

## First Missions – Western Australia

### First Missions – Pioneering Workers – Western Australia

Western Australia – 1905

Revised August 7, 2025

**When did the workers first arrive?** 1905

**Who were the first brother workers?** First to arrive were Tom Turner and Jim McCreight

**Who were the first sister workers?** First to arrive were **Laura Falkiner** and Aggie Hughes

**Who was the first to profess?** Syd Maynard in Kanowna, near Kalgoorlie in 1906; SYD WAS FIRST PERSON IN AUSTRALIA TO PROFESS. The next person to profess was Mrs. Burgess of Bassendean, about 1907.

**Who was the first native to go in the work?** Syd Maynard  
Grace Snowball was the first Sister Worker to go in the work in WA.

**When & Where was the first meeting?** (unknown)

**When/where was the first baptism?** (unknown)

**When & Where was the first convention?** Held between the homes of the Radfords and Jacobs in Bassendean, then known as West Guildford in March 1915; and also in 1916.

**Where are the conventions currently held?** Two conventions held at Williams

**Who have the Overseers been?**

Tom Turner was overseer in W.A. from the 1916-1921 workers Lists. He later was overseer in Queensland for many years.

Syd Maynard 1922-1923. Must have left for India right after this.

Jack Craig in 1924; was his only year there.

Ted Terry 1925-1927. After this he was in Queensland for many years.

Nestor Ferguson 1928-1937. Married Peggy and looked after Canea Convention grounds for many yrs. died in WA in 1963.

Willie Phyn 1938 for only one year there. He was overseer in New Zealand for many years until his death; and also spent many years in the Mediterranean (Egypt, Greece, Cyprus, Syria, plus some time in what was then the Belgian Congo.)

Sam Jones 1939-1946 (until his death) He was overseer in Tasmania for many years before going back to Western Australia which had been one of his early fields, where he died on Sloan's property.

Joe Williamson 1947-1950 One of the original workers to Australia from Scotland when he was still a teenager. He was overseer only for this brief time and was usually was John Hardie's lieutenant in New South Wales.

Walter Schloss 1950-1955. The Schloss family had many in the work from Queensland. This was his only oversight and he returned to Queensland., where he died shortly thereafter.

Bert Cameron 1956 to March 25, 1967, when he died.

**NOTE:** *Missing Workers Lists from 1956 until 1968*

Clem Geue 1967 – 1980

Bill Macourt 1980 – 2007-08

Peter Doecke Current head worker (2009)

**See also Fred Allen's Account**

## The Work of the Gospel and Conventions in Western Australia

The first workers to come to Western Australia from Ireland were **Tom Turner, Jim McCreight, Laura Falkiner and Aggie Hughes in 1905.**

The first one to profess in Western Australia was **Syd Maynard** on the Kanowna Goldfields, near Kalgoorlie, in 1906, through Laura Falkiner and Aggie Hughes. The next one to profess was Mrs. Burgess of Bassendean, about 1907.

**Sam Jones arrived from Ireland in 1908** and had his first mission around Rockingham, where his companion, **Bob Bashford**, deserted him. Sam went to South Australia in 1909 for the convention at Woodside. He did not return until March 1939, after his first and only visit to Ireland. He died in the bush at Rockingham on the 14th April, 1946.

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob came from New Zealand to have an open home about 1910-11.

Mr. and Mrs. Higgs professed near the end of 1911, through **Bess Pattison and Annie Smith.**

Grace Snowball and her Mother professed in 1912 through **Bess Pattison and Annie Smith.**

Mr. and Mrs. Radford professed through **Emma Mole and Edie Sadlier**, after having given his Church in Bellevue, where he was a Baptist Parson to them for gospel meetings. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor who were some of his congregation professed then also. Mim Radford (later Mrs. Kemble), Mr. Radford's sister, professed about the same time.

Mr. Radford in his last service in his Church told his congregation that he had no sermon for them any more, and was sorry to tell them that he had been deceived as to what was God's true Way, until now when he heard the gospel through God's true servants. He closed that service with the Hymn being sung "Oh Jesus I have promised to serve thee to the end". Mrs. Radford died on May 14th, 1932. Mr. Radford wrote the Hymn "In times of deepest darkness, of sorrow and distress, (N.H.B. No. 262) the night his wife died.

**Theo Karvonikis** professed through **Laura Falkiner** and companion, about 1913, after listening to them in open air meetings in Barrack Street, Perth, near the fish shop in which he had been working. He went in the Work in Western Australia and later he went to **Greece** to preach the Gospel, where he died. He gave the name of "CANEa" to the convention grounds in memory of the name of the place on the Isle of Crete where he had been born.

Mr. Will Gregory professed in a mission held in Bakers Hill, first by **Edie Sadlier and Ethel Harrison** and then by **Alice Begbie and Maude Kerns.** He professed in July 1914.

**The first convention in Western** Australia was held between the homes of the Radfords and Jacobs in Bassendean, then known as West Guildford in March 1915. **Adam Hutchison** was the visiting worker.

**The second convention in Western Australia** was also held in Radfords and Jacobs homes in 1916.

Mrs. Dawson and Lily professed through **Tom Turner and Oscar Collins** at Balance Lo. Donny Brook in 1916. Vicky Dawson (later Mrs. McClellan) and Flossie Dawson (later Mrs. Helms) professed in 1917.

**The third convention in Western Australia** was held in a butcher shop on Guildford Road, Bassendean in 1917. **Adam Hutchison** was the visiting worker.

**The first convention held at "CANEa", Gosnolls** was in Mr. and Mrs. Radford 's home in 1918. Conventions continued there until the last one in March, 1930.

**The first convention on Mr. and Mrs. Radford 's property, CANEA, Helena Valley was in March, 1931.**

Preparations were begun on the new grounds by Nestor Ferguson, Doug Neale and Ian Heberton in 1930. Mr. Radford then went on a visit to New Zealand, after his wife died in 1932.

Mr. Colin Scott, of Kellerbin, took over the purchase of "Canea" from Mr. Radford, after Mrs. Radford's death.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Potter came to live at Canea on October 4, 1932, and stayed for about 7 years.

Mr. Radford came to live at "Canea" again about 1939 or 1940.

Ray Barnes worked with Mr. Radford and when Ray married Mary Shanks in August 1942, they lived at "Canea" also.

A few years later Mr. Radford built the little cottage across the road from "Canea" and called it "Klemse". The letters of this name representing the first letter of the names of people who had a great spiritual influence on his life:

K for his wife Kate

L for Laura Falkiner  
 E for Emma Mole  
 M for Maude Kerns  
 S for Syd Maynard  
 E for Edie Sadlier

Mr. and Mrs. Bob Francis came to live in Canea in 1948.  
 Mr. and Mrs. Nestor Ferguson came in 1951.

After the convention in 1953, the “Canea” house was rebuilt.

About 1957 Colin Scott transferred the Canea property to Mrs. Nestor Ferguson, owing to his family not professing, and wanting it to be preserved for the use of conventions.

In March 1973 David and Grace Edelston came to live at “Canea” and Mrs. Nestor Ferguson (Peggie) then went to live in “Klemse.” Mr. and Mrs. Len Denboer took over the tenancy of Canea and shifted in there on Dec. 12th, 1978. David and Grace Edelston shifted into their own house opposite “Canea”.

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#### **Workers Listed in this account: (in alphabetical order by first names)**

**BROTHERS:** Bob Bashford, Jim McCreight, Oscar Collins, Sam Jones, Syd Maynard, Theo Karvonikis, Tom Turner

**SISTERS:** Laura Falkiner, Aggie Hughes, Bess Pattison, Annie Smith, Emma Mole, Edie Sadlier, Alice Begbie, Maude Kerns, Ethel Harrison

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#### **Syd Maynard's Testimony**

**NOTE:** Syd professed in 1906 when he was twenty years old. He was the first to profess on the Continent of Australia, as well as the first person to profess in WA, and in 1908, Syd became the first native Australian to become a worker.

He labored in WA and SA for 10 years and India where he spent the last 29 years until his death in India in 1954, aged 68. He had oversight of India after 1925 when Adam Hutchison died.

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My mother was a very religious woman and there was a good deal of religion in our home. We were brought up Methodist. I used to think I am not serving God but if I ever want to I know what to do. At about ten years of age I began to take an interest in religious things.

Later we went to the gold fields and we ran wild and did as we liked. My father did not care, then mother came over and things became a little better and things were brought into our lives.

There was a revival mission and I was on the afternoon shift from 4:00 to 12:00 each night. And they would tell me when I came home about these meetings and it impressed me, not the preaching, but the thought that people were turning to God. They tested the meeting and I walked out to the front and said that I wanted to make a start to serve God; my mother was excited about this.

I did not go far before I realized that I did not have the goods, and I tried to my best to improve my life. I went to other religious meetings and was soon in great distress. Then one day two sister workers came to the town and were having open air meetings in the street and I listened. This struck a cord in my heart. The time came when the brothers came and a little while after they had meetings in our home.

After they closed one of the meetings my mother said she did not want any more meeting there. She closed the home against them. As the servants went out the door that night, I said, “Boys I am with you anyway,” and that is how I decided. The days that followed were very distressing. My mother pleaded with me also my eldest sister begged me not to do this. Mother was a quiet woman I never remember her having a quarrel with anyone yet one night when I was working in another place she went down the street in an open street and spoke against the servants of God before the public.

There was something done in me that they could not uproot. It was a desire to do the will of God as much as I could understand, which led to division in our family. Later I went down in the South of Western Australia and I took a return ticket and I haven't used it yet!

I then went over to the state of Victoria for the first convention ever held in Australia. After that I went back with Tom Turner to Western Australia as his companion. We struggled together. Sometimes we did not have too much to eat, things were difficult, but after some years we met under better circumstances. Tom said it was a good thing we did not give in during those days.

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**TTT Editor's Note:** The above summary information has been compiled by the TTT Editor from various sources. Corrections or additions are most welcome; as well as other historical accounts for other countries. [Email TTT](#)