CHRIST CHURCH LOW HEAD TASMANIA

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- **Circa 1877** –

The Anglican Parish of George Town began in 1841 with the appointment of the first incumbent, the Reverend J Walker.

From the late 1850's onwards Anglican services were conducted by Rev. John Fereday in a room at the Pilot Station, generously provided by the Launceston Marine Board. Rev. Fereday also conducted a part time school there for the children of Pilots and other residents.

During the 1870's the population of Low Head increased considerably, brought about by the establishment of the Bass Strait Electric Telegraph Cable, which entered the sea at East Beach. The majority of the residents were Anglicans who felt that a local church building was desirable. Mr & Mrs James Long who farmed most of the Low Head peninsular, donated the necessary land and also helped financially in other ways, resulting in this beautiful little church being built in **1877**.

The first recorded wedding in the church was when Robert Darby married Sarah Jane Huxtable on 12th July 1879. An earlier wedding was that of Mr & Mrs Long's daughter, Louisa Maria to W.P. Coulson at "Bermondsey Cottage on the 9th September 1872.

It was 5 years later that the Church was consecrated, although it had been used regularly in the meantime.

The consecration service was conducted by Bishop Sandford on 20th March 1884. Assisting were Archdeacon Hales, Canon Brownrigg and Rev. Joshua Morling (rector of George Town). The little church which seats 100 was crowded. Christ Church, since the consecration, has only been used for Anglican services, but has been both attended and financially assisted over the years by people of other denominations, particularly from among holiday visitors. Services are usually conducted by the rector of the parish, but much help has been given when needed by other Anglican Clergy. Notable past clergy have been the late Rev. Max Hughes, owner of a holiday cottage nearby, and the late Rev. McKean, who retired to Low Head.

The latter gentleman's widow, Mrs Mary McKean, was a regular communicant at Christ Church.

Today's regular services attract a congregation of around 20, but at Christmas and Easter this is always exceeded. Most of these additional people are folk who have holiday homes at Low Head.

A number of laymen have given good service in many ways, but two names are outstanding. For nearly thirty years Steven Butler was senior Churchwarden, never missing a service except when too ill to attend. During the last few months of his life he continued to attend services and read the lessons in spite of great physical difficulties. "Steve" was a true Christian gentleman, loved by all who met him. His wife, Winifred, served the church equally well as an organist, providing and arranging flowers and church cleaning. These good and necessary works she continued until her recent passing. The beautiful brass candlesticks on the Alter are a memorial to them.

The other outstanding name is Gunn. For many years Mr John Gunn and his son Robert have very generously seen to all the maintenance of the building, which is largely the reason why it is in such good order after more than 128 years of use. Recent works have included a new roof and re-paint inside and out, and a fire control system.

The stained glass window behind the Altar is in memory of two sisters, Mrs Gee and Mrs Gunn, both of whom had many years of association with Christ Church. The window in the west end is in memory of Mrs Walter Perrin who first worshipped here over one hundred years ago. Her daughter, Mrs Nelly Husband who donated the window, lived in Launceston.

Present day services are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, and at Easter commencing at 9:00 a.m. and Christmas Day at 9:30 a.m.

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