

Advancing!

... In Faith



A (HISTORY) (STORY) OF
 ST. STEPHEN'S UNITING CHURCH
 FREEMAN STREET
 RINGWOOD EAST VIC.

COMPILED FROM * MINUTE BOOKS AND CHURCH
 RECORDS BY KEITH SUTTON, A MEMBER OF
 ST. STEPHEN'S FROM MAY, 1955, UNTIL OCTOBER, 2003.
 (OR 47½ YEARS)

AS NOT ALL RECORDS WERE AVAILABLE
 AT TIME OF RESEARCH THERE WILL BE
 OMISSIONS AND SOME DATES MAY NOT BE
 ACCURATE (APPROX ONLY)

* "50 PLUS YEARS"

Keith Sutton (A.K. SUTTON)
 FEBRUARY 2007

COULD BE ADDED (IF REQUIRED)

PAGE 25 - THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
 USED THE SMALL HALL FOR THEIR MEETINGS FROM
 OCTOBER 1966 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1972.

PAGE 18 - A MEN'S FELLOWSHIP WAS ACTIVE
 DURING THE MID 1980'S. THE FORMAT WAS AN EVENING
 MEAL FOLLOWED BY SPEAKERS ON A WIDE RANGE
 OF SUBJECTS.

ST. STEPHEN'S UNITING CHURCH ①

FREEMAN STRISSET
RINGWOOD EAST

"ADVANCING IN FAITH"

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE METHODIST AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN RINGWOOD EAST WERE SIMILAR.

BOTH FIRST MET IN PRIVATE HOMES - IN THE MAIN YOUNG PEOPLE SETTING UP HOMES IN A NEW AREA AND LOOKING FOR A "CHURCH HOME".

METHODIST.

ON 12TH MAY 1954, A MEETING WAS HELD AT THE HOME OF MR. ERIC + MRS. ENID TOMKIN, 1 BOND STREET, RINGWOOD EAST AND IT WAS DECIDED TO FORM A METHODIST CONGREGATION IN THE AREA. ON 17TH MAY A METHODIST TRUST WAS FORMED. COMMENCING 30TH MAY PUBLIC WORSHIP WAS CONDUCTED AT 1 BOND STREET, WHERE IT CONTINUED UNTIL A CHURCH WAS BUILT.

ON 16TH OCTOBER, 1954, THE REV. REG BAADT SUPERINTENDENT OF THE RINGWOOD/CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT SET THE FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE CHURCH ON LAND WHICH THE CIRCUIT HAD SHOWN FORESIGHT BY PURCHASING IN 1948, IN WHAT WAS STILL ORCHARD COUNTRY.

THE CHURCH WAS OPENED ON SATURDAY 5TH MARCH, 1955, BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE VICTORIAN METHODIST CONFERENCE, REV. A. PEDERICK.

THE RINGWOOD/CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OVERSIGHT OF THE RINGWOOD EAST CHURCH FROM THE OUTSET AND, ALTHOUGH IT BECAME PART OF A CO-OPERATING PARISH IN JANUARY, 1966, THIS APPLIED UNTIL THE INAUGURATION OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN JUNE, 1977.

DURING THIS TIME THE FOLLOWING MINISTERS NOT ONLY GUIDED AND HELPED IN ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS BUT LED WORSHIP, ALONG WITH A FEW RETIRED MINISTERS, IN PARTICULAR REV. O. PARNABY, AND LAY (LOCAL) PREACHER

FROM RINGWOOD

FROM CROYDEN

REV. REG BANDT (SUPT) 1954-1960

REV. OLLIE FURNESS 1955-1957

" HERBERT WILLIAMS " 1961-1965

" ROBERT WARD 1958-1963

" LAURIE TURNER " 1966-1970

" ERIC SAYNOR 1963-1964

" DERYCK ROWE " 1971-1977

A SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMENCED ON 3RD APRIL, 1955, FOLLOWED IN MID 1956 BY A YOUTH CLUB. BOTH THESE GROUPS WERE FEW IN NUMBER AS THERE WEREN'T MANY CHILDREN OF SUITABLE AGE IN THE AREA AT THIS TIME.

A METHODIST LADIES GUILD WAS ALSO FORMED DURING 1955 BETWEEN THE TIME OF THE START OF THE CHURCH AND THE APPOINTMENT OF OUR FIRST MINISTER, REV. DAVID WIREN, ~~(AS MINISTER OF THE HEATHMONT CHURCH)~~ THE CONGREGATION HAD BEEN BUSY ESTABLISHING GROUPS AND CONSOLIDATING THE NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES AND COMMITTEES TO PLAN FOR THE ACTIVITIES ALSO PROPERTY ^{DEVELOPMENT} AND THE RAISING OF FINANCE.

DURING THE YEARS 1960-1964 THAT THE REV. D. WIREN WAS MINISTER AT RINGWOOD EAST HIS ~~APPOINTMENT~~ APPOINTMENT WAS ALSO TO THE HEATHMONT CHURCH. HAVING ONE MINISTER FOR THE 2 CHURCHES MEANT A LOT OF CO-OPERATION, PARTICULARLY IN YOUTH CLUB ACTIVITIES WHERE A BIGGER GROUP WAS ABLE TO BE INVOLVED IN MORE ACTIVITIES INCLUDING CAMPS.

METHODIST MINISTERS APPOINTED TO THE RINGWOOD EAST - HEATHMONT CHARGE WERE -

REV. DAVID WIREN 1960-1964

REV. ALLAN MILLER 1965.

PRESBYTERIAN

THE PRESBYTERIANS FIRST MEETING WAS HELD AT THE HOME OF THE LATE MR JOHN + MRS MURIEL SHUM, VICTORIA STREET, RINGWOOD EAST, ON 7TH JUNE, 1955, WHEN IT WAS DECIDED TO FORM A CONGREGATION. WORSHIP WAS CONDUCTED FOR A WHILE AT THE HOME OF MR + MRS SHUM AND ALSO AT 3 LOIS STREET THE HOME OF THE LATE MR EVO + MRS LUCY READ.

ON 22ND JANUARY, 1956, WORSHIP WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE COMMUNITY HALL WHERE THE CONGREGATION MET ON THE 4TH SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH UNTIL THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCH AT 1 LOIS STREET. THE CHURCH WAS OPENED ON SATURDAY 27TH OCTOBER 1956 BY THE REV MAC KNIGHT STONES, MODERATOR OF ^{THE} PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE NORTH, AND NAMED ST. STEPHEN'S. * SEE BOTTOM OF PAGE

THE MINISTER AT THE RINGWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OVERSIGHT OF THE NEW CONGREGATION AND THIS CONTINUED WHEN IT BECAME PART OF A CO-OPERATING PARISH IN JANUARY, 1966, AND APPLIED UNTIL THE INAUGURATION OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN JUNE, 1977.

TWO RINGWOOD MINISTERS WHO WERE VERY INVOLVED WITH RINGWOOD EAST WERE REV BRUCE ADAMS, 1955 TO ? WHO PREACHED THE FIRST SERMON IN THE CHURCH AT 7.00 PM ON 28TH OCTOBER, 1956 AND THE REV. ARTHUR STAMP 196? UNTIL JUNE 1977?

HOME MISSIONERS AND OR STUDENT MINISTERS APPOINTED TO RINGWOOD EAST WERE -

- DAVID POYNTON - OCTOBER 1957 TO DECEMBER 1958
- RAYMOND CREEVY - 1959 - 1960
- REV. JOHN HAYSEY - 1961 - 1964
- REV. JOHN JEBB - 1965

* THE NAMES HAVING BEEN CHOSEN BY THE CONGREGATION IN AUGUST, 1956.

IN JULY 1955 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES COMMENCED IN THE HOMES OF MRS OKE, OLD LILYDALE ROAD AND MRS HAWKINS LAURENCE GROVE, RINGWOOD EAST, THESE WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE COMMUNITY HALL IN FEBRUARY, 1956. THE HIRE OF THE HALL COST 5/- PER WEEK.

EARLY IN 1962 PLANNING ^{COMMENCED} FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A LARGE HALL WITH ENTRANCE FOYER, KITCHEN AND STAGE, THIS WAS COMPLETED MID 1962.

A MITNISE WAS BUILT AT 15 LOIS STREET ON LAND PURCHASED IN 1962 AND WAS OPENED ON 28TH APRIL 1963 THE FIRST OCCUPANTS WERE REV. JOHN HAYSEY AND FAMILY.

TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CONGREGATION A SMALL EXTENSION AND A PORCH WERE ADDED TO THE CHURCH IN 1964.

THE EASTWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL RENTED THE LARGE HALL FOR CLASSES FROM THE BEGINNING OF 1965. THIS ARRANGEMENT CONTINUED FOR QUITE A WHILE.

CO-OPERATION

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP AND INSPIRATION OF OUR THEN MINISTERS, REV. DAVID U'REN - METHODIST AND REV. JOHN HAYSEY - PRESBYTERIAN, TALKS WERE HELD REGARDING CO-OPERATION. THE FIRST PRELIMINARY TALKS WERE HELD BETWEEN THE LEADERS OF BOTH CONGREGATIONS IN SEPTEMBER 1963 WHEN PROPERTY - INCOME - COMMITMENTS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS WERE ALL DISCUSSED.

THIS LED TO THE START OF COMBINED FORTNIGHTLY EVENING SERVICES AND BY NOVEMBER, 1963, ALL EVENING SERVICES WERE COMBINED, ALTERNATING MONTH ABOUT IN EACH CHURCH.

AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE TOOK PLACE IN NOVEMBER, 1963 WHEN A COMBINED WEEK-END MISSION WAS CONDUCTED FOR THE COMMUNITY - "THE TRANSFORMING FRIENDSHIP OF CHRIST".

THIS CONFIRMED THE THOUGHT THAT THE CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN RINGWOOD EAST WOULD BE STRENGTHENED BY THE FULL CO-OPERATION OF BOTH CHURCHES.

TALKS AND PLANNING REGARDING CO-OPERATION CONTINUED UNTIL IN AUGUST, 1964, BOTH CONGREGATIONS VOTED FOR FULL CO-OPERATION WHICH MEANT WE WERE "ENGAGED" AND FOR THE NEXT 16 MONTHS WE TALKED AND WORKED TOWARDS THE DAY OF 'THE MARRIAGE' WHICH WAS SET FOR 1ST JANUARY, 1966.

IN DECEMBER, 1964, A PROVISIONAL ADVISORY BOARD WAS FORMED AND DURING THE PERIOD OF 'THE ENGAGEMENT' MADE MANY IMPORTANT DECISIONS, THE 3 MAIN ONES BEING - TO WORK UNDER 'DOCUMENT 3' OF THE JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE METHODIST AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

THAT THE FREEMAN STREET PROPERTY WOULD BE DEVELOPED AS THE MAIN CHURCH CENTRE AND THAT THE CO-OPERATING PARISH WOULD BE NAMED ST. STEPHEN'S.

THE METHODIST TRUST THEN STARTING PLANNING FOR ALTERATIONS, EXTENSIONS AND REFURBISHMENT OF THE CHURCH AND FOR THE BUILDING OF A HALL BESIDE THE MEETING ROOM, WHICH WERE OPENED ON 3RD OCTOBER, 1965, BY REV. A. J. WILLIAMS, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE RINGWOOD / CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT.

DURING THE TIME OF PRELIMINARY TALKS AND PLANNING ALL THE ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES, GROUPS AND CLUBS CONTINUED IN THEIR WORK OF CONSOLIDATION AND BUILDING UP THE FELLOWSHIP OF BOTH CHURCHES.

1ST JANUARY, 1966 THIS WAS THE DAY THAT "ADVANCING IN FAITH" BECAME A REALITY.
FULL CO-OPERATION UNDER ONE MINISTER REV. ALAN J. S. MATTHEWS

COMBINED WORSHIP, SUNDAY SCHOOL, YOUTH CLUB, BOYS + GIRLS CLUBS, LADIES GROUPS ETC.

LOCAL COMMITTEES - THE ADVISORY BOARD AND THE PARISH COMMITTEE WERE SET UP FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PARISH IN ACCORDANCE WITH DOCUMENT 3 OF THE JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL.

ST. STEPHEN'S APART FROM OBSERVING DENOMINATIONAL LEGALITIES WAS ONE CHURCH.

IT TOOK A WHILE TO SORT OUT AND SETTLE DOWN TO LIVING AND WORSHIPING TOGETHER. BOTH METHODISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS HAD GIVEN UP TRADITIONS, BUILDINGS ETC. HOWEVER, AFTER THE SETTLING IN PERIOD, WE CAME TO THE REALISATION THAT WE ALL SERVE ONE LORD AND MASTER, NO MATTER THE FORM OR THE PLACE OF WORSHIP, SO WE SETTLED DOWN TO WORK AND WITNESS TO CHRIST'S UNITING POWER.

THE PRESBYTERIAN BUILDINGS IN LOIS STREET CONTINUED TO BE USED, BY THE YOUTH CLUBS AND SUNDAY SCHOOL, FOR DANCES AND SOCIAL OCCASSIONS, ALSO BY COMMUNITY GROUPS, UNTIL IT WAS SOLD IN JANUARY, 1971, TO THE RINGWOOD COLLEGE. ALL ACTIVITIES WERE THEN CENTRED AT FREEMAN STREET.

(THE LOIS STREET SITE AND BUILDINGS WAS SOLD BY THE COLLEGE IN THE MID 80'S WHEN IT BECAME THE RINGWOOD GARDENS SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOME)

THE REV. ALAN MATTHEWS (PRESBYTERIAN) HAD LEFT IN NOVEMBER, 1969, AND OUR NEW MINISTER REV. BILL CRAVEN (METHODIST) WAS APPOINTED IN JANUARY 1970.

EARLY IN 1973 A DRAMATIC INCIDENT TOOK PLACE OUTSIDE THE MANSE IN LOIS STREET. IT INVOLVED BILL CRAVEN AND A VERY DISTRAUGHT MAN. THIS INCIDENT CONFIRMED BILL CRAVEN IN HIS THOUGHTS ABOUT TAKING ACTION IN SOME WAY TO HELP ^{THOSE} IN THE COMMUNITY WITH SIMILAR OR OTHER PROBLEMS.

AT A MEETING AT THE MANSE ON 29TH MAY, 1973, IT WAS DECIDED TO LAUNCH ST. STEPHEN'S COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT AS PART OF RINGWOOD EAST AND A WELFARE AGENCY OF OUR LOCAL CHURCH. WITH THE DRIVE AND VISION OF BILL CRAVEN THIS CONCEPT SOON GREW INTO THE FORMATION OF THE WILKINSON SOCIAL HEALTH CENTRE (NOW EACH) WHICH WAS FORMED AT A PUBLIC MEETING IN NOVEMBER, 1973.

THE CENTRE STARTED OPERATING IN THE HOUSE OWNED BY ST. STEPHEN'S AT 77 PATTERSON STREET ON 1ST MARCH, 1974. BILL CRAVEN WAS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE CENTRE UNTIL OCTOBER, 1974, AS WELL AS MINISTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S. IN THE EARLY DAYS ST. STEPHEN'S BUILDINGS WERE VITAL TO THE PROGRAMS OF THE CENTRE - FOR ITS LARGE

ACTIVITIES GROUPS, CHILD CARE AND OTHER PROGRAMS AS THEY DEVELOPED AND GREW. THE LARGE HALL IS STILL USED BY THE ACTIVITIES GROUP ON 1 DAY PER WEEK. FROM ITS INCEPTION MANY MEMBERS OF ST. STEPHEN'S CONGREGATION HAVE SUPPORTED THE CENTRE IN MANY WAYS, AS VOLUNTEER HELPERS IN GROUPS, CHILD CARE, KITCHEN, PRINTING, GARDENING, ADMINISTRATIVE RELES ETC.

FROM ITS SMALL - BUT INSPIRED - BEGINNINGS THE CENTRE HAS GROWN CONSIDERABLY AND IS NOW A MAJOR PROVIDER OF COMMUNITY HEALTH IN THE EASTERN SUBURBS.

DUE TO THE STRONG GROWTH IN ALL THE YOUTH CLUBS AND SUNDAY SCHOOL DURING THE LATE 60'S AND EARLY 70'S IT WAS DECIDED TO ENLARGE THE HALL AND ADD A LARGE KITCHEN AND STORE ROOM WHICH WERE FINISHED MID 1973.

THIS WAS TO BE THE LAST BUILDING EXTENSIONS AT FREEMAN STREET. HOWEVER, OVER THE YEARS ALTERATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE INTERIORS OF THE BUILDINGS TO SUIT THE NEEDS OF THE TIME.

ST. STEPHEN'S WAS AMONGST THE PIONEERS OF UNION IN BECOMING A FULLY CO-OPERATING PARISH 11½ YEARS BEFORE THE INAUGURATION OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA. IT WAS ALSO ONE OF FIRST LARGER CHURCHES TO DO THIS.

ALTHOUGH WE HAD OUR OWN LOCAL BOARDS TO ADMINISTER THE PARISH, FOR THE SAKE OF LEGALITY, THE MACHINERY OF BOTH DENOMINATIONS HAD TO BE KEPT OILED. HENCE, SEPARATE ROLLS, KIRK SESSION/LEADER'S MEETING, BOARD OF MANAGEMENT/PROPERTY BOARD, DENOMINATIONAL VOTING FOR PARISH COMMITTEE.

WE SHARED A COMMON PURSE FROM WHICH, MONIES FOR THE WIDER WORK, THE LEVIES, CHARGES, LOANS ETC. HAD TO BE PAID TO BOTH DENOMINATIONS.

PRESBYTERIAN MONEY FROM THE SALE OF LOIS STREET COULD NOT BE SPENT ON METHODIST PROPERTY, SO THE PARISH COMMITTEE BORROWED MONEY IN 1974 FROM MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION TO FINANCE THE SEALING OF A WELL PLANNED CAR PARK WHICH INCORPORATED A BASKET BALL COURT AND LANDSCAPING. THE PROJECT WAS FINISHED EARLY 1975. THE MONEY WAS PAID BACK FOLLOWING UNION WHEN PRESBYTERIAN MONEY WAS MADE AVAILABLE.

ALTHOUGH THEY WERE ABLE TO HAVE THEIR INDIVIDUAL SAY, IT WAS A BLESSING - OR FORESIGHT - THAT WE DIDN'T OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGE OUR CONGREGATIONAL BRETHREN.

A NIGHT LONG AWAITED 16TH JUNE, 1977 - FINAL MEETINGS WERE HELD IN THE HALL OF 8 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES OF THE METHODIST, PRESBYTERIAN, AND CO-OPERATING PARISH ALL OF WHICH AGREED IN SEPARATE MEETINGS TO FINALISE THEIR TENURE OF OFFICE AND HAND OVER ALL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA.

MINISTERS OF THE CO-OPERATING PARISH

- REV. ALAN J.S. MATTHEWS (PRESBYTERIAN) 1966 - NOV 1969
 - " BILL CRAVEN (METHODIST) 1970 - 1975
 - " ALAN STUART (PRESBYTERIAN) 1976 - JUNE 1977
- (AND THEN CONTINUED AS UNITING CHURCH MINISTER)

THE INAUGURATION OF THE UNITING CHURCH TOOK PLACE ON 22ND JUNE, 1977, AND THE FIRST SERVICE AT ST. STEPHEN'S WAS ON SUNDAY 26TH JUNE.

OUR "ONENESS" WAS COMPLETE, YEARS OF WAITING WERE OVER, ST. STEPHEN'S DID NOT HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE TRAUMAS OF GIVING UP PROPERTY, LOVED TRADITIONS ETC. WE HAD BEEN THROUGH IT ALL.

WE FELT WE WERE IN THE BOY SEAT BUT, WE STILL NEEDED TO BE CHALLENGED BY THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE AND CONTINUE TO USE OUR TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURE FOR NOW AND TOMORROW.

FROM THEN ON ST-STEPHEN'S HAD TO BUILD ON THE PAST WITH ITS WORSHIP, GROUPS AND CLUBS AND ALSO BE READY FOR THE CHALLENGE OF ADAPTING TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

THIS DID HAPPEN AS IT CONTINUED TO HAVE ROOM TIMES IN SUNDAY SCHOOL AND YOUTH WORK WHICH LASTED UNTIL THE MID 80'S WHEN THIS WORK STARTED TO TAPER OFF AS MANY YOUNG PEOPLE MARRIED AND OR LEFT THE DISTRICT.

THIS MEANT THAT IT HAD TO CHANGE ITS EMPHASIS AND START WORKING MORE WITH THE ELDERLY IN THEIR OWN HOMES OR IN THE SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOMES THAT WERE BEING BUILT AND ALSO WITH DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY.

MINISTERS OF ST. STEPHEN'S UNITING CHURCH

- REV. ALAN STUART JUNE 1977-1983
 - " GRAEMIE NESS 1984-1993
 - " HELEN COX (INTERIM) FEB. 1994-1995
 - " PETER BARNES 1996-2005
 - " GRAHAM FOGUE 2006 -
- (CONTINUED AFTER BEING MINISTER IN CO-OPERATING PARISH)

MINISTERS IN ASSOCIATION

- REV. GRAEMIE JAMES 1989-1992
- REV. DR. PHILIP HUGHES 2001 -

IN 1998 A MAJOR PROJECT ALTERED THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH, UP TO WHICH TIME THE CONGREGATION HAD FACED THE SANCTUARY AREA AT THE FRONT (NORTH) OF THE BUILDING. THE FURNISHINGS WERE THEN TURNED TO FACE THE WEST WALL AND EARLY IN 2000 A WINDOW WAS INSTALLED WHICH LOOKS OUT ONTO THE ADJOINING PARK, THIS AGAIN EMERGED AS A STRONG FOCUS POINT FOR SERVICES OF WORSHIP.

TO 200 ST. STEPHEN'S HAS ORGANISED AND HOSTED, ON SUNDAY EVENINGS, A SERIES OF LECTURES AND STUDIES ENTITLED "A FOCUS ON FAITH".

TITLES HAVE INCLUDED -

"UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH OF OUR NEIGHBOURS"

PRESENTED BY REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE JEWISH, MUSLIM, HINDU AND BUDDHIST FAITHS.

FOCUS ON FAITH AND A NEW CHRISTIANITY FOR A NEW WORLD USING BOOKS BY BISHOP SPONG.

RE SHAPING CHRISTIAN IMAGINATION AN ADDRESS BY MICHAEL NORWOOD

AND MANY OTHER THOUGHT PROVOKING TOPICS.

EVERY SERIES ATTRACTED PEOPLE FROM MANY PARTS OF MELBOURNE AND WERE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS SERIES 2 EVENINGS WERE HELD BY THE SOCIAL WHEN A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX COMMUNITY AND ONE FROM THE SIKH COMMUNITY GAVE TALKS ON THEIR FAITHS, FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION.

IN 2003 A FUTURE'S WORKING COMMITTEE WAS SET UP TO PLAN AND PREPARE FOR THE YEARS AHEAD.

ONE PROPOSAL, SUGGESTED IN FEBRUARY 2004, HAS TAKEN SHAPE AND IS FLOURISHING, WAS TO SET UP A COMMUNITY CENTRE / LEARNING EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

THE NAME WAS CHANGED TO ST. STEPHEN'S COMMUNITY LIVING CENTRE WHICH COMMENCED IN JULY 2004, WITH A PILOT PROGRAM OF "MUSIC TOGETHER" FOR PARENTS AND PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN.

BY TERM 4, A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS WERE BEING OFFERED.

THE CENTRE CONTINUES TO GROW, JANUARY 2006 OVER 90 ENROLMENTS, BY TERM 4, 140 ENROLMENTS FOR THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS, PLUS 25 FAMILIES ENROLLED FOR "MUSIC TOGETHER"

BY THE END OF 2006 THE CENTRE HAD ATTRACTED GRANTS FROM THE MARLBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL AND THE LOCAL BENDIGO BANK. HELPING ST. STEPHEN'S TO FILL A NEED IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

THE STORY OF ST. STEPHEN'S TO DATE HAS BEEN VERY INVOLVED AND HAS NOT REALLY MENTIONED THE MOST IMPORTANT INGREDIENT - PEOPLE.

WE GIVE GRATEFUL THANKS FOR ALL THOSE WHO OVER THE LAST 50 PLUS YEARS HAVE GIVEN SO FREELY OF THEIR FAITH - THEIR LOVE - THEIR TIME, TALENTS AND MONEY TO MAINTAIN A SANCTUARY FROM WHERE THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S LOVE CAN BE SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY OF RINGWOOD EAST.

WE ESPECIALLY MENTION THE VISION, THE PREACHING, THE GUIDANCE AND PASTORAL CARE, PATIENCE AND NURTURE OF ALL THE MINISTERS WHO HAVE SERVED AT ST. STEPHEN'S.

FOR THOSE WHO WILL BE THE FUTURE OF ST. STEPHEN'S OUR PRAYER AND WISH WOULD BE THAT THEY WILL TAKE UP THE PHRASE WHICH COMES FROM THE PAST AND CONTINUE "ADVANCING IN FAITH"

THE FOLLOWING BRIEF OUTLINES OF THE ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES, GROUPS AND CLUBS TELLS THE STORY OF ST. STEPHEN'S AT WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AND ALSO OF IT'S INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER CHURCHES AND THE COMMUNITY.

ADMINISTRATION

EVER ALL THE YEARS THERE HAVE BEEN THE NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES MEETING UNDER VARIOUS TITLES.

FOLLOWING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE IN 1998 ALL THE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PARISH ARE COVERED BY —

- 1) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
 - 2) WORSHIP AND MINISTRY
 - 3) PASTORAL
 - 4) MISSION AND COMMUNITY
 - 5) FINANCE AND PROPERTY
 - 6) CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
- THESE COMMITTEES HAVE ALWAYS SHOWN STRONG LEADERSHIP, VISION AND COMMITMENT TO THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

PASTORAL LEADERS

LEADERS, ELDER'S AND VISITORS, KNOWN SINCE 1998 AS "PASTORAL LEADERS" HAVE ALWAYS SHARED WITH THE MINISTER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL WELFARE AND THE BUILDING UP OF THE CONGREGATION IN FAITH AND LOVE.

VISITATION IS ONE VERY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THIS MINISTRY AND IS DONE ON A VERY STRUCTURED AND REGULAR BASIS, THUS ENABLING THE CHURCH TO BE AVAILABLE TO HELP WHATEVER THE NEED.

WORSHIP

SERVICES OF WORSHIP HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CENTRAL IN THE LIFE OF ST. STEPHEN'S

OVER THE YEARS MANY STYLES AND FORMS OF WORSHIP HAVE BEEN TRIALED, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL FAMILY, YOUTH SERVICES, DISCUSSION GROUPS, COTTAGE SHOP, FAMILY TEAS BEFORE AND OTHER EXPERIMENTS.

TIMES OF SERVICES HAVE ALTERED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS SINCE THE TRADITIONAL TIMES OF 11:00AM AND 7:00PM.

FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS DURING THE MID 1970'S AND AGAIN IN 1982 TWO MORNING SERVICES WERE HELD, ALTERNATIVE SERVICES HAVE BEEN TRIALED, INCLUDING A TUESDAY EVENING SERVICE, THAT MIGHT OFFER A DIFFERENT FORM OF WORSHIP MORE RELEVANT TO THE COMMUNITY.

THE EVENING SERVICES HAVE NEVER BEEN STRONGLY SUPPORTED EXCEPT FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL AND ALSO DURING THE 1970'S WHEN THERE WAS A COFFEE SHOP STYLING OF MEETING WITH STRONG YOUTH SUPPORT.

AT DIFFERENT PERIODS NO SERVICES WERE HELD AND SINCE FEBRUARY, 1989, THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ANY REGULAR EVENING SERVICES OF WORSHIP.

CURRENTLY THE WORSHIP PROGRAM AT ST. STEPHEN'S INCLUDES A SUNDAY SERVICE AT 10:00AM WITH A COMBINED SERVICE WITH HOLY TRINITY, ANGELICAN CHURCH ON THE 2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.

THERE IS ALSO A SHORT SERVICE AT 2:00PM ON THE 3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH FOR RESIDENTS OF THE SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOMES IN THE AREA AND A WEEKLY SERVICE ON WEDNESDAYS AT 10:30 AM.

TAPES OF THE MORNING SERVICES ARE MADE AND TAKEN, ON REQUEST, TO THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND.

SUNDAY SCHOOL - BOYS, GIRLS AND YOUTH CLUBS

AS THE DEMOGRAPHY OF THE COMMUNITY CHANGED SO DID THE NUMBERS IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL, BOYS, GIRLS AND YOUTH CLUBS - SMALL AT THE START, IN THE MID 1950'S, THEN EACH GROUP BUILDING UP AND EXPERIENCING DIFFERENT PERIODS OF BOOM TIMES AND THEN A GRADUAL TAPERING OFF.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

SMALL NUMBERS FROM MID 1952 UNTIL EARLY 1960'S AND THEN BOOM TIMES UNTIL THE EARLY 1980'S.

IN AUGUST 1970 THERE WERE 350 CHILDREN ON THE ROLL AND 40 TEACHERS DURING THIS PERIOD ANNIVERSARIES WITH CHILDREN PACKED ON TIRED PLATFORMS, CONCERTS, PICNICS AND EVEN A FEW SMALL CAMPS.

TRADITIONAL STYLE: CLASSES WERE HELD FOR MANY YEARS AND FROM THE MID 1980'S DIFFERENT FORMATS AND PROGRAMS WERE TRIALED TO HOLD THE INTEREST OF THOSE ATTENDING. SUNDAY SCHOOL CONTINUED MEETING AT THE SAME TIME AS THE MORNING SERVICE UNTIL IT CLOSED IN THE EARLY 2000'S.

THE KUCHA CLUB (KIDS OF THE UNITING CHURCH)

COMMENCED IN THE 1990'S PARTLY AS A WEEK DAY VERSION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL. A SMALL GROUP STILL MEETS, ON A WEEKLY BASIS DURING SCHOOL TERMS, FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL GIRLS WHEN THEY ENJOY A PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDES TEACHING, GAMES AND OTHER INTERESTING ACTIVITIES.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS

FIRST BOY'S CLUB 1961 GIRLS SHORTLY AFTER. SMALL GROUPS WHICH OVER THE YEARS GREW AND PROSPERED. TIMES WITH GROUPS WERE IN ABBEYANCE, FLOURISHED AGAIN FOR A TIME, HOWEVER BOTH FOLDED UP IN THE 1990'S.

YOUTH CLUB

SMALL GROUPS AT METHODIST AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES UP TO 1966 FROM THEN STARTED TO GROW AND FROM THE LATE 1960'S VERY LARGE GROUPS ABLE TO BE INVOLVED WITH MANY ACTIVITIES LOCALLY AND IN THE WIDER CHURCH. OVER THE YEARS HELD MANY SUCCESSFUL CAMPS INCLUDING SOME YEARS WHEN TWO OR THREE WERE HELD.

BY THE LATE 1980'S NUMBERS HAD FALLEN SO ST STEPHEN'S AND HOLY TRINITY (ANGELICAN) WORKED TOGETHER UNTIL BOTH GROUPS CLOSED IN THE LATE 1990'S.

COFFEE SHOP

COMMENCED APRIL 1973 AND OPERATED UNTIL THE EARLY 1980'S THE SUNDAY EVENING COFFEE SHOP MET IN THE MEETING ROOM ENJOYING FELLOWSHIP, MUSIC AND DISCUSSIONS. AT ONE STAGE THERE WERE OVER 70 YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDING. FOR A FEW YEARS, WHEN NUMBERS WERE SMALLER, THIS GROUP MET IN PRIVATE HOMES.

BIBLE CLASS

DUE TO LACK OF SPACE IN THE MID 1960'S THIS GROUP OF TEENAGERS MET IN THE STORAGE SHED. FOR A TIME IN THE 1970'S MEETINGS WERE HELD ON SUNDAY EVENINGS AND IN 1984 AND THE EARLY 1990'S AT THE SAME TIME AS MORNING WORSHIP.

STUDY GROUPS

OVER ALL THE YEARS THERE HAVE BEEN MANY BIBLE STUDY, FAITH SHARING AND DISCUSSION GROUPS, WHICH HAVE BEEN VERY HELPFUL TO ALL WHO HAVE TAKEN PART.

IN THE 1970'S AND AGAIN IN THE LATE 1980'S A SERIES OF HOUSE CHURCHES MET.

PRAYER GROUPS HAVE ALSO MET OVER THE YEARS.

MINISTRY WITH LOCAL SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOMES

FOR MANY YEARS ST. STEPHEN'S MINISTER HAS CONDUCTED WORSHIP AT LIONS BRAE ON A MONTHLY BASIS.

SINCE 1988 MONTHLY AFTERNOON SERVICES HAVE BEEN HELD AT THE CHURCH FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOMES IN RINGWOOD EAST. RESIDENTS ARE COLLECTED BY CAR AND TAKEN TO THE CHURCH FOR A SHORT SERVICE FOLLOWED BY AFTERNOON TEA AND FELLOWSHIP.

CHOIR

THE METHODISTS HAD A SMALL CHOIR FROM THE EARLY DAYS AND THEN A LARGER ONE DURING CO-OPERATION AND UNION. DURING THE MID TO LATE 70'S ON OCCASIONS A LARGE AUGMENTED CHOIR PRODUCED AND SANG SEVERAL CANTATAS. AFTER THIS PERIOD A CHOIR WOULD BE ORGANISED FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS AND WITH THE ADVENT OF THE NEW AUSTRALIAN HYMN BOOK TO TEACH THE CONGREGATION THE NEW TUNES.

THE CHOIR PURCHASED A NEW ELECTRONIC ORGAN IN 1976.

ADVENT WORKSHOP

COMMENCED 1995 HEND, AFTER SCHOOL, ON 4 MONDAYS DURING ADVENT FOR CHILDREN FROM PREPS TO GRADE 6.

A GREAT TIME FOR CRAFT WORK, PUPPET THEATRES, FUN AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR "THE CHRISTMAS STORY" A LOT OF CHILDREN ATTEND AND ARE HELPED BY A LARGE GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS IN ALL THE ACTIVITIES.

BASKET BALL - NETBALL

BOTH METHODISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS STARTED CLUBS IN THE LATE 1950'S AND PLAYED AT EASTWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL. IN 1959 THE METHODISTS STARTED PLAYING ON A COURT BUILT BY VOLUNTEERS ON LAND GIVEN TO THE CHURCH AT THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY. THE COURT EVENTUALLY FELL INTO DISREPAIR AND UNTIL IT WAS RESEMBLED IN 1965 THE TEAMS RETURNED TO EASTWOOD. IN 1975 IT COURT WAS INCORPORATED INTO THE NEWLY SEALED CAR PARK. AFTER CO-OPERATION IN 1966 AND IN THE ENSUING YEARS STRONG TEAMS PLAYED UNTIL THE 1990'S IN THE VICTORIAN CHURCHES ASSOCIATION, WINNING MANY PREMIERSHIPS.

CRICKET CLUB

? ? LATE 1960'S

WEDNESDAY WALKERS

STARTED 1988, "COME WIND COME WEATHER" EXPLORING HIGHWAYS, PARKS AND TRAILS, NEW ESTATES, LOVELY GARDENS, STATE AND NATIONAL PARKS, NATIVE WILD FLOWERS. ALL THESE ARE AN ADDED BONUS TO THE NEEDED EXERCISE THE GREAT FELLOWSHIP, TALKING AND MORNING TEAS.

PRESBYTERY MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

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ST. STEPHEN'S BECAME VERY INVOLVED, APPROX 1999, AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERY MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY. STARTING EARLY 2000 ST. STEPHEN'S HOSTED, ASSISTED BY VOLUNTEERS FROM HOLY TRINITY, ANGLICAN CHURCH, WEEKLY WORKSHOPS AND SMALL GROUPS FOR THOSE WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES AND THEIR FAMILIES. THE PROGRAM IS CENTRED ON MENTAL AND PHYSICAL STIMULATION ACTIVITIES AND FRIENDSHIP. THE CONGREGATION ALSO SPONSORED 2 VERY LARGE AND SUCCESSFUL MUSICAL CONCERTS.

MULLAYA LODGE TITEN

RIMWOOD GARDENS SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOME

ACTIVITY GROUP

STARTED LATE 1993 TO GIVE THE RESIDENTS OF RIMWOOD GARDENS SOME ACTIVITY AS IT WAS NOT PROVIDED BY MANAGEMENT, EARLY IN THE WEEKLY PROGRAM THE RESIDENTS WERE TAKEN ON SHORT OUTINGS. AFTER A WHILE IT WAS AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE MORE BENEFICIAL TO USE THE TIME FOR THERAPY GROUPS SO GAMES ETC. WERE PLAYED FOR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL STIMULATION. THIS GROUP FILLED A GREAT NEED BY GIVING FRIENDSHIP AND CARE, ALSO THE MORNING TEAS WERE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED, THIS MONDAY GROUP CLOSED IN DECEMBER, 1997. A WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON PROGRAM MAINLY VIDEOS AND GAMES HAD STARTED IN MID 1996 AND THIS WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE MS + C HC DURING 1997.

DROP-IN CENTRE

FROM THE MID 80'S TO EARLY 90'S THIS SMALL GROUP MET WEEKLY FOR FRIENDSHIP, GAMES AND ENJOYED A VARIETY OF SPEAKERS AND OUTINGS. IT FULFILLED A NEED FOR LONELY MEN AND WOMEN.

MISSION MORNING

A SMALL GROUP THAT HAS BEEN MEETING, MONTHLY, FOR MANY YEARS IN MEMBERS HOMES. KNITTING, CROCHETING AND PREPARING STAMPS OCCUPY THE MEMBERS PLUS (OF COURSE) PLENTY OF CHATTER.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

COMMENCED JULY, 1982. MEETS TWICE MONTHLY AND IF A 5TH TUESDAY 3 TIMES.

STARTED TO MEET A NEED, ESPECIALLY FOR LADIES ON THEIR OWN OR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOMES, FOR A TIME OF FRIENDSHIP, TALK AND AFTERNOON TEA. TRANSPORT HAS ALWAYS BEEN AVAILIBLIE. HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CARING GROUP WHO WITH FRIENDSHIPS FORMED LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER. AT THE INFORMAL MEETINGS SQUARES ARE CROCHETED TO BE MADE INTO RUGS FOR VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS

LADIES EVENING FELLOWSHIP

STARTED EARLY 80'S MAINLY YOUNGER LADIES AND OTHERS WHO FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ATTEND THE AFTERNOON GROUP. MONTHLY MEETING MAINLY IN MEMBERS HOMES.

THEMES AND ACTIVITIES ARE OF MIXED VARIETY - GAMES, DINNERS, SPEAKERS, CRAFT AND DEMONSTRATIONS. CATERED FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS FOR THE MARCONDAH FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES DINNERS. IN RECENT YEARS HAVE TAKEN ON RESPONSIBILITY FOR CATERING FOR SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS INCLUDING FUNERALS.

UNITING CHURCH ADULT FELLOWSHIP

THE EARLIEST PREDECESSORS OF THE U.C.A.F. WERE THE METHODIST LADIES GUILD STARTED MID 1955 AND THE PRESBYTERIAN LADIES GUILD IN 1959.

BOTH GROUPS, MADE UP MAINLY OF YOUNG MOTHERS SETTING UP HOME AND FAMILY. THEY HELD REGULAR MEETINGS WITH SPEAKERS ON MANY SUBJECTS, SOCIAL AFTERNOONS AS WELL AS MONEY RAISING EFFORTS FOR THEIR NEW CHURCHES. IT WAS IN THE MID 1960'S THAT THE METHODIST LADIES GUILD CATERED FOR ITS FIRST WEDDING, WHICH ACTIVITY WAS IN MORE DEMAND FOLLOWING THE FORMATION OF ST. STEPHEN'S LADIES FELLOWSHIP AT THE START OF THE CO-OPERATING PARISH IN 1966.

WITH THE MONEY RAISED FROM CATERING, CAKE STALLS AND OTHER FUNCTIONS THE LADIES EQUIPPED THE KITCHEN AND ARRANGED AND PAID FOR TRIESTE TABLE TOPS AND STEEL LEGS TO BE MADE.

THE FELLOWSHIP CONTINUED TO GROW IN NUMBERS AND WORKED HARD FOR LOCAL NEEDS AND MISSIONS.

AT THE TIME OF UNION IN JUNE 1977 THE NAME CHANGED TO THE UNITING CHURCH ADULT FELLOWSHIP.

MAINLY A CHANGE OF NAME - THE GROUP CONTINUED HAVING FUN AND FELLOWSHIP, PICS AND SPEAKERS - RAISING MONEY, ARRANGING AND DOING MANY TASKS AROUND THE PROPERTY; CATERING FOR CHURCH FUNCTIONS, INTER-CHURCH FELLOWSHIP DINNERS AND WHEN ST. STEPHEN'S TURN ARRANGING THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER MEETINGS ETC.

HOWEVER DUE TO FALLING NUMBERS AND THE FRAILTY OF SOME MEMBERS IT CLOSED IN MID 2003.

FUND RAISING

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STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGNS - A FEW PROFESSIONALLY RUN, MOSTLY LOCALLY RUN. LARGE FETES - GARDEN SALES - STREET STALLS USING RINGWOOD COUNCIL'S CARAVAN. CONCERTS BY LOCALS AND VISITING GROUPS AT ST STEPHEN'S, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS HIRING THE GEORGEWOOD AUDITORIUM AT YARRA VALLEY AMERICAN SCHOOL WITH PERFORMANCES BY THE VICTORIAN WELSH CHOR AND OTHER GROUPS (VERY LARGE UNDERTAKINGS). MORE RECENT TIMES: 'CHOCOLATE DRIVES' AT EASTER AND CHRISTMAS, LOCALLY AND IN RETIREMENT VILLAGES AND ACCOMMODATION HOMES IN THE SURROUNDING AREA. SALES FOR MANY YEARS AT CHURCH AND SPECIAL FUNCTIONS OF HOME MADE JAMS, CITRUS JELLYS AND RELISHES MADE IN A WELL EQUIPPED AND ORGANISED KITCHEN OF A CHURCH FAMILY. ALL OF THESE EFFORTS NOT ONLY RAISED MUCH NEEDED MONEY BUT HAVE FOSTERED A STRONG FELLOWSHIP FROM WORKING TOGETHER.

THE CHURCH PAPER - "THE LINK"

THE METHODISTS STARTED "THE FAMILY CIRCLE" AND THE PRESBYTERIANS "THE LINK" SOON AFTER ESTABLISHING CHURCHES IN THE MID 50'S. THE FOCUS OF BOTH PUBLICATIONS WAS TO LET PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT THE NEW CHURCHES AND THEIR PLANS. ON FORMATION OF THE CO-OPERATING PARISH IN 1966 IT WAS DECIDED THAT "THE LINK" WAS THE MORE APPROPRIATE NAME. "THE LINK" HAS HAD A CHECKERED HISTORY, ORIGINALLY A MONTHLY PUBLICATION THEN IN ABEYANCE FOR A TIME THEN A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER AND THEN OCCASSIONALLY. OVER THE YEARS IT WAS PUBLISHED IT WAS A VERY VALUABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION.

SOCIAL GROUP

ORIGINALLY REMYAG (REMYACS) KINCWOOD EAST METHODIST YOUNG ADULT GROUP STARTED APRIL 1961 TO GIVE YOUNG PARENTS, IN PARTICULAR, AN OUTING ON A MONTHLY BASIS AND ALSO A CHANCE OF GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER. OLDER CHURCH FOLK BIT BY SAT. THIS GROUP, NOW CALLED ST. STEPHEN'S SOCIAL GROUP, IS STILL FUNCTIONING AND MAINLY MEETS IN MEMBERS HOMES FOR FRIENDLY (SOMETIMES HILARIOUS) EVENINGS HAVING GOOD OLD FASHIONED FUN, THEME NIGHTS AND SOMETIMES EDUCATIONAL AND STIMULATING SPEAKERS.

NOTES:

- ① THE PHRASE "ADVANCING IN FAITH" TOGETHER WITH ANOTHER ONE "AN ADVENTURE IN FAITH" WERE BOTH USED AT THE METHODIST CHURCH FOR A STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN IN 1964. THEY HAVE BEEN USED AND APPLIED BY ST. STEPHEN'S OVER THE YEARS AND ARE STILL APPLICABLE TODAY, JANUARY, 2007
- * ② THE FULL STORY OF THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MAROONDAN SOCIAL HEALTH CENTRE CAN BE READ IN THE PUBLICATION "JUST A SMALL SHOW" A HISTORY 1973-1994 BY JAMES LAWRY.
- * ③ FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ST. STEPHEN'S CO-OPERATION WITH HOLY TRINITY REFER TO "A CHURCH AMIDST THE GUM TREES" BY JAMES LAWRY (2005)
- * BOTH THESE PUBLICATIONS ARE IN THE CHURCH ARCHIVES.

ECUMENICAL CO-OPERATION AND FELLOWSHIP

NEIGHBOURS - ST. FRANCIS OLD SALES' CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL (CLOSED MARCH 1993) USED ST. STEPHEN'S SMALL HALL FOR CLASSES DURING 1963/1964 AND AGAIN IN 1973/1976 AND IN BOTH PERIODS USED THE CHURCH A NUMBER OF TIMES FOR SPECIAL MASSES.

FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS FROM THE MID 60'S APPROX 4 COMBINED EVENING SERVICES WERE HELD EACH YEAR WITH HOLY TRINITY AND ST. FRANCIS AND FOR A SHORT PERIOD THE BAPTISTS. EACH CHURCH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR HOSTING AND ORGANISING THE SERVICE.

PALM SUNDAY MARCHES AND SERVICES WITH HOLY TRINITY, ST. FRANCIS AND ST. STEPHEN'S. ONE YEAR A SERVICE WAS HELD IN THE RINGWOOD EAST RAILWAY STATION CAR PARK BEFORE PROCESSING WITH PALMS, BANNERS ETC. TO OUR OWN CHURCHES.

ANOTHER YEAR A LARGE GATHERING TOOK PLACE IN THE GROUNDS OF ST. FRANCIS WHERE A SERVICE WAS HELD.

COMMENTING ABOUT 1964 HOLY TRINITY AND ST. STEPHEN'S HAD STARTED SHARING IN FELLOWSHIP IN VARIOUS WAYS. IN LATER YEARS VOLUNTEERS FROM HOLY TRINITY JOINED ST. STEPHEN'S IN THE M.S + C.I.C ACTIVITIES - THERAPY GROUPS FOR RINGWOOD GARDENS AND THE MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY AND ADVENT WORKSHOPS FOR A WHILE IN THE EARLY 90'S HOLY TRINITY'S & ST. STEPHEN'S SMALL YOUTH GROUPS COMBINED FOR THEIR ACTIVITIES.

SINCE THE MID 90'S BOTH CONGREGATIONS HAVE WORSHIPPED TOGETHER IN ALTERNATE CHURCHES ON THE 2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH. ALTHOUGH HOLY TRINITY BECAME ONE PARISH WITH CATHOLIC CHURCH HEATHMONT IN 2004 WE STILL ALL WORSHIP TOGETHER ON A MONTHLY BASIS. THE TIES WITH HOLY TRINITY WERE SO STRONG THAT, BEFORE IT FORMED A PARISH WITH HEATHMONT, SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD ABOUT OUR TWO CHURCHES FORMING A CO-OPERATING PARISH.

ECUMENICAL CO-OPERATION AND FELLOWSHIP (CTD)

A SERVICE CALLED "STOP GAP" WAS SETUP BY THE TWO CHURCHES IN 2001 TO COVER "GAPS" IN OTHER HELPING AGENCIES TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY RELIEF IN THE FORM OF MEALS, TRANSPORT, BABY SITTING ETC.

AFTER A SLOW START IT WAS WELL USED MAINLY FOR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS - BATHING AND ON A REGULAR BASIS READING MAIL FOR A VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSON AND HELPING IN MANY TYPES OF EMERGENCIES.

MANSE (CTD)

OVER THE YEARS THE MANSE HAS HAD ALL THE NECESSARY REPAIRS, REPLACEMENTS, PAINTING ETC. CARRIED OUT.

MAJOR REFURSHMENT AND ALTERATIONS WERE MADE IN 1995 AND 2006.

A LOT OF THE WORK OVER ALL THE YEARS WAS DONE BY THE CHURCH MEN + WOMEN.

PARSONAGES + MANSE

PARSONAGES - (METHODIST)

IN OCTOBER 1955 THE RINGWOOD/CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT PURCHASED A HOUSE IN MYRTLE AVE, RINGWOOD EAST, FOR USE AS A PARSONAGE WHEN A MINISTER WAS APPOINTED. AT THE TIME IT WAS ENVISAGED THAT ANY APPOINTEE WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BAYSWATER, HEATHMONT AND RINGWOOD EAST CHURCHES. A TRUST WAS FORMED ON THIS BASIS.

HOWEVER, IN JANUARY 1960, WITH REV. DAVID U'REN WAS APPOINTED HIS RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD ONLY COVER THE HEATHMONT + RINGWOOD EAST CHURCHES.

IN APRIL 1963 THE CHURCH SOLD THE MYRTLE AVE. HOUSE AND BOUGHT ONE NEAR THE HEATHMONT CHURCH IN CANTERBURY ROAD.

MANSE - PRESBYTERIAN THEN UNITING CHURCH

A MANSE WAS BUILT ON LAND PURCHASED FOR £1,500, AT 15 LOIS STREET RINGWOOD EAST AT A COST OF £6,023-4-9 AND WAS OPENED ON 28TH APRIL, 1963.

THE FIRST OCCUPANTS WERE REV. JOHN HAYSEY AND FAMILY AND ON HIS APPOINTMENT IN 1965 REV. JOHN JEBB AND FAMILY.

THIS MANSE WAS RETAINED AND USED BY THE MINISTERS OF THE METHODIST/PRESBYTERIAN CO-OPERATING PARISH FROM JANUARY, 1966, UNTIL UNION IN JULY, 1977, WHEN IT WAS OCCUPIED BY THE MINISTERS OF ST. STEPHEN'S UNITING CHURCH.

IN 1985 IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT THE FRONT OF THE BRICK GARAGE WAS COLLAPSING AND STARTING TO PULL PART OF THE MANSE WALL WITH IT.

AFTER CONSULTATION IT WAS DECIDED TO PULL DOWN THE FRONT OF THE GARAGE FIX THE MANSE WALL, SHORTEN THE GARAGE BY ERECTING A NEW WALL IN LINE WITH THE HOUSE THUS TURNING INTO A WORKSHOP A NEW CAR PORT WAS BUILT, SEPARATE FROM THE HOUSE.

LAND - FREEMAN STREET PROPERTY

1948 LOTS 66 + 67 FREEMAN STREET PURCHASED BY RINGWOOD/CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT IN WHAT WAS STILL ORCHARD COUNTRY

1951 (OCTOBER) MRS HOPKINS GAVE 110 FT OF THE REAR OF HER PROPERTY LOT 56 (NO 73) PATTERSON STREET FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT - IT EVENTUALLY BECAME A BASKET BALL (NETBALL) COURT.

MR FRED RAYMENT ALSO GAVE 20 FT OF THE REAR OF HIS PROPERTY LOT 57 (NO 75) PATTERSON STREET TO ALLOW EASY ACCESS FROM CHURCH PROPERTY TO LOT 56.

1963 (NOVEMBER) MR KING GAVE 20 FT OF THE REAR OF HIS PROPERTY LOT 58 (NO 77) PATTERSON STREET TO EVEN UP CHURCH LAND HOLDING.

1964 (APRIL) PURCHASED 6 FT WIDE STRIP OF LAND ON WEST SIDE OF CHURCH FROM RINGWOOD CITY COUNCIL FOR £25.00 PER FOOT. THIS WAS PURCHASED TO MAKE A SAFE EXIT DRIVE FOR VEHICLES USING CHURCH PROPERTY.

1964 (MAY) PURCHASED LOT 58 (NO 77 PATTERSON STREET) FOR £4,800 WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THE CHURCH WOULD "BRING OUT A BRITCH" - THE "IN" THING AT THE TIME.

NO 77 WAS RENTED OUT UNTIL NOVEMBER 1973 WHEN THE MAROONDIA SOCIAL HEALTH CENTRE WAS STARTED. (SEE NOTES IN CHURCH HISTORY B)

THE PROPERTY WAS REFINANCED AND THE OPPORTUNITY TAKEN TO CONSTRUCT A RIGHT OF WAY ON THE EAST SIDE, THUS ALLOWING EASY ACCESS TO THE CHURCH PROPERTY FOR PEOPLE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE RAILWAY LINE.

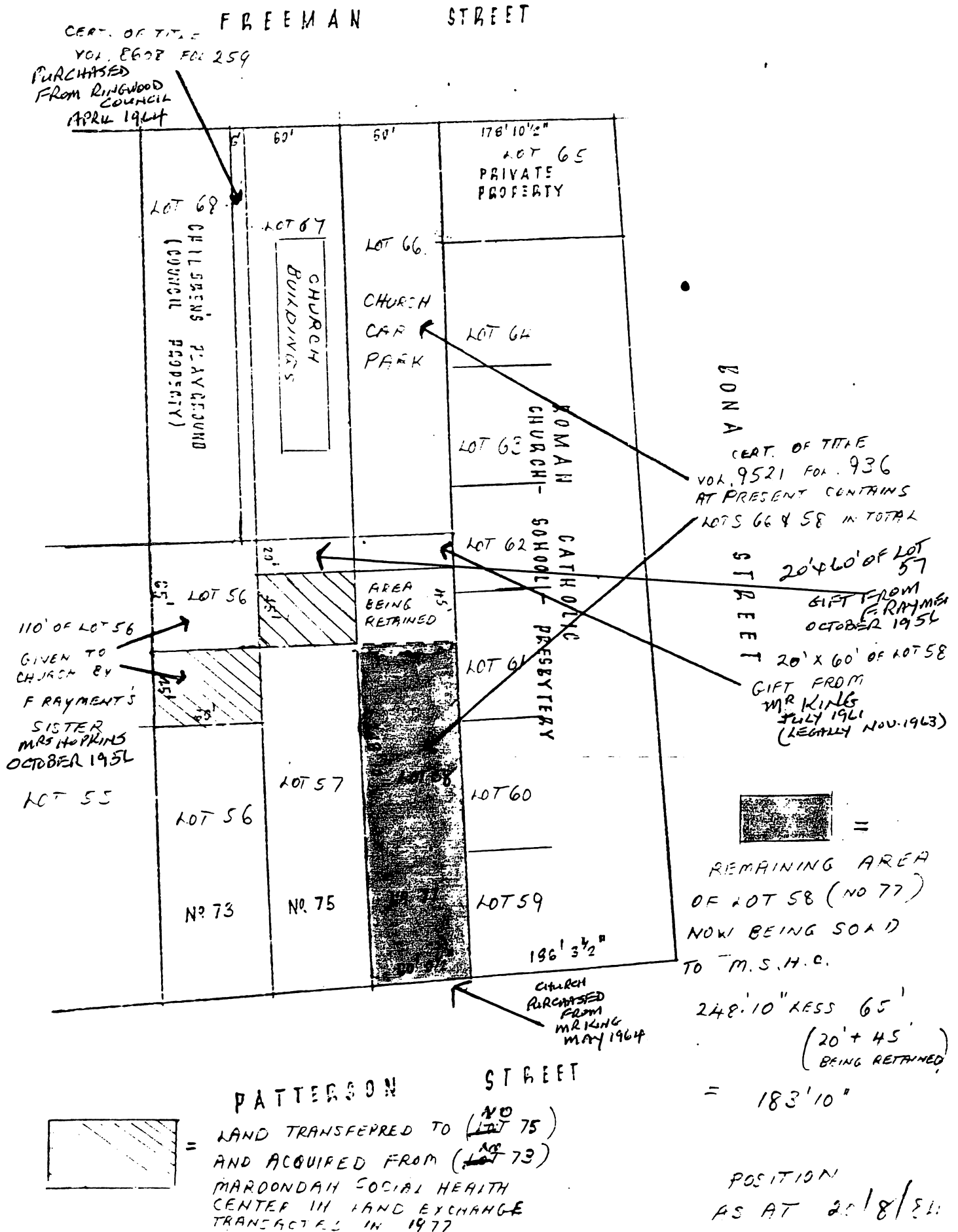
1977 LEGAL EXCHANGE OF LAND WITH M.S.H.C. - 45 FT OF NO 73 PATTERSON ST. FOR 45 FT OF NO. 75

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LAND - FREEMAN STREET PROPERTY

1983 (AUGUST) AGREED TO SELL NO 77 PATTERSON ST
TO THE MITROCHIDAH SOCIAL + COMMUNITY HEALTH
CENTRE (EACH) DUE TO LEGAL DELAYS IT WAS
MID 1985 BEFORE THE SALE WAS FINALISED.

PLAN OF RINGWOOD EAST UNITING CHURCH
PROPERTY SHOWING DETAILS OF PROPERTY
TO BE SOLD TO MARDONDAM SOC. HEALTH CENTRE
JULY 1984

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BUILDINGS(ETC) FREEMAN STREET PROPERTY

ON 16TH OCTOBER, 1954, THE REV. REG BARNIST, SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER OF THE RINGWOOD/CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT, SET THE FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE CHURCH, (WHICH WAS BUILT FOR THE COST OF £3,200-00) WHICH WAS OPENED ON 5TH MARCH, 1955, BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CONFERENCE, THE REV. A. PEDERICK.

DURING THE ENSUING YEARS THE PROPERTY WAS DEVELOPED WITH THE ADDITION OF —

A KINDERGARTEN + PRIMARY ROOM (LATER TO BECOME THE MEETING ROOM) WAS BUILT AND

OPENED FEBRUARY, 1961.

ADD * METAL STORAGE GARAGE SEE PAGE 2

EARLY IN 1964 THE LOCAL METHODIST + PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES VOTED FOR FULL CO-OPERATION AND IT WAS DECIDED TO DEVELOP THE FREEMAN STREET SITE.

THE METHODIST TRUST STARTED PLANNING AND IN 1965 ALTERED AND EXTENDED AND REFURBISHED THE CHURCH AND BUILT A HALL BEHIND THE MEETING ROOM,

TOTAL COST £10,297-00. THESE EXTENSIONS WERE OPENED ON 3RD OCTOBER, 1965, BY REV. H. J. WILLIAMS, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE RINGWOOD/CROYDON METHODIST CIRCUIT. THE BUILDINGS WERE READY FOR WHEN THE 2 CONGREGATIONS WOULD BE ONE IN JANUARY, 1966.

SEWERAGE WAS CONNECTED TO THE PROPERTY IN JUNE 1972 — THE END OF THE OLD OUTSIDE "PIT" TOILETS.

1973 SAW EXTENSIONS TO THE MAIN HALL WITH THE ADDITION OF A LARGE KITCHEN AND STORE ROOM — THIS WAS TO BE THE LAST OF BUILDING ON THE PROPERTY

BUILDINGS (ETC) FREEMAN STREET PROPERTY (CTD)

LATE 1974 SAW THE START OF A WELL PLANNED SEALED CAR PARK WHICH INCORPORATED A BASKET BALL COURT AND LANDSCAPING OF THE PROPERTY.

RAMPS

OVER THE YEARS RAMPS WERE BUILT TO MAKE FOR EASY ACCESS TO ALL BUILDINGS AND ALSO FROM THE CAR PARK.

* ADD TO PAGE 1

STORAGE GARAGE

IN 1962 (MARCH) A LARGE METAL ~~STEEL~~ GARAGE WAS PURCHASED AND USED FOR STORAGE - MOVED SEVERAL TIMES AS OTHER BUILDINGS WERE EXTENDED - USED FOR SEVERAL YEARS AS A CLASS ROOM FOR THE BIBLE CLASS (NEEDED CLEANING UP MOST WEEKS) FLOORING - ORIGINALLY COVERS FOR THE BRKING SIDE IN W CLASS TRANS - COST 6⁰⁰ EACH.

ST. STEPHEN'S UNITING CHURCH
 28 FREEMAN STREET
 RINGWOOD EAST

CHURCH OPENED MARCH 1955
 MEETING ROOM FEBRUARY 1961
 EXTENSIONS TO CHURCH OCTOBER 1965
 HALL OCTOBER 1965
 EXTENSIONS TO HALL + KITCHEN JULY 1973

BRICK 122' x 25' = 3050 SQ. FT.
 WOODEN 61' x 30' = 1830 SQ. FT.
 TOTAL 49 SQUARES

