

IRON HALL
125 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY
1890—2015



WELCOME

Throughout this year we have been celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Iron hall. We have been doing this in a number of ways – special ministry meetings, a gospel mission, and having special events aimed at the children of the area.

As we near the end of the year of celebration we are having a Praise Service and thought it appropriate to publish a book which will reflect the History of the Hall, remember some of the important landmarks in the history of our Hall, and also show some of the events of the year.

We trust you find this “look back” interesting and may recognise some “old faces” or indeed recognise yourself from 10, 20, 30 or more years ago.

Can I thank all those who contributed pictures, helped with the “History”, shared their memories and pulled the script together. It is a blessing to be able to look back and thank God for His goodness to us.

We also look forward to continuing the Work of our Lord in this area and pray that we shall see the work prosper to the Glory of God.

TREVOR POLLEY
CHURCH SECRETARY

KEY EVENTS • AROUND • — 1890 —



1886

Pemberton Medicine Company was founded in Atlanta, Georgia. It's name was later changed to Coca Cola.



1889

300m high Eiffel Tower officially opened in Paris.



1890

The longest bridge in Great Britain, The Forth Bridge in Scotland is opened by the Prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VII



1888

Foundation of the English Football League

1888

Prince of Wales opens the first Underground Station at Stockwell, South London.



1890

Iron Mission Hall is Founded on Templemore Avenue.

1888

Belfast granted City status by Queen Victoria.



KEY EVENTS • AROUND • — 1890 —

JOHN & CHRISTINE TAYLOR

IT IS WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE THAT WE AS A FELLOWSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE LOOK BACK OVER THE LAST 125 YEARS OF THE WORK AND WITNESS OF THE IRON HALL.



So much has been accomplished over all those years, and although there have been many changes in so many different ways, our unchanging God has remained forever faithful.

While we look back over all those years of work for the sake of Christ and His Gospel, it is so important that what has been achieved in the past does not become an anchor to hold us back, but that it is an incentive for the church to step out into the future, and to continue the work that God has called us to do, until Jesus comes for us, or else calls us home. It would be a tragedy for any local church to rest on its laurels, or to dwell so much in the past, that we miss the opportunities that God has for us in the present and for the future.

We must retain our passion for the souls of others, and we must never lose our vision for the world in which we live, that has little or no interest in the work of God.

“...WE MUST RETAIN OUR PASSION FOR THE SOULS OF OTHERS, AND WE MUST NEVER LOSE OUR VISION FOR THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE, THAT HAS LITTLE OR NO INTEREST IN THE WORK OF GOD...”

And we must minister especially to this local community; for that is where God has placed us, and that is something we must never forget.

Of course the days in which we live are difficult, spiritually speaking, and whilst there are often discouragements and setbacks in the work that we do, we must keep pressing on, and we must seek the help of God to see the work done for His Glory.

IN PSALM 85V6 THE PSALMIST CRIES OUT – “WILT THOU NOT REVIVE US AGAIN: THAT THY PEOPLE MAY REJOICE IN THEE?”

When you consider this Psalm, you will note that the title of the Psalm ascribes it to the Sons of Korah, and as you read the Psalm you can see that the psalmist is reflecting on the past, and he is crying out for God to intervene in the situation that he and others were facing.

As he reflects on the past he remembers very vividly the blessings of God. He could think of all that had happened in the past and say that the Lord had been favourable unto the land. God had looked upon His people with great favour and He had undertaken for them in so many different ways.

He had led them and fed them and they had lacked nothing from the hand of God.

Despite their times of rebellion, when they had forsaken Him, God had not forsaken them and He had blessed them abundantly.

However that was all in the past. As we think of the past, both in this local church and also in the land in which we live, God has been favourable to us too. He has blessed the preaching of the Gospel; He has blessed the witness of His people; He has established so many local churches throughout this land, and he has been pleased to call to Himself so many people whom He has sent out throughout the world, to take the Gospel.

When we think of all the blessings of God in the past, we could say: “How good is the God we adore!”

But then in Psalm 85, as the Psalmist reflects on the present he could see apathy and spiritual decline and it greatly concerned him.

He realized that the blessings of the past would not suffice for the present. Things had changed and the people's relationship with God had turned sour.

“AS WE LOOK BACK OVER THE LAST ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY FIVE YEARS AND AS WE FACE THE FUTURE, WE SAY WITH THE WORDS OF THE HYMN WRITER: WE PRAISE YOU FOR ALL THAT IS PAST, AND TRUST YOU FOR ALL THAT IS TO COME!

God was angry with them because they had taken Him for granted and they had forsaken His ways.

We hear the cry come from the heart of the Psalmist – Wilt Thou not revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?

That ought to be the cry of our hearts too, and it ought to be, not only the cry of God's people who meet in the Iron Hall, but the cry of all God's people everywhere, in this land and across our nation. We desperately need the presence and the power of God to be evident in these days in which we live.

Our land in the past has been so blessed of God, and yet it seems outwardly at least, that what we see today, are days of spiritual decline, and we seem to have become so self sufficient that we feel no need of God.

IN PSALM 85V7 THE PSALMIST ALSO SAYS: “SHOW US THY MERCY, O LORD, AND GRANT US THY SALVATION!”

As a fellowship, let's reflect on the past and give God thanks for all that has taken place for His Glory, but let's not rest on our laurels and let's not take God for granted. Let's bow humbly at His feet again and, in heartfelt earnest prayer, join with the psalmist as we cry out:

“Wilt Thou not revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee? Show us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation!”

As we look back over the last one hundred and twenty five years and face the future, we say with the words of the hymn writer: “We praise you for all that is past, and trust you for all that is to come!”

**JOHN TAYLOR
PASTOR**

CHANGING FACES OF IRON HALL



1900's
Packed Iron Hall
during the 1900's

1966
Picture from
City Week - April 1966

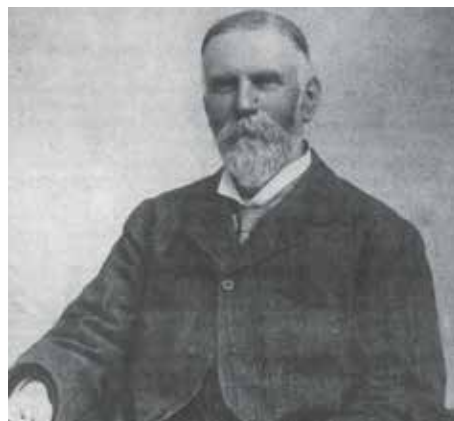




THE HISTORY OF IRON HALL

There is an interesting historical connection between the Iron Hall and the infamous St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France. When Protestantism was introduced to France between 1520 and 1523, many members of the nobility, the intellectual classes, and the middle class accepted its principles. At first the new religious group enjoyed royal protection, but the rise in the number of French Protestants caused alarm and stirred hatred among the French Roman Catholics. The religious hatred was intensified by political rivalry between the house of Valois, then in possession of the French throne, and the house of Guise. Civil war broke out between 1562 and 1598 and bitter battles were fought between the French Roman Catholics and Protestants during those years.

Charles W Lepper — Founder of the Iron Mission Hall



The Protestants were being severely persecuted. On St Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572 the Queen Mother and the King ordered thousands of Huguenots to be massacred in Paris and in other parts of France.

Many found life in France intolerable under the ensuing persecutions and because of the evaporation of religious liberty hundreds of thousands of Huguenots fled to England, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the English colonies in North America. The total emigration is believed to have been between four hundred thousand to one million, leaving one million Protestants in France.

In this dispersion the "Le Pere" family moved to England and settled there. To ease their integration into English life the family changed their name to Lepper. The Leppers soon blended into English society and established a prosperous company which imported tea from India and Ceylon.

Mr Charles Lepper, a descendent of the Le Pere family, was born in the middle of the nineteenth century. His father descended from the French Huguenot line and his mother was of Scottish descent.

When he was a young man Charles Lepper's father sent him to Trinity College, Dublin, to study Law. It was there in Dublin that he felt a very real and deep impression of the Spirit of God to begin to work in his heart.

FROM THE TIME WHEN MR LEPPER CAME TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS HIS OWN SAVIOUR AT THE AGE OF NINETEEN HE FELT A DEEP CONSTRAINT TO SERVE THE LORD. WHEN HE HEARD HIS MASTER'S CALL HE DEVOTED HIS ZEAL AND ENERGY, AND HIS LOVE AND EAGERNESS TO THE SERVICE OF THE LORD.

Mr Lepper got a job as a Tea Merchant in Belfast and moved to the North of Ireland. He and his wife bought a house in the outskirts of Bangor and they attended the new Brethren Assembly which met in the Victoria Rooms in Belfast.

His uncompromising fidelity to his Lord and unswerving loyalty to the Word of God made him a great witness for the truth of the gospel. His radiant testimony and generous heart made him appreciate and enjoy fellowship with all who owned Jesus as Lord, and he always loved to respond with overflowing liberality to every appeal from those needing assistance.

Charles Lepper employed all of his talents to spread the knowledge of his Saviour. He wrote several books which were widely circulated in the early twentieth century and through his instrumentality many were brought from darkness into light and from the power of Satan to God.

During the 1880's Charles Lepper felt constrained to become involved in the evangelistic outreach from the Victoria Hall into East Belfast. He commenced a Sunday School in the Mountpottinger Orange Hall to reach the many children of the area. He was encouraged by his endeavour and with the interest that was shown.

The work diversified when Mr Lepper and some others organised gospel meetings for adults. God blessed both works, and many people were converted by the grace of God. Soon there was a regular programme of weekly meetings and an encouraging number attended the services.

1890

As the work grew and others got saved Mr Lepper felt led of the Lord to purchase a piece of ground at the corner of Thorndyke Street, on Templemore Avenue in March of 1890

"...ON THIS SITE HE ERECTED A BUILDING WHICH BECAME KNOWN AT THE IRON MISSION HALL. UNDOUBTEDLY THE HALL EARNED ITS NAME BECAUSE PORTIONS OF THE STRUCTURE WERE MADE OF CORRUGATED IRON..."

Mr Lepper was eager to evangelise the lost, but the Mission grew and ensured that the work followed sound principles of Scriptural truth. Devoted and capable servants of the Lord ministered the Word of God, and soon the Iron Hall became the spiritual home of many believers. The work was carried on with apostolic fervour and made a telling impact on the densely populated Albertbridge Road community.

From its conception and throughout its history the Iron Hall maintained a very strong emphasis on biblical ministry.

The early work developed so quickly that the early brethren felt it was necessary to call a full time evangelist to lead the work. The first person appointed to the position by the elders was Mr Driver. Little information is available about this servant of God or about the dates of his ministry.

1909

In 1909 Mr Robert Graham followed Mr Driver as the pastor of the hall. Many of his congregation worked on building the Titanic at the nearby Harland and Wolff Shipyard.



*Robert Graham and his wife
Pastor 1909-1916*

1916

In 1916 Pastor Graham was constrained to leave his ministry in East Belfast and went to work with the Glasgow City Mission.

Charles Lepper adopted the Iron Hall as his spiritual home. He continued to have a burden for the souls in that area.

His love for and understanding of Christian literature was reflected by his own literary skills of which he left a rich legacy in the form of songs of hope and cheer for weary hearts. Several of his poems were dedicated to the work of the hall.

“...HE DEDICATED ONE SUCH POEM/SONG BASED ON PSALM 23 “TO THE LITTLE FLOCK OF 800 AT THE IRON MISSION HALL, MOUNTPOTTINGER”. HE WROTE OTHER SONGS FOR DAYS OF INTERCESSION AT THE IRON HALL DURING THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE GREAT WAR IN 1918...”

Those who had the privilege of enjoying Mr Lepper’s personal friendship and profited from his godly influence felt a keen sense of loss when he was called into the presence of

the Lord on 1 November 1923. His widow remained associated with the Iron Hall until her home call years later.

The brethren at the Iron Hall extended an invitation to Mr Tocher to become the full-time evangelist at the Iron Hall. Mr WE Tocher



*W. E. Tocher
Pastor 1916-1930*

had come to Northern Ireland as an evangelist, commended from the Brethren movement near Dundee. He and his wife travelled throughout Ulster in a horse drawn caravan conducting evangelistic meetings in many isolated rural areas.

He accepted the invitation and commenced his ministry in the hall around 1916. He was a very competent minister of the Word, and crowds flocked to hear him. Over eight hundred people attended Tocher’s meetings at the Iron Hall.

1919

Seemingly nothing daunted Tocher. During the General Strike of 1919 some locals tried to force him to cancel the meetings at the Iron Hall. Employees from the shipyard, downed tools with workers all over the British Isles.

They were demanding a reform of the standard working week from fifty-four to forty-four hours. “Work no more ‘til forty-four”, was their slogan. In accordance with the strike’s organisers, households were obliged to turn all lights off – gas and electric. Mr Tocher was determined, strike or no strike, the Lord’s work must go on.

At the regular time the lights at the Iron Hall were lit as usual for the mid-week evening meeting. A deputation of burly union men arrived at the door of the meetinghouse and told the preacher in no uncertain terms, “Put your lights out or we will put them out for you!” Tocher was not to be intimidated, and although he complied with their directive he sent word to all the people in the locality to bring their oil lamps to the meetings in future until the strike was over. The meetings continued unabated.

During Tocher’s early years of ministry at the Iron Hall Ulster’s renowned evangelist, WP Nicholson, conducted several evangelistic missions in East Belfast at which hundreds of people were converted. Many of those converts found their way to the corrugated iron

building at the corner of Thorndyke Street to enjoy the powerful and effective preaching of WE Tocher.

Mr Tocher also reaped an abundant harvest of converts through his own preaching and soon The Iron Hall was packed to capacity and at times it was bursting at the seams. To be sure of securing a seat it was necessary to arrive at the hall at least half an hour before the service began.

Such growth meant that the Hall had to be enlarged. The corrugated iron sides of the building were removed and replaced by brick walls which were built to the outer perimeter on both sides of the site. Soon afterwards the front and rear of the Hall had to be extended to their maximum also.



*Alex Cooke
Pastor 1935-1937*

With these renovations the corrugated iron, which gave the hall its name was discarded, but the name Iron Hall remained.

1935

When Mr Tocher terminated his ministry at the Iron Hall he was succeeded by Mr Cooke who commenced his pastorate at the Hall in 1935 and remained in that position for the next three years.

During the vacancy that followed Pastor Cooke's departure great responsibility fell on the elders to minister the Word of God at the Iron Hall while they prayed about a replacement.

"...IT WAS DURING A VISIT FROM MR ALEXANDER MARKS, A BLIND JEW WHO WAS INVITED TO MINISTER TO THE CONGREGATION FOR A PERIOD OF SIX WEEKS THAT THE ANSWER CAME..."

Mr Marks informed the elders that Mr TE Evans was returning home to Wales from missionary service in India and might be interested in the pastoral ministry. Upon this recommendation the leaders of the Iron Hall approached the former missionary about the matter, and Mr Evans perceived that the Lord was opening the door for him in East Belfast.

1939

In 1939 Mr and Mrs Evans moved to Belfast to engage in this new sphere of ministry at the Iron Hall. Pastor Evans' ministry was more of a personal nature rather than on the public platform. He had a warm disposition and regularly visited the hospitals and prisons. He called upon many homes in East Belfast to meet people surrounding the hall. He was more of an evangelist and missionary than a Bible teacher and was a keen soul winner.



*T. E. Evans and his wife
Pastor 1939-1962*



His bright Welsh disposition shone through in his preaching and he would suddenly burst into song in the middle of his sermon and sing as only a Welsh man could. He was a very caring pastor and was loved and appreciated by all.

The early part of Pastor Evan's ministry was during the Second World War. He guided his congregation through this difficult time of great danger and catastrophe. The infamous German Blitz brought enemy aircraft over the city raining down their deadly bombs on the helpless population. In the space of a month in 1941 Belfast suffered three devastating air raids. On Easter Tuesday 745 men, women and children were killed, the highest casualties in any one raid outside London.

Whole streets of terraced houses and quiet suburbs were destroyed. In all 950 died in the raids. Tragically Thorndyke Street took a direct hit from a German bomb and most of the houses were destroyed with a heavy loss of life.

Pastor Evans visited the bereaved families bringing the comfort of the Scriptures to many broken hearts and shattered homes. The Iron Hall building suffered extensive damage and had to be virtually rebuilt. Just as the local population showed great resilience in the face

of these hostilities, the believers at the Iron Hall rallied round to rebuild their church for the preaching of the Word of God.

"...AT THE END OF THE WAR A HANDFUL OF MEN GATHERED TOGETHER IN THE IRON HALL WITH THE DESIRE TO SING HYMNS WITH MUSIC ESPECIALLY WRITTEN FOR MALE VOICES..."

From this embryo the Iron Hall Gospel Male Voice Choir began. Over the succeeding years the choir developed their mission to one of gospel outreach – singing, testifying and preaching the Word of God. They travelled to Scotland and Southern Ireland in their ministry for the Lord. To be a member of the choir it was necessary to be able to testify to the saving and keeping power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The choir continued until the death of their conductor Mr Jack Harris in January 2015.

The Coalman's Testimony Band was making a considerable impact throughout Belfast, and many people were converted at their first mission at Skipton Street Mission Hall. Pastor Evans attended these meetings and invited these Christian workmen to conduct an evangelistic mission at the Iron Hall.



*The Coalmen's Testimony
Band March of Witness 1950*

Night after night the coalmen sang the gospel, testified of God's grace in their lives and preached the Word of God in the plain man's language. More than fifty people trusted the Saviour during this mission which lasted for one month.

1952

In 1952 Mr Muir, a famous herbalist from Glasgow, conducted a children's mission for two weeks at the Iron Hall. This was a great time of blessing with over six hundred boys and girls attending each night.

Several years later two workers from Child Evangelism Fellowship, Mr Sammy Seymour and Raymond Lunn, both from Kimberly Street City Mission, conducted another children's mission.

Sammy Seymour arrived every night with a small attaché case with a bushy tail hanging out from one end. The curiosity to know what was in the case enthralled the children. He threatened to open the case each night but kept their suspense going throughout the two weeks. Sammy was a bright and happy worker and called the Christian boys and girls Glowing Smilers.

Raymond played the accordion every night and composed a chorus for the occasion.

The meetings attracted more than one thousand boys and girls each night. The impact on the district was phenomenal and even the Belfast Telegraph sent a reporter to write a feature article on the "Glowing Smilers" at the Iron Hall.

Scores of children professed faith in Christ, and a great follow-up programme ensued after the mission.

In the mid-fifties the former "The Iron Hall Mission", was reconstituted as the "Iron Hall Assembly". The new elders were appointed as trustees of the property. These were Mr Alexander Campbell, Mr Jack Kane, Mr Bertie Campbell, Mr Billy Hinds and Mr Neil McCloy.

A wide variety of speakers were invited to preach at the Iron Hall. Jock Troop came from the Tent Hall in Glasgow. Mr Callaghan, Mr Reggie Squires, Mr Leech and Mr Michael Perrot all travelled from Dublin to minister at the Iron Hall. Dr Herbert Lockyer from the United States spoke at special conferences. Pastor Evans invited Pastor Tocher to preach at the Iron Hall before Mr Tocher died in 1956.

1962

After twenty-five years of ministry in East Belfast Pastor Evans due to ill health retired and returned to his native Wales in 1962. Amazingly Mr Evans made a great recovery from illness and was able to return to India for a year in the service on his Lord.

"...MR EVAN'S DEPARTURE LEFT A VOID AND BROUGHT GREATER RESPONSIBILITY ON THE ELDERS OF THE IRON HALL, ESPECIALLY ALEX CAMPBELL AND JACK KANE WHO WERE IN LEADERSHIP OF THE WORK..."

As the church congregation prayed for guidance to find a man to fill the vacancy attention was directed to Mr Jack Mitchell of Glasgow. The Mitchell family was well known to the members of the Iron Hall for Mr Mitchell Sr had frequently visited Easter Conventions as the guest soloist.

Mr Jack Mitchell had been involved with Pickering and Inglis, an evangelical publishing company in Glasgow, for many years and was much in demand as a preacher in the Brethren movement throughout Scotland. He had developed good communication skills and had a tremendous gift as a Bible teacher.



*Jack Mitchell & Family
Pastor 1966-1987*

The elders at the Iron Hall were convinced in their hearts that Jack Mitchell was God's man for East Belfast and sent an invitation for him to be their pastor. Mr Mitchell had a corresponding assurance that this was God's opening for him, and in January 1966 Mr Mitchell commenced his pastorate at the Iron Hall.

Under his leadership the Iron Hall became a distinctive centre for a sound and solid Biblical teaching ministry. Mr Mitchell's Scottish accent added a warmth to his fluency as he preached on rich Bible truths on the Lord's day and at the Monday evening Bible study. People from beyond the bounds of East Belfast were attracted to the ministry at the Iron Hall. It was recorded in City Week, 14 April 1966, that

"UNDER MR MITCHELL LARGE AUDIENCES ARE AGAIN A FEATURE OF THE IRON HALL ESPECIALLY ON SUNDAY AND MONDAY EVENINGS, AND OLDER MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP SAY THAT HE REMINDS THEM OF MR TOCHER".

1967

In 1967 Mr Mitchell introduced Mr Ronnie MacMillan, a fellow Scot, to the fellowship at Templemore Hall, just down the avenue, and as a result they invited Mr MacMillan to become their pastor. The close friendship between Pastor MacMillan and Pastor Mitchell enabled them to lead Templemore Hall and Iron Hall into a United Easter Convention which continues to this day.

“...MR MITCHELL'S MINISTRY WAS IN MUCH DEMAND THROUGHOUT NORTHERN IRELAND, AND FREQUENT INVITATIONS CAME FROM HIS NATIVE SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND TO SPEAK AT PROPHETIC CONFERENCES...”

Mr Mitchell introduced many preachers to the Iron Hall for special occasions. These included Dr Allister Noble, Andrew McFarland, Geoffrey Bull, Archie Naismith and Billy Strachan.

Pastor Willie Mullan conducted a great evangelistic mission at the Iron Hall during Pastor Mitchell's time and over one hundred people trusted the Saviour in the meetings. As the number of people grew each night some believers left their seats in the church to allow room for the unconverted. The upper room was filled, and additional seating was placed in the vestibule of the church to accommodate the crowd.

The Hall underwent a major refurbishment in the early seventies and this gave more room for the growing congregation. Mr Mitchell's ministry continued to be blessed even though the agitation and disruption of the Troubles restricted people's attendance at many church services during the seventies and eighties. The Monday night Bible Study increased in numbers so much so that they had to vacate the small upstairs room and use the main hall to contain the crowds attending the Bible Class.

Jack Mitchell completed twenty-one fruitful and blessed years at the Iron Hall and concluded his ministry there in 1987. His contribution to the ministry of the gospel in East Belfast during that time is impossible to quantify. The dynamic and blessing of God's servant continues to be felt to this day.

1987

Mr Mitchell's pending departure drew the attention of the Iron Hall's overseers to a young man who was the pastor of Carryduff Baptist Church. Denis Lyle was born into a Christian home in Banbridge, County Down. After his training at the Baptist College, Denis accepted a call to Carryduff Baptist Church where God greatly blessed his ministry for eleven years.

After prayerful consideration the oversight decided to call Denis to become their new pastor. Denis accepted the call and commenced his ministry at the Iron Hall in May 1987. He quickly developed capable teaching skills which enabled him to continue the strong Bible teaching emphasis which has been characteristic of the Iron Hall for many years.



*Denis Lyle and Family
Pastor 1987-1998*

Denis Lyle also manifested tremendous evangelistic zeal and organised several evangelistic outreaches. He conducted a mission for three weeks with George Bates as the evangelist and the meetings were blessed by the Lord.

“...IN JUNE 1989 THE IRON HALL COMBINED WITH TEMPLEMORE HALL FOR AN EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN IN A TENT AT ORANGEFIELD PARK...”

The meetings were conducted during a good spell of weather and hundreds attended each night as Denis Lyle and Victor Maxwell shared the preaching on alternate nights while Jackie Brown of CEF conducted special meetings for the boys and girls earlier each evening.

Ulster evangelist Ivan Thompson conducted a very successful mission at the Iron Hall with great numbers in attendance and many souls trusted the Saviour. Roger Carswell from Leeds preached for an evangelistic outreach for two weeks in 1992.

Denis Lyle's ministry attracted large crowds both on the Lord's Day and Monday nights for the Bible Study. Several of the series Denis completed in these Bible studies furnished the material for two books which were authored by him.

Pastor Lyle was invited to conduct evangelistic campaigns in churches throughout Ulster and Scotland. He had the opportunity to travel to Romania and minister God's word there immediately after the overthrow of Communism.

After Mr Drew Craig showed slides of needy work in Romania further contact was made with a small assembly in Moreni which is in North East Romania. The Iron Hall assumed the role of a sister assembly and pledged to help build a hall for the brethren in Romania.

The building was started in 1992 and completed in 1995 at a cost of £36,000 which was donated by the Iron Hall Assembly.

In 1996 Pastor Lyle, Alex Campbell and Billy Brown travelled to Romania with Drew Craig and other friends for the opening of this church. Billy Brown has continued to visit christian workers and churches in Romania since that time.

Denis Lyle introduced several well-known preachers to the Iron Hall pulpit. Dr Sidlow Baxter conducted three notable days of Bible ministry for us in 1994. Dr Lehman Strauss held a week of meetings at the Hall in 1997.

Other men of God who ministered at the Iron Hall during Denis Lyle's time included Mr Geoffrey Fewkes from Wales and Dr Rex Mathie and Harold Peasley from South Africa.

1994

The church marked the centenary anniversary of the Iron Hall in March 1994. Dr Dwight Pentecost of Dallas Theological Seminary was the guest speaker for a special week long series of prophetic meetings.

"...NIGHT AFTER NIGHT HE OPENED THE SCRIPTURES AND EXPOUNDED GREAT PROPHETIC THEMES. THESE MEETINGS ATTRACTED LARGE CROWDS EVERY NIGHT..."



David Legge and wife Barbara
Pastor 1999-2008

Over the years the Iron Hall has been given strong and capable leadership by its various pastors. It has also been well served by its devoted elders and deacons who have given unstilted dedication to the work.

Mr Bertie Campbell was a member of the Iron Hall for most of his Christian life and was a most welcoming treasurer. Alex Campbell, a well-known businessman, was secretary of the Iron Hall for over forty years.

1998

After eleven years in the ministry at the Iron Hall Pastor Lyle was invited to consider a call to Lurgan Baptist Church. Torn between his commitment to the Iron Hall and the challenge of moving to another sphere of work, Pastor Lyle did not find it easy to know what the Lord would have him do. After much prayer and sharing with the oversight at the Iron Hall, Denis left East Belfast and moved to Lurgan in February 1998.

1999

David Legge was a young man who had attended Iron Hall with his parents Stephen and Ruth and his sister Faith since he was a young boy.

On completing his education at Belfast Royal Academical Institution (Inst) David applied to the Irish Baptist College. Applicants of David's age and inexperience were usually not considered for a position on a full time course at the College but such was David's spiritual maturity, gifting and conviction of God's leading that he was accepted.

David completed his theological training at the Baptist College and was the assistant pastor at Portadown Baptist Church. The oversight of Iron Hall took the bold decision to call David to be pastor of the Iron Hall and this was overwhelmingly endorsed by the membership.

"...THE OVERSIGHT HAD INTENDED TO EASE DAVID INTO THE WORK AND ASSIST HIM WITH MANY OF HIS DUTIES BUT DAVID QUICKLY GREW INTO THE ROLE OF PASTOR AND IT WAS EVIDENT THAT GOD HAD GIFTED HIM FOR THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE WORK..."

David was a gifted expositor of the scriptures and many visitors came along to enjoy his ministry at the Monday Evening Bible Study. One of the series David conducted was entitled Strongholds of Satan. During this series David looked at the teaching of various sects and cults and the studies were later presented as a book called 'Strongholds Shaken'.

For many years the Oversight had a vision to provide new facilities for youth and during the early years of David's ministry, after prayerful consideration, the oversight began to look at various sites in East Belfast but the costs were prohibitive and it was difficult to see a viable solution.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive were carrying out a regeneration programme in the Lower Castlereagh Road and Templemore Avenue. Various Victorian terraced dwellings were demolished and replaced with modern terraced and semi detached dwellings and apartments. A small row of dwellings were located on Templemore Avenue between Thorndyke Street and Chatsworth Street directly adjacent to the Electricity Sub Station and the site was not ideal for redevelopment as housing. The ground was offered to Iron Hall for purchase.



Old houses that were demolished to
make way for the new building

AFTER YEARS OF SEARCHING GOD PROVIDED A BUILDING SITE RIGHT BESIDE THE EXISTING CHURCH FOR A VERY MODEST SUM OF MONEY. GOD HAD ONCE AGAIN PROVED THAT WITH HIM ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE AND HE IS FAITHFUL.

Architects were appointed and with the expertise of various members of the church a final design for a new church building was agreed.

Work commenced and the building was officially opened in November 2004 by Mr Bertie Campbell who was an Elder, church treasurer and lifetime church member.

Although the building costs were about £1.3 million with the generosity of the people of Iron Hall the building was paid off over a modest period of time. Shortly after the opening of the new church building a team of volunteers from the church managed by Stanley Smith began refurbishment works to the original church building turning the main meeting area into a multi-purpose hall which is still in use today.

2008

In early 2008 David Legge advised the church that God was leading him into an itinerant ministry and he would be stepping down from the pastorate of Iron Hall in May of that year.

David has gone on to preach and teach extensively around Northern Ireland and further afield speaking at local churches, conferences and Missions.

Billy Brown, one of the church elders was formally recognised as church visitor for his extensive and faithful visitation to those who are sick or confined to their homes.

During the vacancy which began after the departure of David Legge one of the Elders, Hugh Martin, was asked by the Oversight to act in a full time capacity as an interim measure. Hugh had previously taken early redundancy from his position in Danske Bank to follow the Lord's leading into full time Christian work. During this time several new evangelistic initiatives commenced such as the Amazing Journey which was an annual outreach into local Primary Schools.

2013

After much prayer seeking the Lord for direction the Elder's called John Taylor to the pastorate at Iron Hall. At that time John was pastor of Lisburn Baptist church.

He had previously been pastor of Kilrea Baptist, Armagh Baptist and Mourneview Assembly, Lurgan as well as spending some time serving with Slavic Gospel Mission (SGA) preaching and teaching God's Word in central and eastern Europe. John Taylor accepted the call and commenced the pastorate of the Iron Hall in May 2013.

"...THE WARMTH OF JOHN TAYLOR AND HIS WIFE CHRISTINE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE FOLKS AT IRON HALL AND JOHN'S MINISTRY HAS BEEN A GREAT BLESSING AS HE CONTINUES TO ENCOURAGE, CHALLENGE, AND FEED THE FLOCK..."



*John Taylor and wife Christine
Pastor 2013-Present*



*Hugh Martin and wife Priscilla
Assistant Pastor*

Prior to the appointment of John Taylor the Oversight had advised the church that they felt the workload of Preaching and Teaching and Caring and Sharing was too much for one man to oversee and a short time after John Taylor was installed Hugh Martin was invited by the Oversight to take the role of Assistant Pastor in a part-time capacity and this began in October 2014.

Hugh and his wife Priscilla have key roles in the children's work and continue to work with great energy to serve the Lord in Iron Hall.

The effect of the Iron Hall's witness has been felt far beyond the shores of Northern Ireland.

ALEX STEWART & ALEX IRELAND

were both recommended by the Iron Hall to the work of Sudan Interior Mission in Nigeria in 1925. They and their wives gave a lifetime to the Lord's work in Africa.

BETTY O'NEILL

a nurse, served the Lord in the former Belgian Congo with Unevangelized Fields Mission and was caught up as a victim of the infamous Zimba uprising in 1964. Several of her close colleagues were martyred including Ruby Gray, a fellow nurse from Dromara.

ERIC & ANN MAGOWAN

served the Lord in Africa with UFM. Ann attended the Sunday School at the Iron Hall and her family were members of the fellowship. In recent years Eric has been involved in a Bible teaching ministry in the Far East.

MARGARET PURDY

attended Bible College in Swansea and language training in Belgium before serving as a missionary nurse engaged in eye safari work with eye doctors in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

SHARON GRAY

worked with Wycliffe Bible Translators for many years in Africa and USA.

AARON & CRYSTAL WILSON

served as missionaries in Japan for a number of years with Japan Mission.

ROBERTA SHERLOCK

a school teacher who has attended Iron Hall all her life is currently serving the Lord in Peru with Child Evangelism Fellowship.

DONALD & JACQUELINE FLEMING

have a ministry in Eastern Europe called Faith in Action Mission which meets practical needs and brings the gospel to many needy people including those in schools, churches, orphanages and prisons.

A number of people who attended the Hall in their early years went on to serve the Lord with various Missions in a full time capacity.

In recent years many people from the Hall have been engaged with short term mission work with New Tribes Mission, Child Evangelism Fellowship, United Beach Missions, Asia Link and Churches in Romania.

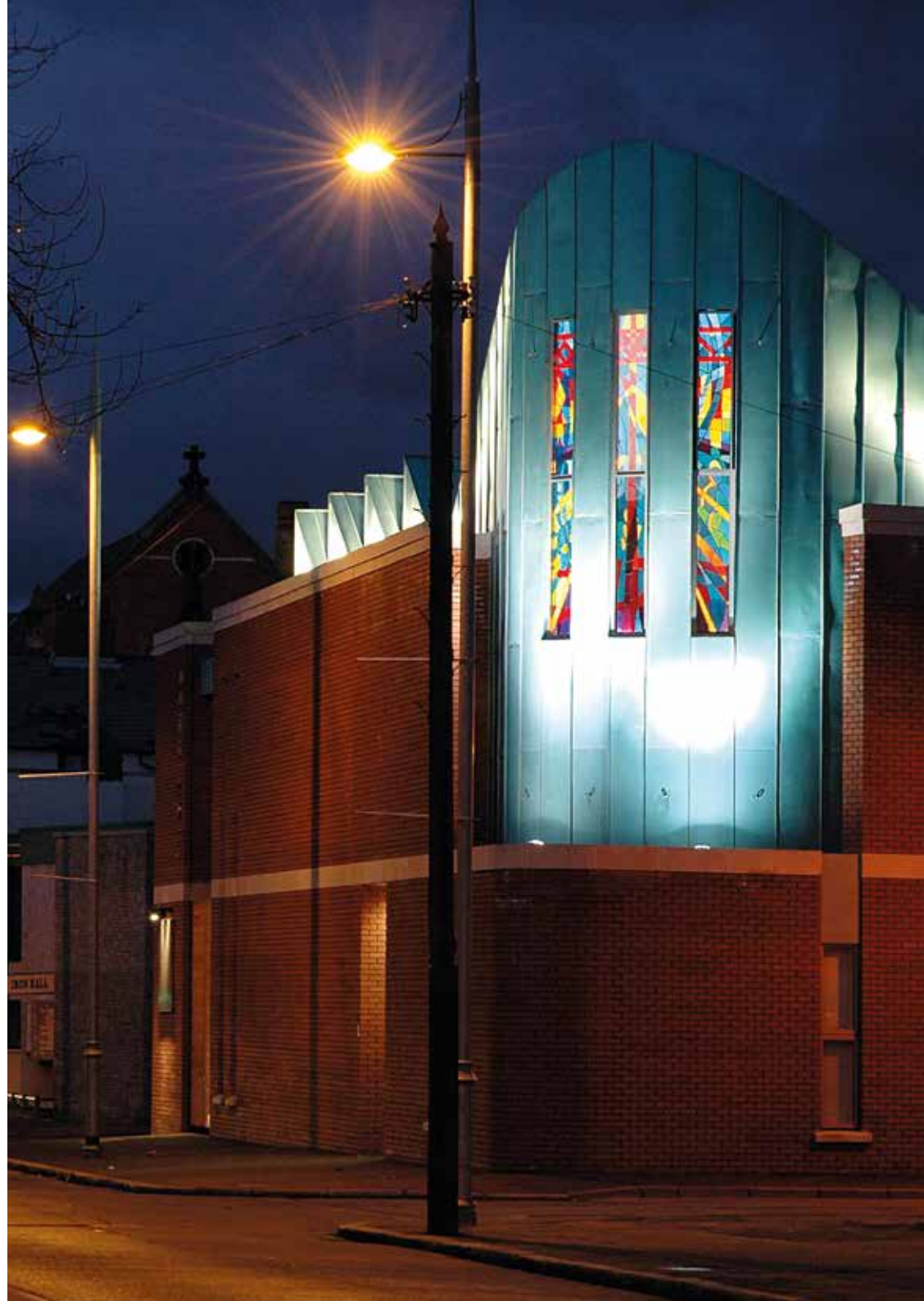
In Iron Hall, the priority of preaching and teaching God's word continues alongside the work of evangelism.

"...THE WORLD IS A VASTLY CHANGED PLACE SINCE 1890, HOWEVER; THE NEED TO MAKE CHRIST KNOWN REMAINS THE SAME..."

It seems fitting that during our 125th year the Lord has blessed with a significant increase in the numbers of children attending the Holiday Bible Club, Sunday School and Childrens' Meeting taking us back to where it all began with reaching out to the boys and girls.

There are many faithful saints who have contributed to the work of Iron Hall over its history and most are now in glory. Many saints have left a good legacy and example but the history of Iron Hall is essentially about God working in the lives of individuals through His own people throughout many generations. To God be the glory, great things He hath done!

We wish to express our thanks to Pastor Victor Maxwell for allowing us to use information from his book 'Belfast Halls of Faith & Fame'.



GROWING UP IN IRON HALL ROBERT KERR

THE FIRST TIME THAT I CAME TO IRON HALL, I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT I WAS BROUGHT ALONG AGAINST MY WILL TO HEAR DENIS LYLE PREACH - BUT OF COURSE I WAS ONLY A FEW DAYS OLD AT THE TIME. NOW TWENTY TWO YEARS LATER I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT MY LIFE WOULD BE LIKE WITHOUT IRON HALL BEING A PART OF IT, PRETTY BORING I'M SURE.



My mum, Margaret Kerr, enjoys telling the story of how as a baby I managed to escape her one Sunday morning, crawling under the pew. I was discovered playing with someone's shoelaces a few rows back and had to be passed back to her over the tops of people's heads. Nice to know I haven't changed much.

I don't remember too much of my childhood at the church, but the memories I do have are happy ones. Each Sunday the family always sat on the same pew, next to Billy and Liz Brown. I remember one time when there was a leak in the roof above us, Billy leaned down to me and said that he would let Liz sit below it so her hat would catch the water.

Many of my childhood memories at the church involve sitting and having long conversations with some of the older members of the church particularly Cecil Carson, Jack Harris and Raymond Sloan (who would allow me to try on his thick rimmed glasses).

Mostly I think people just humoured me. Many Sundays as a young boy I stood at the entrance to the church, next to my dad Dawson Kerr. As he welcomed people to the meeting I would hand them the hymn books, eventually I earned the title 'Junior Deacon'.

Growing up at Iron Hall has been a great experience. My parents sent me, my brother Richard and my sister Judith down to Sunday school each week and when we were old enough we eventually attended the youth fellowship where I still help out today.

For me the highlights of the year were the church summer BBQ and Christmas dinner. I always looked forward to these events which had great atmosphere. As a child I found these very exciting. Apparently I used to call the Christmas dinner the 'Christmas feast', I don't remember doing this but it does sound like something I would say.

For me these events always involved a lot of running around with my friends and if by the end of the night I wasn't in some sort of trouble then I knew I hadn't had as much fun as I could have had. It wasn't until the age of seven that I started to take what was being said from the pulpit seriously.

"... ONE SUNDAY NIGHT AFTER PASTOR DAVID LEGGE HAD BEEN PREACHING IN THE OLD CHURCH BUILDING, I WENT HOME AND ASKED THE LORD JESUS TO FORGIVE ME OF MY SINS..."

and take me into Heaven when I died, a place I knew my parents were going too.

Although since that night there have been many difficult days, I have never regretted putting my faith in Christ as a child and am grateful to my parents for bringing me to church and encouraging me in my Christian life.

Growing up at Iron Hall has been a great experience. I always sat on the front pew for the Sunday morning children's talk; I went to Sunday school and attended the Youth Fellowship.

"...I HAVE MANY WONDERFUL, HAPPY MEMORIES FROM THESE TIMES, TOO MANY TO SHARE..."

Now, aged 22, I am one of the people who gives the children's talk, I teach the junior Bible class at Sunday School and I sit on the youth fellowship's organising committee, as well as being part of the Church's 'sound team'.

I view Iron Hall as very much being my church and it's difficult to imagine a time when I won't be involved in some part of the work. I thank God for Iron Hall, for the impact that it has had in my life as well as the lives of countless others.

I only pray that as someone who was raised through the church and is now involved in many areas of the work, that I can help some of the younger people to one day look back at their time at the church in the same way that I now do.



Previous building now used as the Activity Centre



Current building opened in November 2004

Iron Hall and Templemore Hall warmly invite you to join us for our combined Easter Ministry Meetings, taking up the theme of..

Sacrificial LOVE

Speaker: Rev Tom Shaw
Sunday 29th March to Sunday 5th April

Singers during the week:

- Sunday 29th—Calderwood Sisters
- Monday 30th—Geoff Sloss
- Tuesday 31st—The Islanders
- Wednesday 1st—Solid Ground
- Thursday 2nd—Heaven Bound
- Friday 3rd—Iron Hall Singing Group
- Sunday 5th—Iron Hall Singing Group

Held at **Iron Hall** on **Templemore Avenue**, each weekday evening at 7.30pm and Sunday evenings at 7pm




GROWING UP IN IRON HALL DORIS SHERLOCK

I WAS BORN IN 16 ROXBURGH STREET, NEWTOWNARDS ROAD, BELFAST IN 1954 AND FROM BABYHOOD I WAS BROUGHT TO THE IRON HALL BY MY PARENTS, JOHN AND SARAH BAILIE ALONG WITH MY SISTERS LILIAN AND MARGERY.



My maternal grandmother, Sarah McCoubrie and my aunt Lily McCoubrie who was known to everyone as “auntie Lil” also lived in Roxburgh Street and they too attended “the Hall”. In those days my family walked to church together. My earliest memories are of my family crossing over the Newtownards Road on Sundays and usually meeting up with Grace McArthur’s grandmother Mrs Millar (Ma Millar) who lived in Austin Street and together we would make our way up Templemore Avenue.

My mother told me that one day when I was about three or four, I went missing from home and was found by a lady on Newtownards Road. Apparently she asked me where I was going and I told her I was going to the Iron Hall.

I have memories of Pastor Evans visiting our home and of me singing for him. He had a beautiful Welsh voice and he loved to sing. At times when he was preaching, he would spontaneously burst into song.

His wife was a good singer and I remember her singing ‘Sweet Rose of Sharon’.

Mrs Hagan was my first Sunday School teacher. Mr James Beck was superintendent in those days. We sang hymns out of Alexander hymnbook.

Our full day Sunday School outings were always well attended by old and young. In the weeks leading up to the outings, anyone who wanted to go had to come to the church on a given night and obtain a ticket. The ticket had details of date, destination, times, etc in the middle bit and there was a perforated piece on each side, one stating ‘first refreshment’ and the other stating ‘second refreshment’.

“...AT LUNCHTIME WE TORE OFF THE FIRST PIECE, HANDED IT IN TO JIMMY POLLEY, RAYMOND SLOAN OR ONE OF THE OTHER ORGANISERS AND WERE GIVEN A WHITE ‘BUN BOX’ CONTAINING SANDWICHES, BUNS, ETC. JIMMY AND OTHERS WOULD THEN GO AROUND WITH BIG KETTLES FULL OF TEA FOR THE ADULTS AND JUICE FOR THE CHILDREN...”

This would be repeated at tea time when the ‘second refreshment’ bit was exchanged for another box of food.

I recall two ladies at the church who reached the age of one hundred - Granny Smith and Granny Heaney. Around the time of Granny Heaney’s birthday a number of the congregation along with the children from the Sunday School went to her home.

She was brought outside and everyone sang to her. A photograph of this was published in a newspaper.

The Children’s meeting was held on Wednesday nights and sometimes they gave out pencils as prizes for answering questions. The pencils had the words ‘Glowing Smilers’ printed on them along with details of the meeting times.

“...IN MY EARLY DAYS MY AUNTIE LIL LED THE JUNIOR CHOIR WHICH MET EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT. SHE WAS ASSISTED BY MA MILLAR. IRENE POLLEY TOOK OVER THE LEADERSHIP WHILE I WAS STILL IN THE CHOIR...”

On Children’s Day the girls wore white blouses with red roses pinned on them and the boys wore white shirts and red ties.

Trevor Polley would usually open the service with a “Welcome to our Children’s Day” poem. The church organ was played in those days by Judith Campbell’s aunt Ethel Polley and by Gordon McIlmail. Grace McArthur’s mother, Doreen McIlmail was a great pianist and she would have played for the Junior Choir and in midweek meetings.

Although Iron Hall was “my church”, I also attended a children’s meeting in Foundry Street and it was there on 25th February 1965 at the age of eleven I was saved. The lady who prayed with me that night was called Betty. Some years later she married John McClelland who was a member of Iron Hall and I became reacquainted with her as she started to attend the church with him.

My family moved from Newtownards Road to Tullycarnet shortly after Pastor Mitchell took over the pastorate. After the Sunday morning services I went to my grandmother’s house for lunch. Grace McArthur went to Ma Millar’s house for her lunch then we would meet up and walk to Iron Hall Sunday School together.

At that time we were in her uncle Gordon McIlmail's class.

I started to attend the Young Peoples' Fellowship when I was eleven. It was held then in the little back room in the old building. Sammy Jamison and Sam Lewis were the leaders. I had many happy times in the YPF especially on the weekends away at Castle Erin in Portrush.

Peter Mitchell, Mark Foster, Ian and Pamela Sloan, George McClure, Andrew Robinson and Carol Davison were among the many who attended over the years. I was one of a large number of YPF members who were baptised on the same night in Iron Hall.

It was in those years that the YPF started to organise the annual senior citizen's Christmas party.

"...SAMMY JAMISON AND HIS LATE WIFE, SADIE OPENED THEIR HOME TO MANY OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE AND LOTS OF US SPENT HAPPY HOURS THERE AFTER THE YPF ON A SATURDAY NIGHT AND AFTER CHURCH ON SUNDAYS..."

When Arthur and Evelyn Carnaghan married, they too made us very welcome in their home many times. Friendships were forged then. We who were provided with this hospitality owe a great debt of gratitude for the interest shown to us. I believe that their kindness and selflessness played a great part in keeping us together as many young people can slip through the net for want of good Christian company and true friendship.

I joined the Mixed Choir when I was in my teens. There was a mixture of people of all ages in the choir - Bertie and Doreen Campbell's mother, Mrs Ruddy, Mrs Preston and Albert McClean to name a few. We met



to practice every Monday night after the Bible study.

The prayer meetings used to be held on Friday nights and there was also a mid week gospel meeting each Wednesday night. The women's meetings which my mother and grandmother attended were held on Thursday afternoons and Minnie Beck's mother in law, Mrs Beck was a faithful worker among the ladies.

Lesley Grant's grandfather, Alfie Stewart was a regular speaker at Christmas morning services. Her father, Leslie Armstrong was often in the pulpit on a Sunday. Names such as Joe Davison and J J Ruddock from Limerick come to mind when I think of visiting preachers. A special highlight was when Dr J Dwight Pentecost visited the Iron Hall and conducted a series of meetings.

"... WHEN THE CHURCH BUILDING WAS BEING RENOVATED IN THE EARLY 1970S, ALL OUR SERVICES WERE HELD IN THE YMCA BUILDING ON ALBERTBRIDGE ROAD..."

The Easter conferences were always well attended by people from far and near. Visiting speakers included Archie Naismith

and William Gilmore from Scotland. On Easter Mondays everyone was invited to stay for a lavish tea in between the afternoon and evening meetings.

Over the years I have enjoyed the ministry of Pastor Evans, Pastor Mitchell, Pastor Lyle, Pastor Legge and our current Pastor John Taylor. Only a few people remain who have attended the Iron Hall since my childhood until now. Others have moved on to other places. I often think of those whose journey is done.

These include Jack Kane, Alex Campbell, Gordon McIlmail, Raymond Sloan, Jimmy Polley, Andrew Millar, Martha Polley, Miss Nicholson, Mrs Mackie, Ena and Jim Brown and their mother, Mr and Mrs Hughes, Mrs Clarke, Mrs Lowry, Tom Fraser and many more.

Many of these people, probably unknown to themselves, influenced my life for good, some as my Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, friends and others who were simply just there with a friendly word, smile or handshake.

It was only as I started to write about my years at Iron Hall that I realised just how important a part this assembly has played in my life. My most special memories are connected with this place which has been my life long spiritual home - memories of family members, friendships formed and meeting and marrying my husband.

"...I BROUGHT MY CHILDREN ALONG AS BABIES AND HAVE WATCHED THEM PROGRESS THROUGH THE VARIOUS STAGES OF CHURCH LIFE. NOW I HAVE THE PLEASURE OF SEEING MY GRANDCHILDREN BEING BROUGHT TO IRON HALL..."

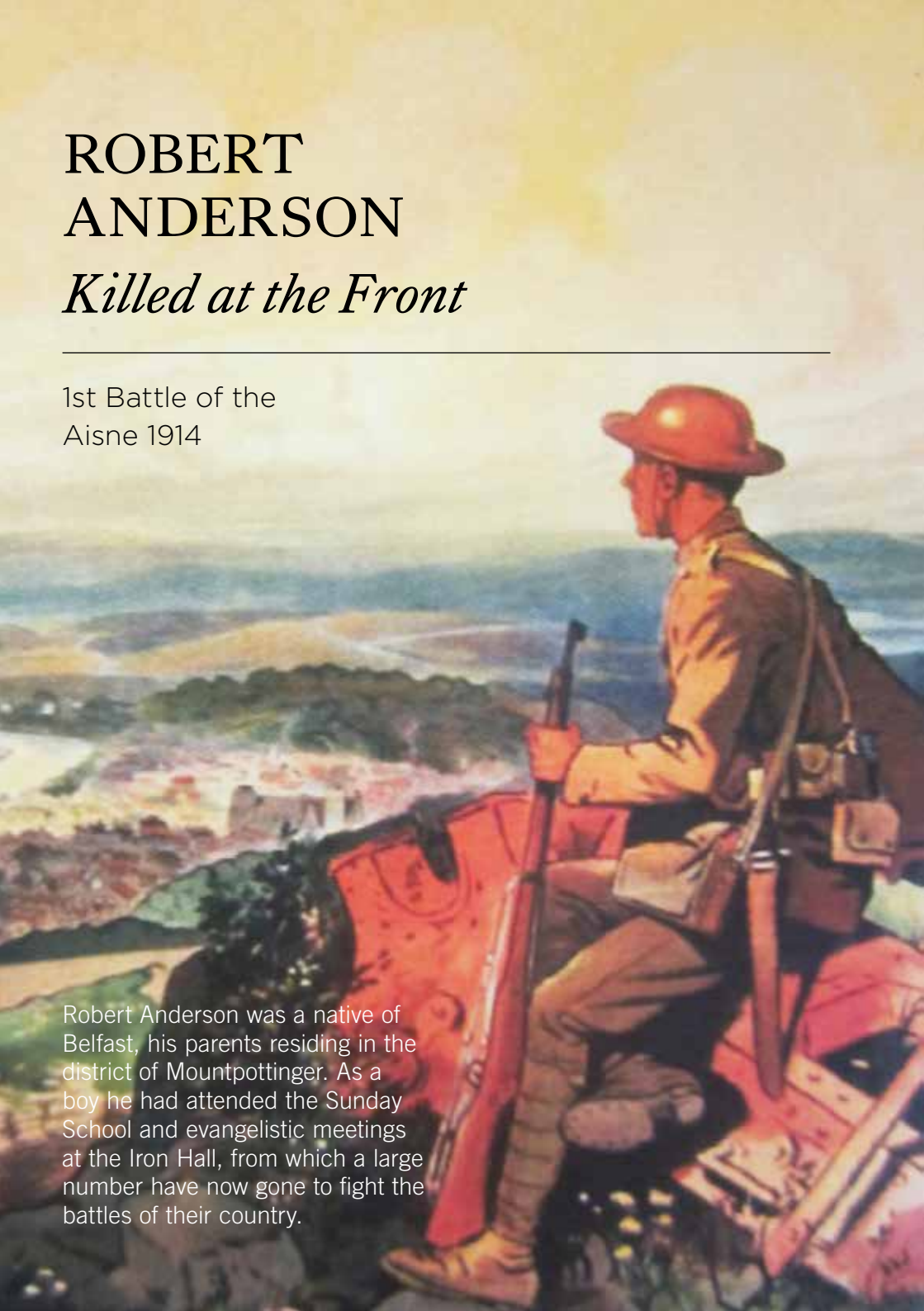


ROBERT ANDERSON

Killed at the Front

1st Battle of the
Aisne 1914

Robert Anderson was a native of Belfast, his parents residing in the district of Mountpottinger. As a boy he had attended the Sunday School and evangelistic meetings at the Iron Hall, from which a large number have now gone to fight the battles of their country.



TROUBLESOME

Robert was a boy of extraordinary energy both of mind and body, and was somewhat difficult to control at times, even taxing the patience and forbearance of the teachers and superintendent to their utmost limit. He was not only unruly himself, but was quite a leader of a company of lads about his own age. Instead of coming to the school or meetings to seek any profit or help, his chief aim and object seemed to be to upset the class or disturb the meeting. At length he became such a trouble that on one occasion the superintendent was reluctantly obliged, for the sake of peace and order, to put him outside.

CAUGHT AT LAST

Robert, however, was not worse than many others who are perhaps endowed with a greater amount of self-restraint or self-control. He was a rebel against God, and was not ashamed to manifest his true character as such whenever occasion offered. It has always been true that those who have much forgiven become the best soldiers of the Cross of Christ. So it was with Robert. He was caught at last in the Gospel net. The arrows of Divine truth struck fast in him. They are *"always sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, whereby the people fall under Thee."*

NIGHT OF TRIUMPH

Robert was no exception, and when the arrows of the Almighty penetrated his heart and he was laid low at the great Redeemer's feet. We are told that *"there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth,"* and that joy is often shared on earth by those who are helpers in the fight. It was a night of triumph and of victory, of joy and rejoicing on the part of the workers at the Mission Hall when Robert Anderson now nearing the years of manhood, was manly enough to confess himself a guilty sinner in the sight of God, and lay down the arms of his rebellion at the feet of Jesus.

SEEKING OTHERS

One of the first evidences of true conversion is a manifest desire to win others for Christ. When Robert had abandoned the slavery of Satan, and enlisted in the ranks of the great Captain of our salvation, he began at once to seek for others amongst his companions, and endeavoured to lead them into the path of life and happiness. It is believed his efforts in this direction were not in vain, and that he has left some behind to carry on the war against the powers of darkness.

ENLISTMENT AND DEATH

One of the first evidences of true conversion is a manifest desire to win others for Christ. When Robert had abandoned the slavery of Satan, and enlisted in the ranks of the great Captain of our salvation, he began at once to seek for others amongst his companions, and endeavoured to lead them into the path of life and happiness. It is believed his efforts in this direction were not in vain, and that he has left some behind to carry on the war against the powers of darkness.

WHAT IS YOUR HOPE?

Should this little story fall into the hands of others engaged in this deadly conflict, the writer would enquire, with all sincerity and tenderness, "Had your name appeared in the list of casualties amongst the killed instead of Robert Anderson's, what would have been your hope for the brighter, better world?" The question must be faced, and the answer given, in the life that now is. Do not defer it until your latest breath. You may not have a moment then to consider or decide the all important question which is to determine your eternal destiny. *"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."* *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* *"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."* Let the sword of the Spirit find you out today, then the sword of Divine justice with you shall have nothing to do. It has already plunged into the blood of Him Who

"Fought the fight alone
Who won the meed and crown;
Trod all his foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down."

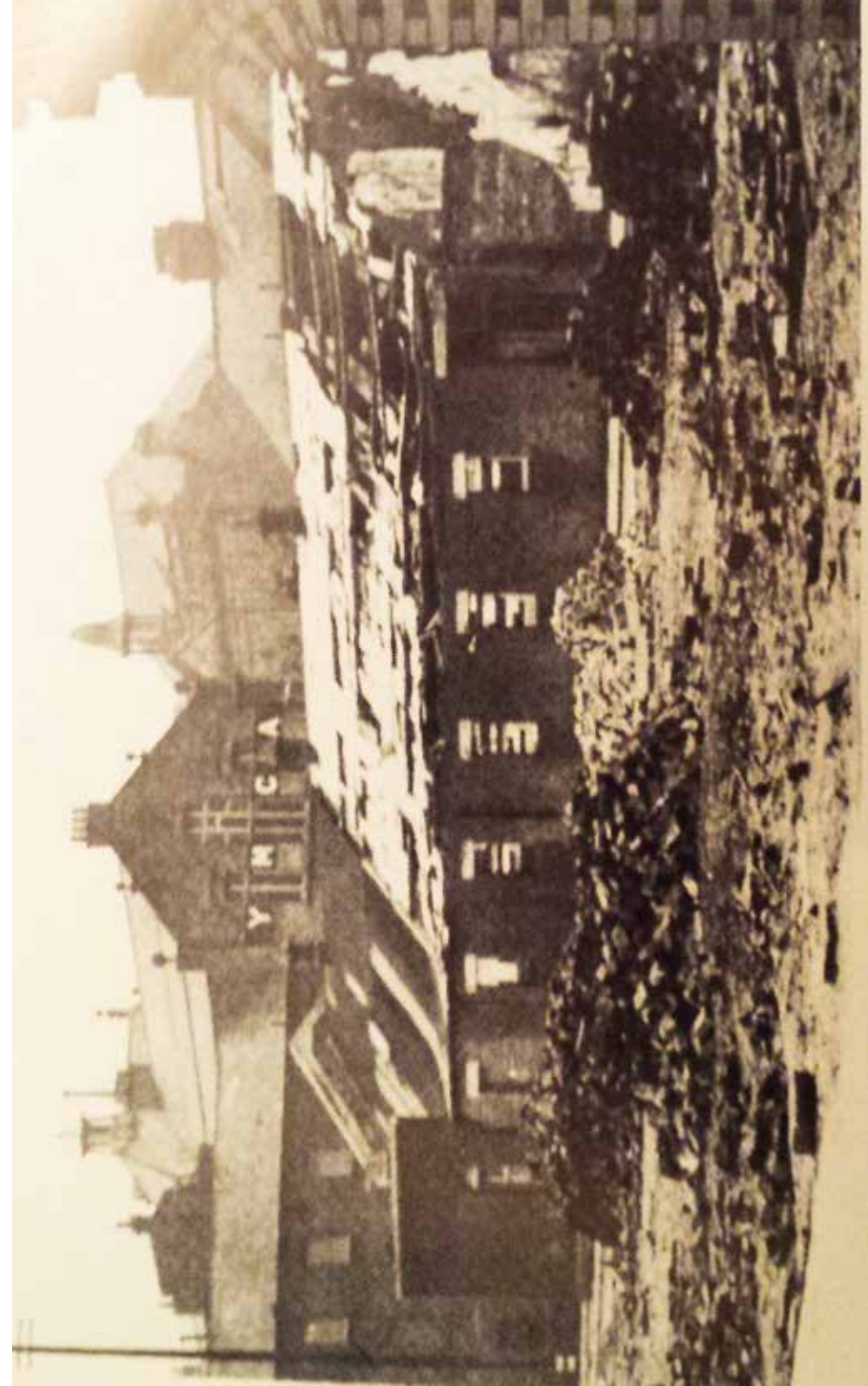
"He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

MAKE READY

No one, not even the most robust, has a lease of life for a single day, therefore it is all-important that we should be ready for the summons, at whatever hour it may please the Lord to call upon us.

*"Whether it be noon or night,
Say, are you ready, brother?"*

*Article from 'Wireless
Messages' by Charles W
Lepper (1920)*



THE IRON HALL DESTROYED BY GERMAN BOMBS
in the 1940s

TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

FESTIVE FOOD & FUN CHRISTMAS DINNER 20.12.14



TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

FOOD & FELLOWSHIP CHURCH DINNER 13.03.15



TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

EASTER DUCK RACE TOLLYMORE 07.04.15



TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

LADIES OUTING 24.08.15



GROWING UP IN IRON HALL IRENE POLLEY

I WAS BORN ON 26TH OCTOBER 1932 AND A SHORT TIME AFTER I WAS BROUGHT IN MY MOTHER'S ARMS WITH HER SISTERS AND MY GRANDMOTHER TO THE WOMEN'S MEETING IN IRON HALL. THAT IS WHERE YOU WERE DEDICATED TO THE LORD IN THOSE DAYS.



My grandfather and mum's whole family belonged to this hall. My grandfather James Spence and Mr Polley and Mr Cairns and such men used to come here early on a Sunday morning to open up for the 8.00am time of prayer. So that was the start of our family in the Iron Hall.

Doreen, Jim, Bertie Campbell and myself went to Hall together each week. In my early days we lived in Hamburg Street next door to Canton Street Mission Hall and I attended children's Sunday school and children's meetings.

In Iron Hall there was a Pastor called Pastor Cook who I can't remember, but as a teenager I remember Pastor Evans (pop Evans) who was a pastor to all us and we were very fond of him. I attended the early morning Sunday school which took place before church and my teacher was Helen Polley. There was an afternoon Sunday school as well. We were kept very busy!

I was saved in the childrens meeting in the Iron Hall at a young age and then one night at an open air meeting Pastor Evans was asking some of the girls to give a word of testimony. I was concerned that I wasn't sure if I had a testimony I could give. Pastor Evans said "there are many of you saved but what work are you doing for the Lord". That night at twelve years of age I dedicated my life to the Lord.

“...GOSPEL MEETINGS WERE HELD ON A WEDNESDAY NIGHT IN IRON HALL. FREDDIE PAULEY LOOKED AFTER THIS MEETING IN THE SMALL HALL...”

I have good memories of my teenage years. Alex Campbell and Eric Lewis had a group on Saturday night called the Berean Band. If you were chosen you had to take a verse home and make a message out it which you had to share the next week. The girls often bribed the boys to do it for them.

We met on a Saturday and went out on bicycles to the villages like Dundonald and Purdysburn and gave out tracts and had open air meetings, then we came back to clean the Hall. If you went to Eddie Spence's you would get a plate of chips and four forks. Some Saturday afternoons went to beach.



Groups of young people used to go and stay in timber cottages in Millisle for a week's holiday. There wasn't much privacy as we crammed into the bedrooms.

On one of the evenings Mr Evans dressed everyone up in Indian costumes and we marched through the village and sang some songs in Indian which he taught us. Some of the boy's realised that the bad smell they had noticed was coming from the onions in some of the head dresses! We would then gather near a church on the main street for an open air meeting.

Those weeks were filled with good fun and pranks. I remember one time the boys threw fish into the bedroom and on another occasion some boys jumped out from behind headstones in grave yard.

THERE WAS A BUS RUN EACH YEAR WHEN THERE WAS A DAY TRIP TO THE PORTSTEWART CONVENTION. THIS WAS A GREAT DAY OUT AS PEOPLE DIDN'T USUALLY GET TOO FAR BACK THEN.

In the church meetings we sat on wooden benches and facilities and decorations were basic. There was only a small kitchen at the side of the church.



There was only cold water and I remember the women's hands being freezing from washing the salads for Easter meetings.

People started pairing off among the young people. Male voice choir members were picked off one by one and ended up in marriage.

"I STARTED GOING OUT WITH JIMMY WHEN I WAS 15 YEARS OLD AND I GOT MARRIED IN IRON HALL BY PASTOR EVANS WHEN I WAS 20."

The reception was held in the Presbyterian Hostel in Bedford Street. The photos were taken on the flat roof of the building. We got some lovely wedding presents from each of the works in the church. Six years later Trevor was born.

My husband Jimmy was never a person for up at the front. He preferred to work in the background and he carried out many building repairs especially during the war years to ensure that the leaks etc were stopped before the meetings. Before Jimmy and I were married there was one particularly bad night during the blitz.

Jimmy told his sister Martha he was going down to the hall on his bike to check everything was alright. He was told by a man that he wouldn't advise going into the church as buildings were being bombed.

After being at the Hall for a short time Jimmy and those in the neighbouring houses were warned to go immediately into the air raid shelter. The shelter took a direct hit from a bomb. Jimmy was the only one to survive. People were out looking for him. He turned up in Lurgan Hospital which was the only place where space was available. Jimmy had been listed in paper among those who were thought to be dead.

SECTIONS OF THE HALL WERE BLITZED. I GOT BAPTISED IN MOUNTPOTTINGER BAPTIST BECAUSE THE BAPTISMAL TANK WAS DESTROYED BY A BOMB.

Pastor Evans and Trevor Polley



There was a women's meeting on a Thursday afternoon. Some of the women brought their children in their prams. The meetings were led by Mrs Beck. Mrs Evans was always there as well. She was a Godly woman who was quite a reserved person.

As young mothers we visited many of the older ladies in the church and they enjoyed seeing our children. I visited ladies such as Mrs Ransom and her sister who lived near Avoniel.

In the earlier days there was no crèche or children's church.

"...ONE MORNING TREVOR WAS 'PLAYING UP' AND JIMMY DECIDED TO TAKE HIM OUT OF THE SERVICE. AS HE DID THIS PASTOR EVANS SPOKE OUT FROM THE PULPIT IN HIS WELSH ACCENT, "O JIMMY, HAVE MERCY ON HIM!"

A short time after the same thing happened to Beverly Campbell. Neither of the two of them 'played up' again.

During my married life it was privilege to have had various speakers and men who came with the scotch choirs stay in our home. Pastor Mitchell's brother came to stay with us when he was over.

I took over the leadership of the Junior choir from Mrs Miller and Lilly McCoubrie and was helped by Jean Cusin who later went on to lead the work herself. We had about 50 boys and girls each week. Women in the church passed on outfits to other younger children when their own children had grown out of them.

I was also a Sunday school teacher for years while Trevor was growing up.

As well as those memorable formative years under the Pastor Evans I have enjoyed the ministry of Jack Mitchell, Denis Lyle, David Legge and our current pastor John Taylor.

As a family we have always been contented in Iron Hall and I have enjoyed seeing my own son Trevor grow up in the church and am delighted about the contribution he has been able to make over the years.

Iron hall means everything to me. I have always thought of it as our second home.



AMAZING JOURNEY ROADSHOW MAY 2015

The Amazing Journey took place in Elmgrove Primary School, Avoniel Primary School, Harding Memorial Primary School, Nettlefield Primary School with Ken Carson and various helpers from Iron Hall.

TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD



IRON HALL FAMILY FUN DAY 30.05.15

TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD



**LADIES
WALK FOR
LIFE**
JUNE 2015



TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

FOOD & FELLOWSHIP CHURCH BBQ 20.06.15



TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

REACHING OUR DISTRICT SOMME PARADE 01.07.15



TOGETHER
WITH ONE
ACCORD

SUPER SUMMER BIBLE CLUB

24.08.15 — 28.08.15





SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER — 7.00PM

SINGERS: IMMANUEL

MONDAY 5TH OCTOBER — 7.45PM

DANY PASINSKI — MY SEARCH FOR REALITY

TUESDAY 6TH OCTOBER — 7.45PM

KEITH SHIELDS — FORMER N. IRELAND'S STRONGEST MAN

WEDNESDAY 7TH OCTOBER — 7.45PM

HARTFORD ARNOLD — HOPE IN THE MIDST OF HEARTACHE

THURSDAY 8TH OCTOBER — 7.45PM

ELAINE PRICE — FROM STREET LIFE TO CHRIST LIFE

FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER — 7.45PM

BILLY AINSCOUGH — SURVIVOR OF HILLSBOROUGH DISASTER

SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER — 7.00PM

SINGER — VICTORIA SALT

GREAT
IS THE
LORD
AND
GREATLY
TO BE
PRAISED

IRON HALL IS CELEBRATING
125 YEARS (1890—2015)
OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS.

JOIN US AS WE GIVE THANKS TO
GOD IN A PRAISE SERVICE ON
FRIDAY 27TH NOVEMBER
8.00PM



REVELATION



CALDERWOOD
SISTERS



NATHAN
THOMPSON

GO YE INTO
ALL THE WORLD,
AND PREACH THE
GOSPEL TO EVERY
CREATURE.

MEET OUR MISSIONARIES



DONALD & JACQUELINE FLEMING

FAITH IN ACTION MINISTRIES

In March 2000 the Lord called Donald and Jacqueline into full time service, and also to start a new organisation called Faith in action missions. The work started in Belarus among the sick and the elderly, helping them in many different ways especially spiritually, as they tried to reach them and love them, and win them for the Lord Jesus Christ. Donald and Jacqueline soon realised that this was a ministry that was close to God's heart. Two years later the Lord called them to the Country of Ukraine, where they were going to assist in many different ministries, among these were schools, churches, hospitals, orphanages, prisons, rehabs, as well as other places.



ROBERTA SHERLOCK

C.E.F. PERU

Roberta is currently serving the Lord with Child Evangelism Fellowship in Peru. She is involved in direct ministry with boys and girls through weekly Good News Clubs in various homes and teaching classes in a local school. She also holds a number of teacher training classes in order to help prepare local believers to evangelize and disciple children. During the summer months she runs 5 Day Clubs and helps local churches with their Holiday Bible Clubs.



ERIC & ANN MAGOWAN

FAR EAST

Eric & Anne Magowan have been working as Missionaries with UFM for 44 years. They arrived in Congo early 1973 where they worked as Missionaries until 1993. Most of that Time was spent teaching in Bible College and Training students to be Pastors. They spent 2½ yrs in Kenya in the business end of the Mission, and returned to UK in 1995. The Lord opened the door in 1996 to The Far East to go there and open up a Bible Teaching Programme for the Training of young men and women for Pastoral Ministry in the secret Underground church. All Eric's Teaching Notes to Date have been translated into the Local Language and printed into 6 Volumes.

CHANGING FACES OF OUR ELDERS PAST & PRESENT

MEET OUR
CHURCH
FAMILY



ELDERS CIRCA 1970

BR: Bertie Campbell, James Beck, William Brown, Gordon McIlmail FR: Jack Kane, Jack Mitchell, Alex Campbell



ELDERS 1990 BR: Gordon McIlmail, Sidney Lewis, Jim Shaw, William Brown,
FR: Bertie Campbell, Alex Campbell, Raymond Sloan



ELDERS & WIVES 2004

BR: William Brown, Alex Campbell, Jim Martin, Jim Shaw, Bertie Campbell, Gordon McIlmail,
Hugh Martin, Jack Ritchie, Colin Murray, David Legge FR: Thelma Martin, Elizabeth Brown, Irene
Shaw, Priscilla Martin, Hazel Ritchie, Sharon Murray, Barbara Legge

CURRENT ELDERS



BR: Colin Murray, Lewis Roberts, Paul Murray, William Brown
FR: Hugh Martin, John Taylor, Trevor Polley

CURRENT DEACONS



Arthur Carnaghan



Grahame Grant



Dawson Kerr



Ivan Martin



Bill McMillan



Billy Mitchell



Stephen Roberts



Dave Rea



Leslie Stewart

MEET OUR MUSICIANS



David Martin



Margaret Kerr



Grace McArthur



Doris Sherlock



Peter Craig



Alan Craig



Naomi Smyth



Stephen Patton



Philip Craig

IRON HALL MALE VOICE CHOIRS OF YESTERYEAR

Founded post second world war during the time of Pastor Evans and continued until January 2015.





I.M.H.
CHOIR
1918

PSALMS 10-28

SUFFER
THE LITTLE
CHILDREN

CHILDREN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE HEART OF IRON HALL

- 01. Early Childrens Mission
- 02. 1986 Children's Meeting
- 03. 1990 Christmas Party



01



02



03

**CHILDREN'S
MEETING**
CLASS OF
2015



**SUNDAY
SCHOOL**
CLASS OF
2015



**JUNIOR
& SENIOR
BIBLE
CLASS**



**MOTHER'S &
TODDLERS — 2015**

GROWING UP IN IRON HALL BEN MURRAY

TO BE TOTALLY HONEST I DON'T SPECIFICALLY REMEMBER MY FIRST TIME IN THE IRON HALL, BUT I AM TOLD IT WAS 22 MAY 2000, I WAS 5 DAYS OLD! NOW FIFTEEN YEARS ON I'M STILL GOING STRONG.



Although I don't recall much about my early days in the old building, I do remember the opening of the current building. It was a very cold night and we had been to McDonalds for dinner, and I had got a Peter Pan toy dagger with the meal.

Just before the doors opened to let everyone in to see the new building I remember running around and poking people mainly my brother Matthew and parents Colin and Sharon Murray with this toy dagger to keep myself entertained.

My parents had me at everything possible from a very young age. One of the main memories I have is when Children's Day came because that was new outfit time. I was usually left quite annoyed by this because my mum got my brother the same outfit as me many times, apparently it was 'cute' but I thought quite the opposite!

According to many people my brother and I look very alike and we often got called each other's names on a weekly basis which we found far from amusing. So wearing the same outfits did not help the matter.

"FROM A VERY YOUNG AGE I KNEW MANY BIBLE STORIES, MEMORY VERSES AND CHILDREN'S CHORUSES AND ATTENDING THINGS SUCH AS SUNDAY SCHOOL, CHILDREN'S MEETING AND CHILDREN'S CHURCH ONLY IMPROVED THAT KNOWLEDGE."

One night at the age of 10 after talking to my dad, who is an elder in the church, I asked the Lord into my life. Also at the age of 10 I stopped going to Children's Church and started sitting in for the morning sermons. At that time there was no pastor in the church but I still found it beneficial to listen to a variety of preachers.

I have many fond memories of the Iron Hall around the time I got saved one of which was when Peter Ritchie who is now my Bible Class teacher performed his song about Hugh Martin falling into the baptismal tank at the Christmas Dinner, which left everyone there that evening in stitches of laughter.

At the age of 11 I started attending the YP which I have found very beneficial in my spiritual life and it has also been great craic too. YP weekends have left me with many great memories over the past four years and I'm really grateful to those at the YP who have made those weekends so memorable.

I am also very grateful to the YP for the chance to lead the odd meeting here and there and to become more involved in church life.

The annual Duck Race at Tollymore Forest Park and church BBQ have provided me with many great memories down the years which I have been able to share with my family and friends from the church like the Alexanders who have become great family friends over the years.

Sam Alexander, Philip Craig and Caleb McCullagh are great friends of mine within the church and every Sunday we are the 'back row believers' because we are in the back row every week without fail! However, we have faced some friendly competition for these particular seats.

When Pastor John Taylor and his wife Christine came to the church in 2011 they were warmly welcomed and were quickly liked by many. I was very impressed by the effort that Pastor Taylor put in to get to know people in the church by attending the YP where he shared his testimony and gave a brief talk. From that night onwards I began to really enjoy and appreciate his ministry which has helped me grow in my walk as a Christian.

The Iron Hall has been part of my life for years and it would be hard to imagine what it would be like without it. Over the past few years I feel that I have benefitted from the solid teaching that it provides.

"SO ON THIS 125TH ANNIVERSARY I CAN ONLY THANK GOD FOR THE WORK THAT THE IRON HALL HAS DONE IN THE LIVES OF MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS, THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN SAVED AS A RESULT OF ITS MINISTRY AND OF COURSE IN MY LIFE TOO."

LET NO
MAN
DESPISE
THY YOUTH

YOUNG PEOPLES FELLOWSHIP THEN & NOW

Iron Hall Young Peoples
outtings over the years —
spot anyone you know?





GROWING UP IN IRON HALL SCOTT MURRAY

HI! MY NAME IS SCOTT MURRAY AND I AM 34 YEARS OLD. I AM MARRIED TO MY WIFE HEATHER AND WE'VE BEEN BLESSED WITH 3 WONDERFUL BOYS, ISAAC (AGED 8), NATHAN (AGED 6) AND ELLIOTT (AGED 4) WHO HELP TO KEEP US ON OUR TOES.



I was born on 13 November 1980 and my parents brought me along to the Iron Hall from birth. The Iron Hall has been a big part of our family and there are currently 4 generations in attendance (my Grandparents, Parents, my wife and I along with our 3 boys).

I have very fond memories of the old Church, which was based in what is now the Activity Centre. The early days are fairly vague but there are a few things that stick in my mind. I can remember going along to Sunday School and the Childrens Meeting. I can remember my dad taking the Childrens Meeting along with George Magilton and my Nanny Myrtle (Murray).

"...ALTHOUGH SHE WAS ONLY 4FT NOTHING NOBODY MESSED WITH WEE MYRTLE! A FEW TRIED BUT THE WEE SANDY ROW BELFAST ACCENT CAME OUT AND AFTER A GOOD TELLING OFF THEY ALWAYS CAME BACK INTO LINE..."

We could do with a few more Myrtles in the meetings these days!

Another thing that is etched into my memory was Childrens Day. When I was younger I used to take piano lessons and one particular year, my sanity left me and somehow I got roped into playing the organ on my own in front of everybody.

I'm sure my mum or dad had bribed me with something to get me to do it. I've no idea what I played and I don't think anyone else in the Church did either!

That same year my brother John sang a solo called "Shining for Jesus". Lets just say his voice hadn't dropped by then! I'm also fairly confident that my sister Rachel also sang a solo "Busy little raindrops" during which she took a breath about every 2 syllables.

"...MY SIBLINGS CAN BOTH SING (THERE IS A BIT OF SINGING HERITAGE IN THE FAMILY!) BUT FOR SOME REASON I DIDN'T SEEM TO GET THAT GENE..."

I'm nearly sure there's a Home Video somewhere in my dads house of that year but lets hope it is well and truly lost!



Another embarrassing fact was the new Outfits for Childrens Day. Lets face it, the 80's / early 90's was a bit of a disaster for fashion. One year in particular (it must have been late 80's) the trendy thing was to wear dark trousers with a coloured jacket.

My brother and I both had a 3 piece with waistcoats that looked like my granny's curtains, dark trousers and then the jackets. I had a dark green jacket, John had light green and big Paul Roberts finished off the cat walk show with a smart blue blazer. And back then big Paul had a full head of hair!

If there is one thing you look back on with regret or disappointment it's the number of kids you grew up with that no longer go to the Church.

As I grew up into a Teenager the Youth Fellowship was on a Saturday night.

Davy Reid, George McClure and Hugh Martin took the YP and it was a good way of getting teenagers into Church, rather than what most of your friends were out doing. Quite often my mum would pick us up around 10pm take us home and my dad would be sitting on the sofa "watching"

Match of the Day but in reality was sound asleep - Now being a parent of 3 kids myself I know why!

One of the highlights in the YP Calendar was the Senior Citizens dinner. Although the Pensioners appear sensible on a Sunday at the Dinner they're as mad as a box of frogs but it's a good laugh.

There was a group of us after church on a Sunday night used to regularly go to the Grant's or the Carnaghan's house for supper.

It was some lighthearted fun and our group was a relatively small but close knit bunch, most of which still come to the church.

At Sunday School, Childrens Meeting and later into the Youth Fellowship I was often in the same group as a girl called Heather Murphy. Being a typical boy I was more interested in football than "smelly girls" but as I grew up that all changed!

At the age of 16 we started to go out and at 23 I found myself standing at the platform waiting for my bride to be to come up the aisle. Heather and I were married in 2004 by Pastor Legge in what was to be the last Wedding held in the old Church building.

"...MY GRANDFATHER WOULD SAY THERE IS NO GREATER BLESSING IN LIFE THAN BEING MARRIED TO THE PERSON THAT GOD CREATED FOR YOU AND I CAN CERTAINLY VOUCH FOR THAT..."

It's amazing to think that we've known each other through the Church from when we were both babies!

Just less than 2 months later I can remember the first Service being held in the new Church. A church that was designed and built with young people like me in mind.

The elders wanted a new building so the church could grow and be sustained for generations to come.

Since then I've had the pleasure of carrying our 3 boys, Isaac, Nathan and Elliott into the church as babies - it's funny how history sometimes repeats itself! And who knows, maybe our boys will find their bride to be is also right under their nose in the Church

..... watch this space!!



SENIOR YOUTH
FELLOWSHIP — 2015



LADIES MEETING



ACTIVITY MORNINGS FUN OVER FIFTY



First activity mornings in August 2006





ISRAEL 1981
44 men from Iron Hall
On tour in Israel.



HOW GOOD
IS THE GOD
WE ADORE

IRON HALL CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF GOD'S BLESSING







**IRON HALL
EVANGELICAL
CHURCH**

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Belfast BT5 4FX

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