

Chronology of Epping SDA Church

Date	Event
Pre July 1 1902	Establishment of Epping Church in first church building after meetings by Brother G W Tadich – 35+ members baptised
9-19 Oct 1902	Camp-meeting – Corndale, Epping and Goulburn churches admitted to NSW Conference
1909	Location of church on north side of Carlingford Road, on corner of Pennant Parade, given in Sands Directory
23 June 1914	First church burned

The local newspaper, *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate*, gives some extra detail and colour to the story:

CHURCH BURNT DOWN

The church of the Seventh Day Adventists at Carlingford, near Epping, was burnt down on Tuesday night. The building was of weatherboard, with an iron roof, and measured about 40 feet by 25 feet. It had just been decorated for Miss Mobbs' wedding, fixed for the next day, and the decorators left the church at 10 p.m., leaving everything apparently all right. About half an hour later, Mr. Rhodes¹, who lives about 500 yards away from the church, noticed a glare, and saw that the church was on fire. He gave the alarm, and he and Mr. Sonter were about the first to arrive at the scene of the conflagration. The flames had secured too great a hold of the building for anything to be done, and as there no fire appliances and no water available nothing was attempted. In a short while, the building and all its contents, including an organ, were destroyed. The church was built by volunteer labour; and was not insured. The loss is estimated at £200.²

July 1914	Plans to build new church
26 January 1915	Second church built

The second church

Within a fortnight of the disaster, the nineteen members held a business meeting and planned the rebuilding of the church. Offerings and pledges were made and a block of ground on the Nevertire Estate, the present site, then valued at ninety pounds, was given by Sister A J Mobbs and her son Lewis³. Six months later, on the January 26 Australia Day holiday, a "building bee" consisting of all the brethren of the Epping church and a number from other suburban churches making twenty five in all, met at the site and by the end of that "hottest day of the

¹ Mr Rhodes was resident in Willoughby Street, Sands' Directory 1914, page 1548. He had a house in Orchard Street, Epping, which is still there: *Epping Presbyterian Church 1894-1994*, page 12.

² *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate*, Saturday June 27, 1914, page 6.

³ Lewis Mobbs was born in 1884 (NSW Register of Births, deaths and Marriages) and died at Eraring via Dora Creek on April 27 1967 (Probate Index for NSW, 1967, No 641860).

year” had erected the greater part of the building. It was neatly finished and ready for dedication a few days before the service took place on Sunday April 18 1915.

Pastor A H White preached the dedicatory sermon from I Chronicles 28:20: “*And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.*” Pastor W W Fletcher offered the dedicatory prayer.

The treasurer’s report showed that 147 pounds 15 shillings and 10 pence had been expended. Besides the gifts of the ground, labour, paint and so on, 86 pounds 17 shillings and 3 pence had been given in cash by the members and local friends. The debit of 60 pounds 18 shillings and 7 pence was a little further reduced by the offering made, which was taken up during the singing of a hymn by a company of children.

1920s Church debt paid off

When Sydney Patrick wrote: “This debt was finally cleared in 1922 by a sum of 100 pounds left in a bequest to the church by a Mr Chee, a Chinese fruit agent in Sydney.”⁴, it is likely that this date should be some years later and that the benefactor was in fact Mr William Chie, whose obituary appeared in the *Australasian Record* written by E G Whittaker:

*William Chie, aged sixty-three, died at his residence, Carlingford Road, Epping, on Sunday, September 13, 1925. Brother Chie was one of the pioneer members of the Epping church, having been associated with the message for about twenty years. His health had been somewhat indifferent for some time. He leaves a wife to mourn her loss. We laid him to rest in the Carlingford Cemetery. In the service conducted at his house, his favourite hymn was sung; “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh! What a foretaste of glory divine.”*⁵

William Chie was the son of John Chi, a dairy farmer at Avondale, near Wollongong, and his wife Margaret (nee Miller). William and his wife Mary Jane (nee Miller) had been married for 42 years and had two sons, both of whom predeceased their father. His death certificate gives his occupation as “poultry farmer” but he had a productive orchard in Pennant Parade, between Carlingford Road and the Karonga School.⁶ On this orchard he grew fine apricots.⁷ William Chie resided in a house which he had named “Avondale”, near to Annie Mobbs’ “Nevertire”, between Ryde Road and Midson Road.⁸

20 January 1924	Church picnic - Pr Cozens mentioned
1929-30	Church building modified
1933-1948	Church used as Sunday School by Church of England
1943	Church painted by Brother Mills at cost of \$32

⁴ Souvenir Programme, Official Opening of the Epping Seventh Day Adventist Church, 17th and 18th June 1961.

⁵ *Australasian Record*, 12 October 1925, page 7.

⁶ Alex McAndrew: *An ABC of Epping, A Handbook for Residents*, page 262. This is confirmed by entries in the *Sands Directory*.

⁷ *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers’ Advocate*, October 1898.

⁸ *Sands’ Directory* 1924, page 284.

1946	Renovations and modifications to church, including new blinds
1948	Carpet, new table cloth and palms purchased
1951 or 1952	Church moved to back of block
1956	Fundraising for new church begun
1956-1961	Building of new church from plans by Douglas Forsyth-Evans
17 & 18 Jun 1961	Official Opening and Dedication of new church
21 Jun 1961	First official function in new church – marriage of Maree Dawes and Robert Halliday
27 March 1965	Baptism of 10 young people by Pr S M Uttley, Conference President
14 May 1966	Visitors Day
Sept 1969	Need for new hall; first fundraising – Garden Fete
Sept 1974	Demolition of old church/hall by voluntary labour
	Children's SS meets at home of Gwen Carter in Midson Rd
Dec 1974	Children's SS moves into new rooms
22 Nov 1975	Official opening of new hall by Pr Claude Judd, Conference President
14 Oct 1978	Nestor House weekend
May 1979	Mission by David Coltheart, Epping's pastor
1970's & 80's	Hall regularly used for 5 Day Plans, Nutrition Schools, and Stress Management
	Annual Art Shows
	Friday Nite Club
Oct-Nov 1999	'Net '99'per video
May 2000	'Jesus 2000' at Conference Office
6 July 2002	Special day before cessation of services
1 March 2003	First service by Chinese Church members