




Speech by

Ian Berry

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Wednesday, 31 October 2012

SILKSTONE BAPTIST CHURCH

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (12.35 am): On Saturday, 27 October 2012 it was a pleasure to have attended the Silkstone Baptist Church celebration for 100 years of service to Silkstone and its surrounding areas. A venerable cornerstone of the community, the Silkstone Baptist Church has helped countless people overcome adversity in their lives and has generously given to those in need. It was an honour to have been present for such a momentous milestone in the church's history. Both Councillor Bruce Casas of the Ipswich City Council and I were privileged to give a greeting message to the Baptist Silkstone community.

The church first started on 11 November 1911 when a group of interested deacons and lay preachers of the Ipswich Baptist Church met to discuss the prospects of opening a Baptist work in Silkstone. A few short months later the first church services were being conducted in March 1912. By the end of the year a wooden church building was erected on the current site of the church today for a total cost of \$1,000 at the time.

During the late 1920s the church recorded the greatest periods of growth, both spiritually and materially. The congregation had a vision of expanding the church to a brick building capable of seating their increasing needs, beginning work in 1928. By 1929 the Baptist Tabernacle, as it was originally known, was complete and ready to seat 350 people. In 1967 a Christian education block was erected. In 1978 the school hall was expanded, and in 1981 a new front porch was added to the main tabernacle building creating the church today as its followers know it.

The church has offered many outreach programs over its life including, more recently, support for widows and a counselling ministry. During the war years the church kept contact with local men serving in the forces at home and overseas, also supporting Baptists in England through funds such as the Bombed Baptists of Britain Appeal. Throughout Australia the immediate postwar years were dedicated to returning to normalcy and consolidation, and during this period the church kept up its support of war sufferers contributing to the Money for Food for Britain scheme.

This event had other surprises for me. Ian Smallbone and his band Family performed for the parishioners. Ian and I shared a grade 7 teacher together. It was comforting that his memory was in fine form, as I thought we met each other in grade 4. I commend Senior Pastor Reverend Daryl Rossow and his leadership team on the hard work that they have put into the church. In particular, I note the substantial contribution of the steering committee under the guidance of Mr Ken Clarke. Ken's wife, Helen, should be also commended for her perseverance over the many years in the organisation of this momentous event. For over 100 years Silkstone Baptist Church has enriched the lives of many people in the local community and the devotion of its members, I am sure, will see the church strongly through another 100 years.