



**HISTORY
OF
GRANVILLE CHAPEL**

by Ruth Oliver

THE HISTORY OF GRANVILLE CHAPEL

I. THE ORIGINS

In the Spring of 1990, the church which is called Granville Chapel and which follows the traditions of the 'Open Brethren' and which meets in a building on the corner of Granville Street and 43rd Avenue in Vancouver, British Columbia, celebrated their 40th Anniversary. Those who have chosen to be part of this church community have experienced many years of happy fellowship, and also some painful times as they have sought to carry out God's work in this area of the city and to find God's will for this church. Through all the ups and downs many people have been blessed by their time in the fellowship and many parachurch organizations have been helped by the leadership given by members of Granville Chapel.

During the 1940's a number of meetings were held to discuss the possibility of moving the Mount Pleasant Assembly into another area of the city of Vancouver. There was a strong desire to move to the west side of Vancouver and there were a number of reasons given for the move. These included the facts that there was not an Assembly meeting in that area; that Mount Pleasant Hall was overflowing each Sunday; that three-quarters of the members lived in the west side of the city and had to travel quite a distance to attend the meetings; and that the area around Mount Pleasant was becoming an industrial area. Another very compelling reason was that Mr. Marshall Sheppard had been carrying on a large Sunday school in a store front building in the Marpole area and it was felt that it would be desirable to have an Assembly in the area to follow up on all his contacts.

Over the years there were many meetings, much lively discussion and much prayer over the issue. Finally, on October 25, 1949, a contract was given to Bennett and White Construction Company to begin work on the new building. Approximately one-third of the members of Mount Pleasant Hall decided to continue to maintain a testimony in the Mount Pleasant area. This group later moved to Heather Street and 68th Avenue and formed Heather Gospel Chapel. The two lots were purchased on Granville Street for \$1,800.00 and the total cost of the building, including furnishings was \$112,000.00. The money was raised through donations, and the sale of bonds and debentures.

News of the new Assembly was announced to the Brethren world by a very interesting and informative letter that was

sent out to many other assemblies and assembly magazines. It read as follows: "The assembly in Vancouver, B.C. which has occupied the hall known as Mount Pleasant Hall since 1914 hopes (D.V.) to open a new building in May which will be known as Granville South Gospel Chapel. Located at the corner of 43rd Avenue and Granville Street, it will be opened by a special campaign with Mr. Henry Peterson of Los Angeles, who will be with us for the month of May. Services will be for young and old. We beseech your prayers that there may be much blessing."

Decision to move as an assembly was made in 1944. However, delays in the building program, aggravated by post-war restrictions and shortages of materials changed the picture to some extent. There will still be an assembly in Mount Pleasant Hall, as some of the brethren feel that they would like to maintain a testimony at the old stand. The two assemblies will be in full fellowship.

The new building is comprised of two main auditoriums, one for regular services and the other for Sunday school and young people's work. The two auditoriums will be separated by a collapsible curtain which can be drawn back making one large auditorium to seat between 600 and 700 people, giving all a full view of the platform. The assembly auditorium will seat about 330 on the main floor with accommodation for an additional 100 in the balcony. The Sunday school room will seat about 230 and spacious classrooms are provided for individual classes. The baptistry is located behind and above the platform with adequate dressing rooms conveniently situated. A modern kitchen with cafeteria service is planned, using the school room as a dining hall. Cloakrooms and other facilities are provided, such as a nursery where mothers with young children can enjoy the services in the knowledge that they will not disturb the audience. Also, there are aids for the hard of hearing. The building is frame construction with a full concrete foundation and structural steel beams thus eliminating all posts and ensuring a clear view of the platform from all parts of the auditorium. With hot water heating, using oil for fuel and with adequate ventilation, it is hoped to ensure the maximum of fresh air without drafts. It is a far cry from 1911 when some few brethren commenced the meeting which in 1914 built and occupied the Mount Pleasant Hall, seeking to carry out New Testament principles of reception, welcoming all who belonged to Christ, if sound in doctrine and godly in life. In those early days valuable help was given by many of the Lord's servants among whom were T.H. Maynard; R. McMurdo; J.M. Carnie; A.N. O'Brien and Tom Baird to mention but a few. The Lord has wonderfully blessed through the years and several assemblies have branched out to different parts of the

city, if not in whole at least in part from this assembly and from these quite a number of missionaries have gone to regions beyond, particularly to the Dominican Republic.

The brethren who were responsible for the commencement of Mount Pleasant Assembly have taken the lead in this new venture in moving to a new part of the city which has no immediate gospel testimony. It is the earnest desire of all that as Mount Pleasant has been, the new hall will be a testimony to our Lord Jesus Christ and to the glory of our God."

On behalf of Granville South & on behalf of Mount Pleasant Gospel Chapel:	W.W. Reid	Hall:
J.M. Robertson, R.C. Dunns		E.C. Hunt, J.T. Rae
R.M. Bagshaw, Jas. Paxton		F.W. Goff, A.J. Jordan
W.N. McPhee, Secty.		B. Thompson, Secty.
3391 West 35th Ave, Vanc. B.C.		3337 Manor, Burnaby, B.C.

The Service of Dedication was held on May 7, 1950 at 3:45 p.m. It was as follows:

Opening Hymn	Holy, Holy, Holy!
Prayer	E.M. Sheppard
Welcome by Chairman	J.G. Bennett
Hymn	The Church's One Foundation
Scripture	V.N. McPhee
Chorus	Faith of our Fathers
Prayer of Dedication	J.M. Robertson
Address	W.W. Reid
Prayer	H. Peterson
Hymn and Benediction	

The elders at the time of the dedication were:

Ralph Bagshaw	Walter McPhee
John Bennett	James Paxton
Jack Cochrane	William Reid
Robert Dunns	John Robertson
John Elder	Marshall Sheppard

Others were added later in the year:

Harry McKenzie	Gordon Rae
George Smith	

Still others were added a few years later:

J.W. Reid
R.E. Robins

II. THE FIFTIES

Approximately 240 persons moved from Mount Pleasant Hall to Granville Chapel. There was great enthusiasm for the work in the new location and also much work for the members to do. Many of us recall being involved in the weekly cleanup of the Chapel. Three or four families were designated to be responsible each week. Also, we could not afford to have a gardener in the early days as we were still paying off the debentures and wanted to continue to send a portion of the offerings to the missionaries. This practice was discontinued after a few years when it was felt that we could afford a full time janitor and a gardener. It became evident as we settled into the new home that we had a great deal of talent and many spiritual gifts to enable us to carry on the work. Many of the overseers were gifted administrators as well as gifted preachers and teachers; many of the congregation were gifted with musical talent and were able to play the organ and piano, as well as sing solos, in quartets and choirs; some were able to fulfill pastoral functions and act as counsellors to those who needed and desired this type of help; and many others had gifts of being able to look after the physical functions of the Chapel. The early Brethren held to the principle of the 'priesthood of all believers'. This was interpreted to mean that all Christians had the right and privilege to come before the Lord in worship and service and it was not necessary to be ordained in order to be actively involved in all aspects of church life. Therefore, anyone who so desired could find some place where their talents could be used and a large majority of the members were very involved, and for the most part, working happily together.

There were a number of visiting speakers invited during the first few years. Prayer meetings were held every night the week before the Dedication Service. The week following, Mr. Henry Peterson spoke each evening. In June, Mr. Herb Butt was with us for two weeks. These meetings were mainly times of ministry. However, a gospel service was held every Sunday evening and a youth service every Friday. In August, Mr. J.K. Boswell also came for two weeks of teaching. Each year during this period, a special series of meetings were held for a week or two at a time. These included Mr. Norman Kion; Mr. H.G. McKay; Mr. A.P. Gibbs; Mr. C.D. Howley; Mr. Stan Ford; Mr. Dennis Clark and Mr. Harold Wildish to name a few. Many other visiting preachers and missionaries came for a night, a weekend or a few days stay and ministered to the assembly.

The order of services in the first few years was as follows;

9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. - Sunday school and Bible class
11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. - Bible Hour
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. - Breaking of Bread
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. - Evening Service

One Sunday a month a Fellowship Hour was held after the evening service in the fireside room. Our family designated these Sundays as 'Five Star Sundays' because of the five services that were held on that day! The average attendance at these special events was around 150, with as many as 200 attending, so obviously they were very popular for a few years.

The Sunday school attendance was around 250 and therefore, required a large number of teachers. Among the superintendents during this time were Harold Macdonald, Jim Inrig and Jim Craig. The adult Bible class was held in the lounge and was very well attended. Marshall Sheppard was largely responsible for this program. For several years a bus was used to transport the children of Marpole Sunday School to Granville Chapel. A number of children, young people and even families were brought into the assembly as a result of this work.

It was a very busy time for the elders of the assembly as they attended to the details of finishing the work on the building; contacted preachers and missionaries regarding speaking engagements; carefully and prayerfully looked after the financial affairs of the assembly and designated gifts for missionaries; visited the sick as well as any member who missed the Breaking of Bread meeting three Sundays in a row, (yes, they kept a roll call of all the members so that they could be aware of a need); supervised the young men who were put in charge of Sunday school, young people's meetings, ushering, catering, etc. It was not until the last part of the decade that the elders began to discuss the advisability of appointing some of the younger men to be deacons in order to take over some of the responsibility of looking after the physical needs of the growing assembly and leaving the elders to be responsible for the spiritual needs.

Mr. R.C. Dunns passed away during the first year. Mr. Dunns frequently spoke at the Breaking of Bread service on the Coming of the Lord and we always enjoyed his thoughts on this subject that was so dear to his heart. In the Spring of 1951, the first gospel campaign was held with Mr. Ernest Woodhouse as the speaker. Following this series of meetings 22 persons were baptized and received into fellowship. In June of that year, the first wedding was held in the Chapel when Miss Eleanor Copp and Mr. Andrew Reid were united in marriage. A second elder, Mr. James Paxton went to be with the Lord during 1951. He had

been a very active elder in the early days and had willingly served on many committees.

Outreach at the Chapel continued throughout the 50's with the well attended Sunday school; hobby classes on Friday nights; a special campaign for children carried on by Mr. Huron Sheppard; some radio broadcasts and many other activities. Mr. James Fullerton and Mr. James McLelland were added to the Elders to help with the many duties required of this group. Some of the issues or details that they were required to attend to included pastoral visitation; use of the Chapel by outside groups or organizations; finances; order of meetings; special campaigns; use of individual cups versus the common cups during the Breaking of Bread; whether women would be allowed to ask questions during the Bible study period on Tuesday evening (no!) or serve on the welcoming group at the front door (maybe!); organization of regular meetings for all the men of the Chapel to get together for information and discussion; to be in touch with a large number of missionaries and decide on the monetary gifts to be sent to them; as well as a number of ministries such as the Missionary Home, Anvil Island Camp, combined Easter Conference with Kitsilano Hall, and the annual meeting of the Society, etc. The first deacons were chosen by the members of the assembly and approved by the oversight at the annual meeting on June 10, 1957. They were John Ferguson, Jim Inrig, George Richmond, Andy Reid, Wemyss Reid, Jack Oliver, Alec McKerracher, George Rich and Doug Robertson. It was suggested that they would be responsible for the gardening, collections and budget, attendance book and records, advertising, catering, ushering, and care of the premises.

During the late 50's there was much discussion regarding an addition to the building so that the large nursery school could be accommodated on the ground floor and thus give more rooms upstairs for the rest of the Sunday school. However, it was very difficult to get a permit from the City Hall because we did not have sufficient parking spaces for the new regulations that had come into effect since the Chapel was built. Mr. Will Wilding was contacted to draw plans to show how we could utilize the space between the ladies lounge and the adult lounge, and also to add some rooms above the kitchen and the fireside room. A poll of the 285 people on the roll indicated that the vast majority were in favor of the expansion.

In retrospect, the decade of the 50's was characterized by many assembly activities; some numerical growth (e.g. 22 baptized after the Wildish campaign and 9 committed their lives to the Lord during the Stan Ford campaign); and generally very good attendance on the part of the majority of the members of

the assembly. For most of us, our spiritual life and our social life centered around Granville Chapel.

Individuals in the assembly were frequently involved in other outreach activities such as holding a Sunday school for handicapped children at Sunnyhill Hospital or in parachurch groups such as Young Life, Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship, The Canadian Bible Society, etc.

III. THE SIXTIES

It is well documented in looking at the history of almost any group or organization that after there has been a period of revival and the early enthusiasm has worn off, there is a tendency to begin to look inward - to ask ourselves the question as to whether my needs are being met and what is there here for me. When any group begins to do that there is the danger of losing the original vision and to begin to lose some of the growth that has taken place. Early in this decade, it appears as if the elders were feeling overwhelmed by the efforts of trying to meet the needs of the growing assembly so decided to invite Mr. John Williams to come to Vancouver for a year in order to hold a Bible School during the fall and winter months and to be available to help in the camp work during the summer or to visit other assemblies in the area. Also during this period, other full time workers such as Don and Gwen McIntosh, Walter Liefeld, etc. were enlisted to help with the pastoral visitation for shorter periods of time. Other men were invited to come to Vancouver to minister in the assembly. These included Mr. A. Naismith, Mr. G.C.D. Howley, Mr. H. Wildish, Mr. E.W. Rogers, Mr. Stacey Woods, Dr. Fredrick Tatford, Dr. Paul Little, among others.

Following the completion of the expansion for the Sunday school, it was decided that there was a need to renovate the kitchen. The deacons were commissioned to buy additional dishes and cutlery so that 200 persons could be served dinner at one time. The women of the assembly were frequently in the kitchen! They also held a monthly Dorcas meeting; a yearly sale of handmade articles and crafts; a twice monthly missionary meeting and a morning coffee hour intended to be an outreach of friends and neighbors.

In the early part of the decade, Dr. Ward Gasque and Dr. Don Tinder came to speak at an Easter Conference. Dr. James Houston came to speak at Granville Chapel while he was in Winnipeg for a year. Under the vision and guiding hand of Mr. Marshall Sheppard, the discussions held with these men and some of the brethren at Granville led to the

establishment of Regent College on the campus at the University of British Columbia in the late 1960's. The faculty and students at Regent College have always expressed a debt of gratitude to some of the men of Granville Chapel who shared with Dr. Houston, Dr. Gasque and Dr. Armerding the vision of a college for Biblical studies on the campus at UBC and who worked with them to make that vision a reality.

By now there were a number of additions to the oversight. They were Dr. R.E. Robins, Mr. J.W. Reid, Mr. G. Abbott, Mr. James Clelland, Mr. Harold Macdonald, Mr. George Rich and Mr. Wemyss Reid. Mr. W.W. Reid and Mr. E.M. Sheppard were authorized to perform wedding ceremonies in the Chapel. The elders addressed a number of concerns during this period in the life of the assembly. These included a desire to see more elders and deacons take part in leading in worship at the Breaking of Bread meeting and a greater concern for the people in the neighborhood and for the work among the children and young people of the assembly. As early as 1964, the question of a full time youth director was discussed. The issues that the elders had to grapple with included; a policy governing the relationship between the assembly and Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship and Young Life; missionary support; the operation of the Sunday school; capital expenditures; evangelistic campaigns and the joint Easter conference.

At every point in the history of the assembly, the matter of pastoral care has been an ongoing concern - too much to be done by too few people! As well, the elders often had to deal with divisive issues, such as the wearing of head coverings by the women. After studying the Scriptures, the elders shared with the church that they believed that the women could attend the service without wearing a head covering. The elders were concerned that so many of the congregation were not attending the Breaking of Bread service and a number of initiatives were taken to endeavor to solve this problem. These included moving the service for a three month's trial period, but it was moved back at the end of this time; arranging for planned ministry after the Communion service for a period; and then trying to encourage worship time by having someone open the meeting with a word on a specific theme. The use of individual cups was introduced for discussion at this time.

During this decade there were a number of wedding anniversaries of note - Mr. & Mrs. Hallam and Mr. & Mrs. Stonehouse celebrated their 50th, while Mr. & Mrs. J.D. Wilson and Mr. & Mrs. Macdonald, Sr. celebrated their 60th wedding anniversaries. The number of those who had their names in the current directory in 1967 was 250. The majority

of those who were baptized during this ten year period were teenage children of families in the assembly. In 1969, Terry Winter spent the better part of the year at Granville Chapel, helping with the youth work and speaking at Granville and other assemblies in the city. It was during this year that Terry, in consultation with a number of the young men in the assembly, felt God calling him to full time evangelism and in 1970 the Terry Winter Evangelistic Association was formed. He was commended to this work by the elders of Granville Chapel.

It was noted that at that time there were 33 missionaries who had been commended from the assemblies in British Columbia, and how best to support a great many of these was always of great concern to the overseers. John and Sheila Shannon were commended to the Lord's work in the Dominican Republic in the early 1960's. Sheila's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wemyss Reid had been actively involved in the planning and building of Granville Chapel and Sheila had been at the church all of her life. The elders were pleased to make this commendation of Sheila and John. The budget for 1965 indicates that the total budget was \$40,000. with \$23,000. earmarked for missionary work and \$17,000. for the operating budget. A report states that in the mid-sixties, there were between 35-40 attending Friday night teens, and 40-50 in the teen and twenties group. A junior Bible class held on Sunday morning was also well attended. Also a gym class for young boys was held at the same time as the hobby classes for girls.

There had been discussions for some time regarding the advisability of changing the schedule of Sunday meetings. It was suggested that we give the new format a trial for a six month period. The new format was as follows;

9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.	Sunday school and Bible class
11:00 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.	Family Bible hour
6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.	Breaking of Bread

At a later period, the Breaking of Bread meeting was changed to 7:00 p.m.

The assembly and especially the elders were involved in a number of joint ventures with other assemblies in the city. These included:

B.C. Outreach - a team of young men, led by Terry Winter who spent the summer months travelling around B.C., holding gospel meetings for adults and children, helping in Daily Vacation Bible Schools and camps, etc. Significant leadership

to the young men who undertook this mission was given by Dr. Wemyss Reid of Granville Chapel.

Youth Challenge - a Saturday night youth rally held in Granville Chapel for a number of years and sponsored by young men from a number of the assemblies. It was a very popular Saturday night activity for years.

Missionary study class - held in an effort to encourage some to consider going to the mission field and others to be supportive of missionaries.

Joint commendation of those interested in going out full time - as much as possible the different assemblies who were in the fellowship had a desire to give this kind of commendation and support to those who had a call to serve the Lord in a foreign field or here at home.

Easter Conference - for a number of years, it was just Granville and Kitsilano involved. Then 16th and McDonald came in, too. A few years later Granville decided to not be involved in the organization of the conference, and some other assemblies became involved. The facilities at Granville are still being used by this group each Easter weekend.

Total Care Home with a board and room set-up - the first discussions were held regarding the building of such a facility. It was several years before these early meetings led to the building of Blenheim Lodge and Parkdale Manor.

IV. THE SEVENTIES

The period of the sixties in North America was a time of change and unrest. The impact of this period on the youth of our society and particularly on the youth of our congregation presented new challenges to our elders in the seventies. Many of the original elders had now retired. Among this group were Mr. W.W. Reid and Mr. W.N. McPhee, both of whom were pioneer workers among the open assemblies in Vancouver. Mr. McPhee was the secretary for the elders for years as well as maintaining a steady correspondence with the many missionaries. To replace them and to widen the responsibility, new members were added; Messers John Cochrane, Frank Hughes, Andrew Reid, Don McIntosh, Maurice Campbell, Ken Smith, Don Bennett, Dave Sheppard, Stanley Cummings, Drs. James Houston and Gilmour Davies. Many committees were established to cover all the activities of the congregation such as finance, ministry, welcoming,

pastoral, young people's, women's activities, missions, Christian education, baptisms, emblems etc.

Dr. Houston and Dr. Terry Winter were chosen to perform wedding ceremonies.

A number of decisions were made around this time which broke with some of the traditions of the past. One was to use individual cups at the Breaking of Bread service. A second was regarding starting a Daycare Centre in the Chapel. After much investigation and discussion a Daycare committee was established and the Daycare opened its doors in October 1973 with over 20 children and a Christian staff. Also at this time, it was decided to begin to serve coffee and tea after the Family Bible Hour - which is ongoing to the present time. The question of women's role in the church was given a lot of prayerful thought and consideration. In 1977 a motion that read, "that women be permitted in the worship service to pray, give out a hymn, and read the Scripture but not to teach." was defeated by a narrow margin. The elders endeavored to approach all of these issues cautiously and Biblically. There was a decision made at this time to add women to the committees where their gifts could be used. As well as the women's issue, the elders were also trying to deal with what practical steps could be taken to have a more meaningful fellowship in our impersonal society. Again a pastoral committee was established under the chairmanship of Mr. J.W. Reid. Many expressed interest in being involved in the visitation of the sick and elderly, the young people and also being part of the welcoming committee at Granville. About this time there was an interest in setting up small home groups for Bible study and prayer. The elders were in favor but were concerned that we not discontinue the Tuesday evening meeting at the Chapel. As it turned out, the desire for the home groups grew but a group has continued to meet at the church on Tuesday evenings. The elders were given the opportunity to take some classes in counselling from Dr. Paul Stevens and Dr. Max Goldsmith in an effort to help them be more effective in their dealings with the problems of the congregation.

In an effort to improve communication, it was decided to have monthly breakfast meetings for men and for a time these were quite well attended and helpful. To improve fellowship, it was decided to have bi-monthly potluck suppers on Sunday evenings, and also to have a family camp once a year at Anvil Island. To improve the spiritual life of the assembly, it was decided to have informal times of prayer after the Sunday evening service and also from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. on Monday morning.

The members and elders have always had a special interest in the work in the D.R., as the Dominican Republic is affectionately called because so many of the missionaries who were working there were either from Vancouver or related to people in Vancouver. Sharon McIntosh, who grew up in the D.R. and then came to join us at Granville Chapel was commended to the work in Columbia, South America, and Doug and Marian Rich to the work in St. Vincent Island, West Indies, with International Crusades. Doug is the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Rich and he grew up at Granville and had been very active in teens and youth work. During this period we enjoyed the ministry of Mr. Vangioni from Argentina; Gary Inrig and Terry Winter as well as many of the men who had come to Vancouver to teach at Regent College. These included Dr. William Martin, Dr. James Houston, and Dr. Ward Gasque, all of whom had become part of the congregation at Granville Chapel as well as Dr. Carl Armerding who attended Marineview Chapel. Attendance was up at the Sunday morning service, but the elders did have to deal with the concerns that there was frequently too much intellectualism in the sermons and also the question of which translation of the Bible was appropriate to be used from the platform. It interested many of us that Dr. Martin used a Hebrew text reading the Bible from the back to the front and was able to translate it into English as he read from the Hebrew.

During this time some of the men who ministered to the congregation besides our own members and missionaries, were Mr. John Williams, Mr. David Pawson, Mr. Alan Nute, Mr. Stacey Woods, Dr. Bruce Waltke and Dr. Clark Pinnock.

A number of special events took place - weddings too numerous to mention. But special note was made of the fact that Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Wilson celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. McCullough celebrated their 60th and Mr. and Mrs. Fraser and Mr. and Mrs. Coldridge celebrated their 50th during this decade.

In the latter part of the decade, the brethren took a step that had been contemplated for some time and that was to invite Mr. Ken Blue as a full time worker at the Chapel in a pastoral role with the understanding that he speak at not more than one-third of the Bible Hour services. Ken was with us for a period of two years and many were helped by his very practical ministry. Originally Ken was to be at the church for a one year period but this was extended for a second year. Ken had a desire to get to know everyone in the assembly as soon as possible, so all the church members were divided into 5 groups and were invited to a "get acquainted" night. This was an opportunity to share how

individuals felt about conditions at the church while at the same time getting to know Ken. Reports of the discussions were given at the meetings of the elders. A new communications committee was set up, chaired by Ken. It was responsible for the following areas; the weekly bulletin, the new quarterly newspaper and the new cassette library. Ken had a heart for evangelism and during the summer of 1979, he led a team of 15-20 young people in the Jericho Project, which was a street and beach outreach ministry in the Kitsilano area of the city. Granville sponsored two young people, Matt Wakeford and Sue Cruickshank to be involved in the project for the summer.

The numbers in the Sunday school were down, due no doubt to the fact that the 'baby boomers' were growing up and the 'zero population growth' idea was being espoused. Also, a number of the young married couples were moving out to the suburbs. However, the attendance of adults at the Christian education hour was around 100 at this time. Ken Blue and the elders had a concern to strengthen the involvement of the 25-40 age group and endeavored to do this by getting them more involved in committees. Every member of the congregation was assigned to an elder and the elders were asked to contact them individually, to let them know that he had a care for them. This led to many contacts, but of course, not all were reached. As there were 21 elders at that time this was not quite as onerous a task as it would be today.

As Granville developed a greater concern for those in the wider community, the elders made the decision to sponsor a family of the Vietnamese boat people. The members were asked how they would like to be involved in this project. For a few it was direct involvement in helping the refugees get settled into a new culture, and for others it was in a more indirect way, by giving money, clothing or household goods. A few years later, Mr. and Mrs. Dang were baptized at Granville. At that time, they had the opportunity to express their gratitude for the new start made possible by many in Granville Chapel.

As the decade came to a close, the elders were still trying to make a decision as to whether we should continue to have a full time worker at Granville or not. There were 21 elders on the oversight at the end of the decade, and all or most of them appeared to be on one or two of the committees that were functioning at that time. They were also reexamining the question of the role of women in the church and the participation of women in the communion service.

V. THE EIGHTIES

The decade of the eighties was not an easy or comfortable time for many in the church, and certainly not for the elders. Some concerns were raised that had not needed to be dealt with previously. One in this category was the question of divorce and remarriage and a second was the question of the marriage of a Christian to a non-Christian. The elders agreed to the following statement:

'God's intention in creating mankind male and female and in ordaining marriage is clear. Human sexuality finds fulfillment in marriage, and marriage is a permanent and exclusive union. This is the divine purpose and ideal. (Gen. 2:24 Mat. 19:4-6)

Divorce is a breach of covenant and is contrary to God's intention (Mal 2:13-16). It is nowhere commanded nor even encouraged in Scripture, but where permitted (tolerated) it presupposes the right to remarry (Deut 24:1-4). We will accept into fellowship anyone divorced and remarried who is truly repentant and who is attempting to lead a Christian life. We would not preclude such a one from exercising their full spiritual gifts given from the Lord."

It was agreed that it would be a general principle that the elders would not marry a Christian to a non-Christian and that they would strongly urge all who wished to be married at Granville to have pre-marriage counselling.

A number of those who were elders at this time resigned for various reasons. Some because they were moving, some going to a different church, some because they could not accept a decision that had been made by the oversight regarding some of the more divisive issues and some because they felt that it was time for them to step down. During this time Dr. Phil Hill and Mr. Bill Armerding joined the oversight. Mr. Tim MacIntosh was also invited to join the oversight as he had accepted the position of youth worker as a part time staff member, while he attended Regent College working toward his Master's degree. Also, in 1980, a new initiative was taken when two women were appointed as deacons. They were Mrs. Catherine Sheppard and Mrs. Bev Richards.

At this time the name of the church was officially changed to Granville Chapel from Granville South Gospel Chapel. This really just recognized the fact that the name had been unofficially shortened long before this time. It had been suggested that we change it to Granville Community Church, but some thought that would indicate that we were moving too far away from our roots in the Brethren movement.

A disturbing event took place early in the eighties,

when a group of approximately 17 young people were encouraged, by someone from outside the Chapel, to leave Granville to go to St. John's Shaughnessy Church. They did not, however, remain there and it is believed that for a time most did not attend any place of worship. This fact led a group of concerned people at the church to get together on a regular basis to pray for the young people, and for the church as a whole. Also, that the Lord would lay it on the hearts of six families to have a desire to come to Granville. We wanted them to all come at about the same time as one coming alone might feel that there were not enough children for their children to relate to. It was a couple of years before we saw our very specific prayer answered very specifically! Happily, we can report that nearly all of the 17 young men and women have been back to Granville or still are back and in fellowship at the church, and we thank God for that. What this did teach us is that when there are major problems or concerns, the answer is that we need to get on our knees before God. Of course, we all know this but it often takes a crisis to help us remember to do so.

Among more minor concerns to be dealt with by the elders was the matter of how to establish a membership roster. This had been an ongoing concern that had not been answered as yet. In order to meet the requirements of the societies act, the elders now ask all who wish to become members of Granville Chapel to sign the Statement of Faith or verbally affirm their consent. There was a strong desire to encourage the young people to consider going into Christian summer service. The elders were prepared to help these individuals out financially if they felt God calling them to a part time ministry. The purpose of this move was to encourage these young people to have the opportunity to discover if full time Christian work might be God's will for their lives.

For some time the elders had been concerned about setting objectives and goals for the church. Early in 1982, several of them prepared an excellent document for study and presentation to the congregation. It contains a statement of purpose; a list of ten goals; and an outline of strategies that would lead (quoting from the document) "to a dynamic, Spirit-led community of believers with a passion for God".

At this time the elders invited Mr. Bill Anderson of Los Angeles to consider coming to Granville as a full time worker. However, Bill did not feel that the time was right, so declined. Tim MacIntosh had been in the position of part time youth worker for several years and in 1984, Tim was asked to work full time at the church while the search committee looked for someone to fill the position of pastor on a more permanent basis. As the search committee continued to

approach various contacts over the next year and a half, it became evident to them that God appeared to be closing the many doors that they tried to open. Finally, in late 1986, the elders made the decision to make a recommendation to the church at the special meeting called for January 1987, that Tim be asked to accept a long term (5 years) commitment to be the Pastor of Granville Chapel and to give leadership and vision for the church. Tim's appointment was very difficult for some of the members to accept, possibly because he had grown up in the church and also, because of his style of leadership and teaching. However, for many more his leadership at the church has been a great blessing and has encouraged all of us to be more involved in prayer and evangelism. During the year, approximately 50 people left Granville Chapel - some moved out of the province; some moved to the suburbs; some moved to other churches and some became too ill to come to church or were called to be with the Lord. However, on a more positive note it is encouraging that during that same year, two social evenings were held for new members at Granville Chapel and approximately 50 people attended.

Dr. Ward Gasque and John Davies were invited to act as elders. Cam MacIntosh was authorized to perform wedding ceremonies. Chris Hall was put on part time staff in order to work with the young couples in the church, while attending Regent College. Subsequently, Dan Eernisee was asked to work with the teen and young people of the church. For the past year, a young woman, Carrie Chimiuk has been working with the teens on a part time basis. For a number of years, Peggy Reid acted as the secretary on a voluntary basis, followed by Nancy Church and then Eleanor Reid. Eventually, it was decided that we required a secretary on a more regular basis and Mary Gordon was taken on staff to fill this role.

Among those who celebrated their 60th and 50th wedding anniversaries during this period were many couples who had been among the founding members of Granville Chapel and a few who had joined the assembly in more recent years. Mr. and Mrs. George McTaggart, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Nelson and Mr. and Mrs. Wemyss Reid were those who had 60 years together. Mr. and Mrs. John Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. George Chelsom, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Cummings, Mr. and Mrs. John Cuthill, Dr. and Mrs. John Elder and Mr. and Mrs. Harry McKenzie celebrated 50 years of marriage. A very impressive number of those blessed by God with many happy years together.

During the eighties, Granville was actively involved with the Billy Graham Crusade in Vancouver in October 1984; in the Pavilion of Promise at Expo 1986; and in an outreach effort with Justyn Rees, held at Oakridge auditorium. Following this

effort, it was felt that it would be more effective to have the outreach in our own church. Since that time, we have had Guest Sundays on a fairly regular basis. The speakers at these special services have been Messers Tim MacIntosh, Terry Winter, Michael Green, Justyn Rees, Harry Robinson and Ian Elliot. A nurture group has often begun after one of these Guest Sundays was held. Another outreach activity has been "Morningside", a group for young moms to attend where they can learn to do crafts and have an opportunity to meet with Christian women. Kid's Night, which is held on Monday evening over the supper hour, is an opportunity to reach kids in the neighborhood who do not attend the Sunday school. It has been very successful in doing this and also in getting many of them to attend Daybreak Point Bible Camp.

Home Bible study groups have had a significant part in the development of Granville Chapel in recent years. The first small group to begin meeting outside the church was formed privately over twenty years ago. The people who met in this group had a concern for the church and a desire to see it be more effective in the community. Other groups began to meet, but the first committee appointed to introduce small group Bible studies to the whole church consisted of Ken and Ruth Smith, Don and Joan Bodel, Joan Messer, Chris Houston and Bill and Joy Armerding. Since that time, home Bible study groups have been an active and vital part of the church.

The Sunday school continues to be small but active. The young parents in the church appreciate the children's church that is carried on during the sermon time. We continue to have an adult education hour but the number of members of the congregation who take advantage of this program is not as great as in the past, even though the adult education committee seeks to offer a range of choices and topics.

Granville Chapel has had a unique role in the wider Christian community. This has been in the area of supplying Christian leadership. It would be impossible to name all those who have been active in parachurch organizations, such as Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship, Young Life, Terry Winter Evangelistic Association, Regent College, Canadian Bible Society, Bible Study Fellowship, International Teams, to name a few.

VI. INTO THE NINETIES

For those of us who are at Granville Chapel in the nineties, it is a very exciting and sometimes exhausting

time as we endeavor to keep up with the changes and the new people that come every Sunday. Some stay for one week, some for a month but more all the time are making Granville Chapel their church home. In the last year of the last decade, twelve people found Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior while attending the church. Tim has challenged us to bring that number closer to fifty-two in the first year of this decade. The average age of those attending the church has dropped considerably in the past decade and we have had our own 'baby boom' this year, which augers well for the nursery in the future. However, the number of mature leaders has also dropped and a major concern and matter for prayer at the present time is that there are only five active elders. Consequently, the elders have made the decision that it is the time to actively search for two new staff members, either full time or part time. In a letter of July 29, 1990, it was stated that; "The purpose of staff at Granville Chapel is not to do all of the ministry in the church, but rather to better prepare the whole church to do the ministry. Church consultants say that ideally you should have one staff person for every 100 people in the congregation. As there is approximately 300 now attending the church, we are somewhat behind". The elders feel that what we require is someone with the gift of administration and someone for pastoral care.

It has been exciting to watch the increasing number of young people who are interested in taking part in a summer mission project. For some, it is counselling at camp, for others it is off to a foreign land. This summer, for the first time our own team was commissioned for a mission in Eastern Europe - Romania. As well, a number went to work with other missions. Tim and other members of the church continue to be involved in leading a one week long camp for teens at Anvil Island. The church is the home church for a number of Young Life staff and a great number of the young people are involved as volunteer leaders in Young Life clubs.

As the average age decreases and more and more babies arrive, there are fewer of us to celebrate such special events as a 50th wedding anniversary. However, Lois and Harold Macdonald were one such couple in this first year of the new decade.

As Granville Chapel moves into this decade, it is the prayer of all of us who consider it our church home, that the Lord will continue to use all of us in His service here at 43rd and Granville and bless us as He has done in the past. And may all the praise and glory go to Him.

