high regard. In 1913 the parishioners presented him with a Morris Chair, a token of appreciation for 25 years of service to the church. The Vestry meeting of 1923 heard a moving tribute to Mr Smith who had '...passed to his rest after 35 years of service as warden and superintendent of the Sunday School'. A copy of a fine portrait of Alex Smith remains in the vestry to this day.

Later in this history are found the names of people who have served as wardens, both elected by the vestry and



Septimus Verinder Pizey of Willow Leigh, Third Creek, Sunday School superintendent, lay reader and choir-master. SLSA B 29577



nominated by the current incumbent. It can be readily observed that certain names are often repeated amongst the crowd who have collectively given uncountable hours of their lives to serve the church and God.

In later times the names of Douglas and Mary Fletcher are prominent. This couple have devoted themselves to St John's since before their marriage in the church in 1966 and Mary continues her devotion even to this present time. In 1975 she was instrumental in gathering information for a proposed book setting out the history of St John's. She produced a script which has proven to be of immense assistance in the production of this current book.



48 - The Church on the Hill

CHAPTER 13 -

Mothers' Union, Sunday School and other Groups

A branch of The Mothers' Union was formed by Mrs Harmer, wife of the Bishop of Adelaide, in North Adelaide in August 1895. To quote from 'MiaMia' writing in January 1976, 'It was fortunate for the Mothers' Union that Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton came to South Australia as Governor in 1895. His wife, Lady Victoria Buxton, a goddaughter of Queen Victoria, was invited to become President as soon as she arrived in South Australia. In those days, many families moved to the hills during the long hot and dry summer, and the report of the first meeting held concluded by saying that further attempts at organisation would be postponed until residents returned to town for the winter, but Lady Victoria Buxton lost no time. While the governor was at his summer residence at Marble Hill, she was busy in October 1895 organising a branch amongst the mothers in the local parish of St John's, Norton Summit. She gathered 30 members and so it was at Norton Summit that the first branch of the Mothers' Union in South Australia to be independent of the North Adelaide foundation branch, was formed. Regular meetings were held until early 1971 when it was reported that '...the Mothers' Union had now joined in the meeting with St George's Magill'. Then, on the third of May 1972 at a meeting in the church chaired by Mrs Dorothy Cooper, wife of the Rev'd Christopher Cooper, '...Mrs Pellew proposed and Mrs Moulds seconded that St Johns Mothers' Union Norton Summit go into recess until such time as we see a future for it in the district'.



Possibly as some sort of replacement opportunity for the ladies to gather, a Ladies Social Club was established in the early 1970s by Pauline Causby and Marjorie 'Midge' Best. Records from then until April 1980 are sparse. A meeting was held on 8th April of that year with the 'new president' Mrs Pauline Causby in the chair. The club met regularly and contributed greatly to both the social needs of the ladies involved and funds were raised to support the church. This continued until March 2000 when the long serving secretary Mary Fletcher announced to parish council that it was to close due to declining numbers.

The Sunday School has a spasmodic history, at times flourishing and at other times not operating at all due to lack of numbers. Many dedicated volunteers have taught and taken responsibility for the running of the Sunday School. Lessons were first held in the attics at *Morialta* homestead, then in the original hall/rectory, the church and finally in the transportable building which provided space for the activities until the Sunday School finally closed in the mid-1990s. A 'kids' service was conducted then by the Rev'd Andrew Mintern assisted by his wife, Anne Roder, both being musically talented.

Mrs. Madelon Thomas

The Girls' Friendly Society
MEMBER'S CARD.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. —GAL. VI., 2.

Blessed are the pure in heart.—S. MATT. v., 8.

Diocese *Adelaide*
Branch *Marialta Norton Summit*
Parish *Morialta*

Member's Name *Beatrice Alice Moulds*
Home Associate *Mrs Buxton*
Address *Norton Summit*
Date of Admission *14 12-1919*

J.M. & G.C. Bishop/Beatrice A. Rother Collection

This was very informal, noisy and was what would in later years be called 'messy church'. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all, even the older members of the congregation. Sadly, this too ceased when Andrew and Anne left the parish to take up ministry at St Chad's Fullarton.

A branch of the Girls' Friendly Society was formed in 1910 and ran for many years. During the 1930s the Rev'd T. Percy Wood reactivated the Norton Summit Literary Society which had declined in the years following World War I.

The Norton Summit Music Society developed from a couple of very successful Sunday afternoon concerts held in the church in 1998. After a stumbling start, a committee was eventually formed by Parish Council in May 1999. It comprised Mary Playford-Snarskis, Diana Wallfried, Pauline Gambley, Deane Miller and John Venus as convenor. Successful concerts were staged during 1999 and 2000 but ceased in 2001. In February 2002 the parish council was told that '...arrangements for the music society are too difficult for one person. Some of the original committee have moved on' and so sadly no further concerts were held. However, in November 2022 Mr Sebastian Phlox, an organist who plays for the Church of the Epiphany at Crafers organised a new concert, so there is hope for the future.

CHAPTER 14 - From the Registers: Baptisms, Weddings and Burials.

It was a big day on Thursday 16th January 1873 as four Suttons and three Channing children were baptised in the one day. The community had obviously been waiting for the new church to be opened. The first baptism recorded in the register, on 16th January 1873, was that of Ethel Elizabeth Sutton, daughter of William and Elizabeth Sutton, whose occupation is listed as 'gardeners', something of the norm in Norton Summit of that time. Ethel was born on 29th July 1872. She was baptised by the Rev'd Alfred Honner, as were all of that pioneering group. From Ethel Sutton until the end of the year 2020 there were a further 1067 children and adults baptised in that beautiful Parisian font.

The first marriage was conducted in the church on 28th September 1873 by Rev'd Alfred Honner between Robert Thomas Barron, bootmaker, and Selinah Harriett Mander, spinster. The occupations of these early pioneers reveal much about the old hills' community. Occupations such as gardeners, labourers, wood splitters and tradespeople were the backbone of the community. There was no place in those early days of the ranges for what are termed 'white collar' jobs. The books tell us that so far there have been a further four hundred and ninety nine marriages recorded.

There have been at least two hundred and twenty four funerals conducted by clergy within the church and also in various other locations. Unfortunately, it is impossible to find accurate figures because proper records only exist from 1957 onwards. Prior to that time the records were kept in the various vestry books of the churches which formed part of the parish. These changed from time to time and in 1955 the records at St Paul's Montacute were destroyed when the church was burnt in the fires of that year.

These historic registers contain a succession of family names and district addresses still well known to this day.

APPENDIX 1

List of Priests who have served St John's Church

1872-1909	Canon Alfred Honner
1910-1911	A. W. B. Everitt
1911-1914	F. G. C. Sewell
1914-1920	J. J. Emery
1920-1927	J. S. W. Coles
1927-1928	A. S. Rowe
1928-1929	S. T. Longman
1930-1939	T. P. Wood
1939-1943	H. Woolnough
1944-1948	W. B. Kenworthy
1949-1953	D. Stuart-Fox
1953-1956	C. W. Wooley
1957-1961	F. J. Mayger
1961-1964	C. Cooper
1964-1966	J. Collas
1966-1967	H. J. C. Hughes
1968-1973	C. Cooper
1974-1979	R. E. Pocock
1979-1990	G. L. Dent
1990-1994	A. C. Cumming
1994-1997	A. S. Wurm
1994-1997	A. W. Mintern
1997-1998	J. H. Stephenson
1997-1998	B. A. Paull-Hunt
1998-2003	A. W. Linton
2005-2013	T. A. Sherwell
2013-	J. W. Venus

APPENDIX 2 - List of Wardens

Priest's Warden

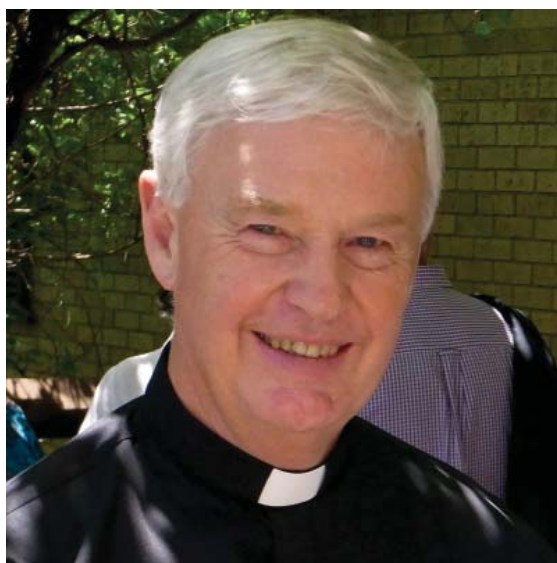
The Hon. John Baker 1873-76
R. Ackland 1876-77
R. Sharp 1877-79
C. Jennings Snr 1879-80
F. I. Bishop 1880-84
A. Baker 1884-96
W. Watkins 1896-97
J. Moulds Jnr 1897-1905
C. H. Bishop 1905-08
W. Watkins 1908-12
A. Shiell 1912-13
No Warden appointed 1913-16
J. W. Makings 1916-19
F. C. Rother 1919-20
A. Hockham 1920-22
J. H. Noon 1922-23
No Warden appointed 1923-24
Alex Smith Jnr 1924-29
A. Smith 1930-39
L. H. Moulds 1940-56
D. T. Thane 1957
I. Moulds 1958- 64
M. M. Cranwell 1965-73
I. Moulds 1974
T. Best 1975- 76
J. Parfitt 1978-82
D. H. Fletcher 1983-92
W. Stewart 1993
M. I. Playford-Snarskis 1994-99
D. Burrow 2000- 01
R. A. Blackwell 2003 -06
J. W. Venus 2007
R. A. Blackwell 2008
E. Bourne 2009-2010
D. H. Fletcher 2011
R. A. Blackwell 2012
M. R. Fletcher 2014-18
R. A. Blackwell 2019- 22

Peoples' Warden

John Giles 1873-76
G. Best 1876-77
F. I. Bishop 1877-80
C. Jennings Snr 1880-81
H. Beasley 1881-83
J. J. Bishop 1883-84
A. Hastings 1884
A. Aiston September 1884
J. A. Muirhead 1885-87
Mr Martin 1887-88
W. Pound 1888-89
Alex Smith 1889-1923
Arthur Smith 1923-24
L. Moulds 1924-37
E. L. Giles 1938-45
A. E. Cranwell 1946-54
H. Basford / D. Lowe 1955
D. T. Thane 1956
No Warden appointed 1957
Priest appointed J. Pellew 1957-64
No Warden appointed 1965
R. R. Ekin-Smyth 1966-67
I. Cuthbertson 1968-69
Mrs P. Causby 1971-72
Mrs E. M. I. Abbs 1973
M. M. Cranwell 1974
D. Pellew 1975
P. Causby 1976
D. H. Fletcher 1977-79
R. Austin 1980-86
N. Otway 1987-88
J. Catherwood 1989-91
P. Parfitt 1992-95
D. H. Fletcher 1996
J. W. Venus 1999- 2006
R. A. Blackwell 2007
J. W. Venus 2008
R. A. Blackwell 2009-10
E. Bourne 2011-16
M. Duncan 2017-22

APPENDIX 3- Gifts and Memorials

Communion plate	- Mr E. Stirling and old Colonists in England
The font	- The Baker family
The East window	- Mr H. L. Vosz
The original altar	- Mr Mayfield (Note: present altar was inherited from St Stephen's Church, Uraidla)
Altar linen	- Mrs H. Walters
Communion Plate	- Messrs Paxton, Stirling and old colonists.
Chancel tiles	- Mr H. Brown
Chairs	- Hon. Thomas Elder MLC
Mats	- Mrs Hart
Cast altar rails	- Mr M. Wyatt
Brass altar rails (now enclosing the organ)	- Memorial to Mr Alexander Smith 1923
Reading desk	- Mr M. Debney
Priest desk	- Lady Tennyson 1899-1903
Original harmonium	- Mr A. Forster
Lamps	- Mr Harrold and F. and S. Sache
Books	- Mrs Hagen
Bell	- Mr George Fife Angas
Reredos	- Lady Dugan, in memory of her mother 1939. (Later damaged by termites and removed)
Lectern Eagle	- Sir Malcolm Barclay-Harvey 1945
Original nave windows	- Mrs Isabella Baker
Four memorial windows	- Estate of Isabella Morrison Baker
Litany desk	- Mrs Isabella Baker
Brass hymn board	- Mr and Mrs Alex Smith 1912
Collection plates brass (2)	- B. M. Basford 1943
Chalice and patten	- Jubilee 1955
Altar Service book	- Florence Wightman (memorial to William Wightman) - 80th anniversary of St John's
Altar cross	- Memorial to J. and M. A. Pinchbeck, married February 1877
Lectern Bible	- E. C. Cranwell 1970
Pump organ	- I. Moulds 1975
Smenge pipe organ	- Mr Deane Miller
Pew heaters	- Mrs Doris Allmond (memorial to parents John William and Flora Makings)
Sanctuary lamp	- Mrs T. A. Ekin-Smyth (memorial to Raymond R. Ekin-Smyth)
Processional cross	- Mrs Doris Allmond (Mothers' Union)
Bowl (copper) in baptismal font	- Memorial to Mrs Doris Allmond
Paschal candle stand	- Venus family (memorial to G. E. Venus 1901-1996)



The Reverend J. W. Venus

A fourth generation Anglo-Celtic Australian John was called to ordination in the Anglican Church after many years as a professional photographer and viticulturalist/winemaker. After qualifying for a Bachelor of Theology and whilst awaiting the opportunity for ordination he completed a further degree of Bachelor of Arts, majoring in history, which has always been a strong interest. So it has been something of a labour of love to have been able to produce this little book celebrating the first 150 years of the unique and beautiful little 'Church on the Hill'.