

# NEW BAPTIST CHURCH OPENED AT LAIDLEY

LAIDLEY, Sept. 6.—The opening and dedication of the new Baptist Church on Saturday marked the establishment of the denomination in Laidley, and the final removal from Blenheim where it was established 72 years ago.

The ceremony, which took the form of a church service, was conducted by Rev. D. Dunlop, who welcomed the visitors and introduced Rev. F. T. Smith (vice - President Baptist Union). After receiving the key from the builder (Mr. F. Mutzelburg), he performed the official opening.

During the service which followed, Mr. H. Mutzelburg read a large number of greetings from churches throughout the State. To these were added the personal congratulations of visiting Baptist ministers and local ministers of other denominations.

Cr. G. Waller (Chairman of the Laidley Shire Council) said that he and his council viewed with approval the erection of such a splendid building in the town, and expressed his appreciation of the initiative and industry shown by all who had participated. He also made a special reference to the members of the Mutzelburg and Jackwitz families, and the consistency with which their names had been connected with forward moves by the Baptist Church in this district. He was supported by Mr. G. Chaik, M.L.A.

Rev. D. A. Brown (Youth Director) said that the Baptist Church was proud of the fact that it numbered among its supporters many young people whose allegiance did not abate as they reached maturity. He observed that this was certainly true of Laidley.

Mrs. F. T. Smith (President of the Baptist Ladies' Union) commended the members of the guild for their contributions, both in goods and labour.

## "Importance Of Church Work"

In his address, Mr. Smith stressed the difference made by religion in the community, and stressed the importance of church work to the individual. He gave interesting accounts of the

interesting accounts of the Roman Empire before the coming of Christianity, and compared conditions then with those which were taken for granted today.

The Treasurer (Mr. A. Mutzelburg) in tracing the history of the faith in the district, said that in 1882 the first Baptist meeting was held in the home of J. Mutzelburg on Sandy Creek, now known as Blenheim. In 1883 the first church, a 26 x 14ft. structure, with a gallery, was built on the property of H. Jackwitz, where it claimed an ever-increasing number of supporters, until in 1890 it was destroyed by fire.

In the same year a second church was erected in the Blenheim District on property donated by F. Mutzelburg and S. Dart, and in 1907 a larger building was found necessary to house the growing number of adherents, and a 40ft. x 23 ft. church with gallery was erected at a cost of £278/- 13/6.

This church continued in regular use by the entire Laidley district until 1952, when the £1392/- 19/4 Baptist Hall was erected in Laidley in 23 days of voluntary labour. This building was designed to be converted for use as a church as needed, and thus catered for the worshippers of the town and its immediate environs at an evening service.

## Cost Of £3500

The debt on opening day (September 4, 1952) was £368, but it was cleared 15 months later. Almost immediately Baptist followers began discussions on the site for a new central church. Rev. D. A. Dunlop presented a map of the district, including Hatton Vale, Plainland, Forest Hill, Laidley, Mulgowie, Laidley Creek West, Blenheim, and Mt. Berryman and gave details of attendances, milages and other relevant information. Eventually, in February, 1954, it was decided to close the Blenheim

February, 1954, it was decided to close the Blenheim morning services and commence at Laidley in addition to the evening service, and to proceed with the building of the new church, at an estimated cost of £3500, on land adjacent to the hall. In March work on this project was commenced.

The 2000 square feet wooden building, designed by Mr. F. Mutzelburg, with the blue-print by his son, Mr. M. Mutzelburg (Margate), is on brick foundations, with a brick front. A feature of the interior is the tiled baptistry, with a large lead-light window and a scene of the River Jordan behind. Fluorescent lighting has been installed and there is seating accommodation for more than 350 people, which, incidentally, proved quite inadequate for the opening gathering.

The total cost of the completed church was £3139/10/2; £368/9/10 below the estimated amount, a circumstance directly attributable to the fact that during operations 46 voluntary helpers came forward.

Some gave from 25 to 30 days of free labour, as well as providing transport and

plant free of charge in their efforts to keep costs at a minimum.

## Financial Statement

The Treasurer furnished the following financial statement — Income: 28 donations, £1749; thanks offering, £34/2/-; sale of timber and iron, old church, Blenheim, £322/7/6; total cash received, £2105/9/8; loan (interest free for two years, by church members), £1547/10/-; total income, £3517/3/8. Expenditure: Cost of completed church, £3139/10/2; cost of manse removal, £200; re-erection of portion of manse at present site, plus other costs amounting to £191/11/-; total cost of manse, £391/11/-; total expenditure, £3517/3/8.

Goods donated amounted to £212/15/6.