

SCOTS-MEMORIAL UNITING CHURCH, HOBART

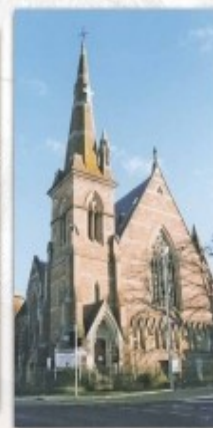
THERE WERE DIVISIONS WITHIN THE WORLD-WIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ESPECIALLY OVER THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE STATE, AND OTHER NON-CHURCH BODIES, COULD INTERFERE IN THE CONDUCT OF THE PRESBYTERIES (GOVERNING BODIES), ESPECIALLY IN THE SELECTION OF A PASTOR TO MINISTER TO THE NEEDS OF THE CONGREGATION.

In 1843 these disagreements came to a head in Scotland, with the formation of a special group known as the Free Presbyterian Church. At first the Presbyterians in Tasmania saw no need to follow the lead of some of their fellow-worshippers in the Mother land, but ultimately (in August 1852) a Free Presbyterian Church (*Chalmers Church*) was established in Hobart – in Bathurst Street, at the corner of Harrington Street. There were moves from the 1880s onwards to bring the two arms of Presbyterianism together, but these did not reach finality until 1936, when the two congregations – St Andrew's and Chalmers, became one church – SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Chalmers building was demolished in 1955. With the institution of Church Union in 1977, whereby the Methodist, many of the Presbyterian and most of the Congregational Churches became the Uniting Church in Australia, this Church came within one



St. Andrew's became Scots Church after amalgamation with Chalmers Free Church in 1936



Memorial Congregational Church, corner Elizabeth and Brisbane Streets Hobart



Davey Street Congregational Church



Scots Church (right of photo) in Hobart Town 1877, courtesy of the W L Croxall Library, Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office

Central Parish of the Uniting Churches. Following the sale of Memorial Congregational Church on the corner of Elizabeth and Brisbane Streets, and their congregation moving to Scots, the congregation today is known as Scots-Memorial Congregation.

The Davey Street Congregational Church had closed in 1973 and amalgamated with Memorial. Consequently the current congregation which meets on the site has descended from two Congregational and two Presbyterian churches.

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IN 1837 THE REV JOHN LILLIE BECAME THE SECOND SETTLED MINISTER. By 1840 the congregation had outgrown even this Church, and a second Presbyterian Church, St John's in Macquarie Street, was opened in 1843. It was traditional at the time for the first Presbyterian Church in any one town to be known as Scots (Or "the Scotch Church", in the mouths of Englishmen) but on the opening of a second Church this one became St. Andrews. It maintained that name until 1936, when Chalmers Free Presbyterian and St Andrews united, when it returned to the name "Scots".

ON 28 AUGUST 1829 THE CONVICT SHIP YORK ARRIVED IN HOBART TOWN having amongst its cargo six turret clocks manufactured by Thwaites and Reed in London; these were available for the Lieutenant Governor to distribute amongst "deserving Churches" at his discretion. Five of them were ultimately erected in Anglican Churches - Scots, or, as it became St Andrews, was the only non-Anglican church to benefit. The clock is still in the position to which it was elevated. It is no longer dependent upon spring mechanisms (which, in the other five, are still providing mechanical force), but has been supplied with an electric motor. But it has been providing the people of Hobart with the correct time for over 178 years. It predates the clock on the Palace of Westminster in London by 30 years.

Early Presbyterian Churches were (unlike the Wesleyan Methodists) somewhat equivocal about music. An official activated a tuning fork to



Chalmers Free Church and Massie Harrington Street, Hobart Town (abolished in 1955)

give the key for the chanting of the metrical psalms, but there were no church organs. St. Andrews broke with this tradition in 1859 when it installed the present organ, built by Charles Brindley of Sheffield, England. It was not till 1866, some seven years later, that the mother Church in Scotland lifted its ban on Church organs. St Andrew's organ was the largest in any church in Australia when it was installed. It was the first organ in Australia that departed from traditional English organ-building traditions. Instead, it followed the developments of the German organ builder, Edmund Schulze, who provided for a much richer variety of tones, in keeping with the Romantic movement of the time.



Scots Memorial Turret clock



Pulpit in Scots Memorial as it is today, with church organ hidden behind large ornate screens



Organ in the Memorial Congregational Church, corner Elizabeth and Brisbane Streets, Hobart

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This site was the starting point for the establishment and expansion of the Presbyterian form of worship in Tasmania. People of Scottish birth, or descent, came together in 1821 and agreed to ask the Scottish United Associate Presbytery in Edinburgh (a breakaway group from the official Church of Scotland) to send a minister to Hobart Town.

THE REVEREND ARCHIBALD MACARTHUR arrived in the Colony of Van Diemen's Land in December 1823, and began his ministry by preaching at a shed at the Women's Prison in Hobart (corner of Macquarie and Murray Streets) early in 1824. That location is marked by a plaque to this day. MacArthur was soon to be the Minister of the Scots Church erected here in Bathurst Street, and opened for worship in September 1824. The building still exists, and serves the needs of this Church as an office and meeting place, at the rear (nearer Melville Street than Bathurst Street). It is now known as St. Andrew's Hall.

The Scottish people of Hobart Town, and others of the Presbyterian persuasion, soon found that the "little stone kirk" was too small



Reverend Archibald MacArthur



Original "little stone kirk"



Founding stone 1822



Rare stained glass, originally from Chalmers Free Church



Scots Memorial Uniting Church today



Reverend John Lillie - St. Andrew's 1837-1859



Interior photograph of stairwell and vestibule, noting the lead covered stairs, added so convicts would not ruin the woodwork

The ministry of the Rev Archibald MacArthur did not survive till that date. He was obliged to resign, it having been alleged that he had been guilty of making

an inappropriate approach to Margaret, the wife of one of the leading elders of the Church, Dr Adam Turnbull. Turnbull was also a powerful local official of the Van Diemonian government (MacArthur is reported to have attempted to kiss Mrs Turnbull).



Colonial pews in Scots-Memorial Uniting Church

for their needs. The foundation stone for the present Church - the building occupying the more prominent part of the city block - was laid in April 1834 by the Lieutenant-Governor, Colonel Arthur, and the building opened for worship, on 26 June 1836, with the New South Wales Presbyterian preacher the Rev. John Dunmore Lang leading the service.