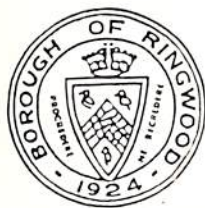


Please read this pamphlet before discarding



# RINGWOOD COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RATEPAYERS

January, 1959

*In presenting its report for 1958 your Council believes that its ratepayers will be interested in the submission made in connection with the Victorian Premier Town Contest 1958, which was prepared and presented by a sub-committee of the Council appointed for the purpose.*

*The submission was adopted by the Council, and while Ringwood was not adjudged the Premier Town among the 43 entries, it was complimented for the manner in which the case was presented, and it has become clear, as is mentioned in the summing up, that advantage has been taken of the opportunity to take stock of the situation; that is to understand the shortcomings as well as the advantages in the things done or left undone in the attempt to improve community life.*

*The plans, documents and photographs referred to in the submission are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's office should they be of interest to any ratepayer.*

## VICTORIAN PREMIER TOWN CONTEST 1958

### Submission by the Council of the Borough of Ringwood.

#### SECTION 1. — PRELIMINARY

1. In considering the submission by the Council of the Borough of Ringwood for nomination as Victoria's Premier Town, it may be desirable that some brief reflection should be given to the essential nature and character of the Municipality.
2. The first land sale was effected in the Ringwood district in 1858, just 100 years ago. Situated 16 miles from Melbourne in the clay-belt so typical of the eastern and north-eastern perimeter of the metropolis, and with a rainfall somewhat higher than that of the metropolis as a whole, the area quickly developed into a small but thriving community devoted largely to orchard activities.
3. The district remained portion of the Shire of Lillydale until 1924 when the new Borough of Ringwood was created, but despite the change in official stature the character of the young municipality was to evolve only slowly in the years leading to World War II, and gave no hint of the tremendous upsurge of development that was to occur in the post war years. Even in 1947 the Census population was only 4897, but the decade since that date has witnessed such development that the estimated population of the Borough is now 22,000.
4. The metamorphosis from a static semi-rural community to a thriving metropolitan residential suburb, with all the demands of a modern society, placed great strain on the resources — mental, physical and financial — of the civic leaders and the Community generally.
5. The problems of development were accentuated by the fact that it was effected in the main, by people in the younger age groups. The birth rate is high, and the consequential demands for infant welfare, pre-school training, youth amenities and sporting facilities, are therefore much greater than in a population where the age distribution is more evenly spread.

6. As evidence that all these problems have been and are being tackled with energy and with thought for the communal welfare, one has but to witness the continuous, prosperous and rapid expansion of the commercial heart of the town area, and the general well-being and enthusiasm of the citizens.

7. In submitting this entry the Council does so not entirely on its own behalf, nor to glory in any sense of self-satisfied complacency, but in the name of and as a tribute to its citizens, who through their ninety or more voluntary organisations within the Borough, have supported the Council in its every effort to keep pace with the development.

## SECTION 2 — TOWN PLANNING

8. Victorian people take pride in the fact that Melbourne, more than any other City of the Commonwealth, had the advantage of being carefully planned in its early settlement, and its wide streets and world-famed gardens bear evidence to the foresight of its pioneers. Not even these far-sighted people, however, could stretch their vision 100 years and foresee the expansion that was to become the Melbourne sprawl during the middle of the twentieth century.

9. Conscious that this uncontrolled sprawl was undesirable from all angles, and particularly the uneconomic nature of the demand for essential services resulting from this haphazard growth, the Government of the day commissioned the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to prepare a Master Plan for the development of the metropolis of Melbourne.

10. At that time most municipalities including Ringwood, had already attempted to plan their own local Government Areas, and had provided by-laws to zone the residential, commercial and industrial requirements of the municipality. Whilst great thought had been given to this planning which was designed to allow controlled development in the municipal area, there was no essential relationship between the planning of one municipality and that of its neighbour.

11. The Master Plan prepared by the M.M.B.W. took a broad view of the metropolis as a whole, and, being prepared by a specialist staff with an expert knowledge of overseas trends, of necessity conflicted to some varying degree, either great or small, with the town planning previously undertaken by municipalities.

12. Ringwood was no exception. The planning prepared by the Board differed only in minor detail with that in force in the Borough, but the Council appreciated that only confusion could result if this state of affairs were allowed to continue. Consequently, the Council approached the M.M.B.W. to consider the differences, and as a result of agreement being reached on the manner in which the Borough should be developed from a planning point of view, the Council made a by-law in December 1955, repealing all its residential area by-laws in order that future development on lines already agreed upon should proceed under the Melbourne and Metropolitan Planning Scheme. The repealing by-law was approved by the Governor in Council in July 1956, and gazetted in August of that year.

13. Ringwood is proud that it was the first municipality to adopt this important course, and indeed, as far as is known, it remains at the present time as the only municipality to have done so.

14. This was a most important and far-reaching step that has proved to be of great benefit to all concerned. Not only has confusion and confliction been removed, but proof positive has been given that Ringwood, whilst vitally concerned and interested in providing for organized development, does not wish to view its planning as a "parish-pump" affair, but rather as an integral part of the continued progress of Melbourne.

15. The Borough of Ringwood sits astride the Maroondah Highway which runs from west to east through the municipality. The railway line parallels the highway, with the Ringwood railway station at the geographical centre of the Borough. It was inevitable, particularly in earlier times before motorised transport, that activity should gravitate towards and about the railway station. In fact, the Municipal Chambers are situate on the highway, directly opposite the station.

16. The effect was, that until about 1950, there was but little commercial enterprise excepting on the highway, and within approximately 200 yards from the railway station.

17. Increasing population with its corresponding demands, and the sharp post war trend in motorised transport, have brought a great extension to the commercial aspect of the town area, and this extension has been almost compulsorily confined to the Maroondah Highway because of the manner in which the railway divides the Borough. The traffic problems that have ensued from this arterial development have been enormous.

18. The Council is in the fortunate position of being able to plan to cope with this problem because of two salient factors:—

(a) At the rear of the Ringwood Town Hall is the Ringwood Recreation Reserve.

(b) Some years ago the Council had the foresight to purchase park land of some 60 contiguous acres, approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile south of the station, and further reference to this area, now known as Jubilee Park, will be made later in the submission.

19. Aware of its problems, and conscious of having the assets to deal with them, the Council has prepared the way for the evacuation of sport from the Ringwood Recreation Reserve and its removal to Jubilee Park on a much grander scale.

20. It was not desirable that sporting bodies should be compelled to vacate premises until alternate accommodation was provided. As described in paragraphs 56 and 57, this has now been done, with the result that this year the Council determined that neither the Ringwood Cricket, Football or Tennis Clubs should occupy the Recreation Reserve after 30th September, 1958.

21. The Council will then be free to proceed with its project of moving from its existing Chambers, and developing a Civic Square on the site of the Recreation Reserve. Preliminary plans have been prepared by the Borough Architects, and provide for a new administrative block, and a new auditorium and supper room in the south west corner of the Reserve.

22. At the same time the Council is able to provide parking space for more than 700 cars.

23. Evidence of these points is borne out by Plans 1 and 2 included in the Appendix to this submission.

24. The Council is of the opinion that the completion of the project will provide Ringwood with a situation practically unique in the metropolitan area, where more than 700 vehicles may be safely and comfortably accommodated within the precincts of the Town Hall, in the heart of the shopping area, and within 100 yards or so of the railway.

25. As will be seen from the aforementioned plans, ingress and egress will be provided from every direction, and in order to accomplish this, the Council has already acquired land leading to Adelaide Street and Melbourne Street North, as shown on the Plans.

26. Considering an entirely different angle the Council has already taken all necessary steps to acquire other land in the same vicinity. The Council is aware that "ribbon development" is not considered advisable by most planning authorities; however, to some extent this has been unavoidable in Ringwood because of the manner mentioned in paragraph 15, by which the Maroondah Highway and the railway divide the Borough. To minimise "ribbon development" and to create a shopping square convenient to shopping and services, the Council has acquired land from property owners abutting on the north side of the Maroondah Highway between Melbourne Street and Adelaide Street, and backing on a right-of-way at the rear of the properties, in the proximity of the Ringwood Recreation Reserve. The location and intention is clearly seen in Plan 3 appended. With the acquisition of the rear portion of the properties concerned, the Council is enabled to construct a street parallel to the highway between Melbourne and Adelaide Streets, and thus allow for the creation of a shopping square.

27. The parking facilities mentioned in paragraph 22 will, of course, be contiguous to this area.

28. In other areas of development the Council has had remarkable success in its efforts to induce the owners of proposed new commercial enterprises to set back construction from the frontage alignment to thus allow for the provision of off-street parking. On the highway, of course, the Council has been supported in

this policy by the actions of M.M.B.W., and the C.R.B., but elsewhere the Council has generally depended upon, and obtained, the goodwill of the citizens in its attempts to plan to cater for parking problems.

29. During this present year the Council has also purchased two properties in an attempt to anticipate the future need for open spaces and parklands. One, of 15 acres, was purchased in the northern part of the Borough, and unless or until ultimately converted for perhaps sporting accommodation, will remain in its natural state of Australian bushland. The other, in the southern section of the Borough, is of some 4 acres, and was purchased primarily in order to enable the Ringwood Branch of the Animal Welfare League, previously affiliated with the Lort Smith Hospital, to more effectively carry out its functions. The area of land superfluous to the requirements of the League has been set aside for future recreational use.

30. Also, from a planning viewpoint, the Council was appreciative that the Maroondah Highway is used not only by its own citizens, but is a main arterial road used by the population generally to reach the Dandenongs, and the Healesville Marysville and Warburton areas. These areas are notable from a tourist point of view. The Council, therefore, has obtained from the S.E.C. expert advice as to the type of lighting most suitable for a highway of such importance. This advice has been adopted and lighting of the mercury-vapour type has already been installed from the western limit of the Borough to a point 200 yards east of the Town Hall, and as a result of a decision made during this year this type of lighting will be extended another half mile in an easterly direction.

31. Though the general planning of the Borough is in accordance with the Melbourne and Metropolitan Planning Scheme, time brings many changes and the Scheme has been deliberately made not rigid so that changes in conditions may be considered with some degree of elasticity. The Borough, for its part, is always consulted by the M.M.B.W. on any proposed changes, and this has meant that the Planning Committee of the Council has been compelled to meet almost fortnightly in order to cope with development.

### SECTION 3 — CULTURE AND EDUCATION



32. Ringwood takes pride in the efforts of various committees, associations and societies to cater for the cultural and educational aspects of community life. A Municipal Council may be required to assist these organizations in various ways, but the initiative and drive essential for the success of these efforts must stem from the citizens, and this Council desires

to place on record its gratitude for so much that has been accomplished in this regard.

33. In November 1955, as a result of the interest evidenced by so many people, the Mayor of the day called a public meeting to consider the inauguration of a Free Library. A committee of citizens was formed, with Council representation, and a great deal of research was undertaken, as a result of which a very fine report was presented to the Council in 1956. The Council adopted the report and decided that provision for a library should be incorporated in the plans of the proposed new administrative block. As will be seen from Plan 1 in the Appendix, this policy has been pursued, although the Council is not yet satisfied that the amount of space allocated in the Plan is sufficient for the purpose, and is at present negotiating with its architects for suitable rearrangement. In its estimates for 1957-58 the Council provided £1,000 towards a fund to establish the Library, bringing the total in that fund to £1,700, and it is anticipated that in the coming financial year another substantial amount will be provided. The Council has, in all its planning in this regard, had the constant assistance and advice of the Free Library Service Board, and will insist that, when incorporated in the new civic headquarters, it shall be worthy of the enthusiasm shown by the citizens' committee.

34. Probably the greatest step forward from a cultural viewpoint, in recent years, was the inauguration of the Ringwood Eisteddfod. This event has been sponsored by the Ringwood Arts and Crafts Society, an organization which has existed since about 1946, and which has had the functions of promoting cultural interests in the community.

35. During August 1958, the Fourth Annual Eisteddfod will be conducted; the program has been enlarged in character, and will extend over a period of two weeks. It was to be expected that in its initial years the Eisteddfod may have to struggle for recognition, but the enthusiasm shown and response from competitors was such that the baby launched by the Arts and Crafts society has developed into a lusty child whose reputation has spread throughout the Metropolis. The programs included in the Appendix indicate the variety and extent of this attempt to provide the community with cultural education.

36. Two art shows have also been conducted during the past 12 months, one by school children from within the Borough and the other, an International Art Show, under the sponsorship of the Ringwood and Croydon Branch of the Junior Chamber of Commerce. The former included exhibitions of art from every school and created immense interest. The standard displayed was extremely high and bears evidence to the increasing interest in art encouraged and developed in the schools; this can only have the effect in future generations of raising the cultural level of the people, and will do much to eradicate the oft-mentioned criticism of Australian culture compared with that of the peoples of the old world.

37. The International Art Show was of different form, and included exhibitions not only from Ringwood students, but also from many oversea countries. As well as the advantages mentioned in paragraph 36, it is believed that some contribution to international goodwill is made by public exhibitions of this kind.

38. Apart from education normally supplied by State and Registered Schools, post war years have seen a remarkable advance in the desire of parents for pre-school training for their children. It has already been mentioned that the population in Ringwood is composed of people in the younger age groups, and consequently the demand for pre-school kindergartens has been more extensive than would otherwise be the case.

39. Efforts by the community to provide this need will be amplified in Section 4 of this submission, but it is desired to state at this stage that kindergartens exist or are being erected within the Borough at Heatherdale, Heathmont, East Ringwood, Greenwood Park and at Norwood. The former three have been operating since prior to 1955, the building at Greenwood Park was officially opened by Lady Brooks in December 1955, and the Norwood Kindergarten is almost completed at the present time.

40. Educational development has also been extensive as will be seen from the following list of schools operating in the Borough:—

- (a) Ringwood State
- (b) East Ringwood State
- (c) Eastwood State
- (d) Heathmont State
- (e) Norwood State
- (f) Ringwood High
- (g) Winnington Grammar
- (h) Our Lady's Roman Catholic
- (i) Tintern Church of England Girls Grammar
- (j) Seventh Day Adventist.

41. In addition, a second High School is to be constructed in North Ringwood, and latest departmental advice is to the effect that tenders for this project will be called in the coming month.

42. Although the majority of schools mentioned are State responsibilities, each and every one of them is supported by a strong parents' committee, which makes itself responsible for supplying many educational aids not normally provided by the State.

43. In the case of the Ringwood High School the Council voluntarily ceded to the Education Department portion of Bedford Park adjacent to the School in order that the School may have the facility of proper sporting recreation.

44. Religious education has also been the subject of great advancement. The past three years have witnessed the erection of new Churches as follows:—

- (a) Holy Trinity, Church of England, East Ringwood.
- (b) Christ Church, Church of England, Heathmont.
- (c) Baptist Church, Heathmont.
- (d) Assembly of God, Heathmont.
- (e) St. Francis de Sales, Roman Catholic School Hall, East Ringwood.
- (f) Church of Christ, Ringwood.
- (g) Methodist Sunday School Hall, Ringwood.
- (h) St. Paul's Church of England Sunday School Hall, Ringwood.

45. It is considered that Youth Clubs and Scout and Guide organizations should be included, at least to some extent, in this Section of the submission, although amplification of these activities will be made in Section 4. Much of the training is devoted to improving the educational and cultural standards of the rising generation, apart altogether from the moral and social training that forms the basis of the organizations.

46. Land has been provided by the Council in Bedford Park to be reserved for these activities, and at present the building to be occupied by the Ringwood Police and Citizens' Youth Club is approaching completion, and should be ready for occupation before the end of 1958. A Plan (Plan 4) of this project is included in the Appendix. It may be seen that the plan allows for a library and technical training centre to be incorporated.

47. Organizations of this type within the Borough include the following:—

- Ringwood Police and Citizens Youth Club
- Heathmont Youth Club
- 1st Ringwood Boy Scouts Group
- 2nd Ringwood Boy Scouts Group
- 3rd Ringwood East Boy Scouts Group
- 4th Ringwood East Boy Scouts Group
- 1st Heatherdale Boy Scouts Group
- 1st Heathmont Boy Scouts Group
- Heathmont Girl Guides Association
- East Ringwood Girl Guides Group
- Ringwood Girl Guides Local Association

#### SECTION 4. — COMMUNITY SELF-HELP

48. If there is one section of activity in the Borough that is worthy of commendation more than any other, then it is the spirit of self-help, without which no authority charged with the responsibility of local government could even hope to cope, considering the multitude of functions that modern society demands. It has been the outstanding feature of the progress of Ringwood and an attempt will be made in succeeding paragraphs to justify that opinion.

49. In the immediate years following World War II, when Ringwood was beginning to emerge from the cocoon stage in its development, sporting facilities were probably equal to the demand at that time but were by no means adequate for the development that lay ahead. The Borough Council faced with private street construction and drainage problems on a large scale, and the host of other problems attendant upon rapid expansion, could not alone attempt to provide adequate sporting facilities without restricting equally or more important projects.

50. Sporting bodies were quick to rally, and placed propositions before the Council whereby they agreed to supply the labour for the construction of pavilions, provided the Council would advance, as a loan, sufficient capital for the purchase of materials.

51. The Council accepted these proposals and agreed to advance capital to be repayable in ten equal annual instalments, free of interest.

52. In the last 3 years the Council has advanced £5,150 for the construction of buildings on Council land. Sporting clubs have completed their part of the bargain with voluntary labour and the required annual repayments of capital.

53. Worthy though these efforts were the Council's ideas on the development of Jubilee Park as an ultimate mecca for sportsmen and sportswomen throughout the metropolis demanded a much wider approach.



54. The Council realized that if these ambitions were to become reality, support from the people would be a prime requirement. Consequently, in October 1957, it sponsored the formation of the Ringwood Jubilee Park Development Auxiliary which contained in its constitution the following objectives:—

(a) To provide or assist to provide technical information, assistance or advice, and to engage in any research or enquiry that may be considered desirable or necessary for that purpose.

(b) To raise funds to be used by the Council for the development of Jubilee Park.

(A copy of the Constitution is included in the Appendix).

55. The Council proceeded to plan the ultimate layout of Jubilee Park, and Plan 5 in the Appendix was prepared, with the sites for the Main Oval, Tennis Courts and Croquet Lawns already being confirmed.



56. The main oval, slightly larger in area than the Melbourne Cricket Ground, was first constructed, complete with turf wickets, and enclosed by a cyclone wire fence. The Cricket Club occupied the oval as from the 1957-58 season, although no dressing facilities have been provided even to this stage.

The opening of the oval was attended by the Chairman of the Board of Control and the Chairman of the Victorian Cricket Association, both of whom spoke in glowing terms of the efforts made by Ringwood to cater for the sporting requirements of its youth.

57. In February, 1958, four new en-tout-cas tennis courts were officially opened with a series of exhibition matches by Ashley Cooper, who has since won the coveted Wimbledon Crown, and other players who have represented Australia overseas.

58. Once again the Ringwood Tennis Club occupied its new courts without the assistance of adequate dressing or club-room facilities.

59. At this point in February, all expenditure in Jubilee Park had been made by the Council. The newly formed auxiliary, which had assisted the Council with technical advice in the construction to this stage, then set out to raise finance towards the development of the new areas, and as its preliminary venture conducted a Queen of Sport Carnival, with a Queen representing each sport that was ultimately to have its home in Jubilee Park.

60. The Carnival which was conducted from March to May 1958, proved beyond all shadow of doubt that the sporting section of the community is prepared to help itself, by raising the magnificent sum of £2,225 in less than 3 months.

61. As its next venture the Auxiliary is contemplating the conduct of a Ringwood Gift, perhaps approaching the scale of the Bendigo 1,000, which will have the added advantage of promoting the name of Ringwood throughout the community.

62. The success of the Queen Carnival greatly encouraged the Council which is of the opinion that help should be provided to those prepared to help themselves. As a result, the Council recently amended its policy towards sporting clubs desiring to erect club rooms on Council land, and has now decided that with the exception of the Cricket and Football Pavilion which is estimated to cost £17,000, to financially assist clubs to the extent of one-third of the capital cost, and to advance the remainder, as formerly, to be repaid over a period of 10 years.

63. The Council has recently received 3 additional requests of this nature, one from the Tennis Club, for £2,100, one from the Croquet Club, for £2,000, and one from the Heathmont Football Club, for £1,500. These requests are in addition to the proposed Cricket and Football pavilion which is still in the embryonic stages, but which, as stated before, is estimated to cost about £17,000.

64. The Auxiliary is considered to be an excellent example of self-help which proved itself at its initial attempt.

65. Another very fine example of longer standing is the Ringwood Henley Carnival Committee consisting of citizens, with a councillor as chairman. This committee has, for a number of years, conducted a Henley Carnival, in the lovely surrounds of the Ringwood lake during each Australia Day week-end.

66. During the past 3 years the Committee has worked magnificently, and has succeeded in raising £1,050. This sum, together with an appropriate subsidy from the State Government, has been sufficient to equip 19 playgrounds with 92 items of equipment. The playgrounds are sited on land acquired for the purpose by the Council, who also encourage sub-dividers to make blocks of land available for this purpose at the time of subdivision.
67. As previously mentioned, pre-school activities are also an integral part of our life, and for their success depend upon the self-help given by the community. This principle is a fundamental one as the State Government does not finance these ventures, but merely subsidises them.
68. For the purposes of this submission reference will be made only to those two which have been erected during the past three years; firstly the Greenwood Park Kindergarten, and secondly, the Norwood Kindergarten now approaching completion in Notlen Street. Both of these are sited on land made available by the Council.
69. Greenwood Park centre was officially opened by Lady Brooks in December 1955, and a photograph of this function is included in the Appendix.
70. The finance for the construction was raised by the voluntary efforts of the Building Committee, but even at the Opening there remained a debt of something more than £1,000, which was guaranteed by a number of guarantors for £100 each.
71. The Committee was not satisfied that this state of affairs should continue, and decided, with the backing of leading business houses in the town, to conduct a Queen Carnival. This took place early in 1956, with the result that the complete debt was liquidated, the total amount raised approximately £1,500.
72. Similarly with the centre at Norwood, which is expected to have its official opening before the end of the year, the cost of construction has been found by a small but virile Committee.
73. The Ringwood Police and Citizens Youth Club is another fine example of what may be achieved by organised community effort. Formed about 1954 the Club has functioned to date in the pavilion at the Ringwood Recreation Reserve. Using every available means to raise funds for the purpose, the Club approached the Council and was granted the use of portion of Bedford Park, so that it may erect its own club rooms. Such was their success that this fine building is expected to be in operation, in its first stage, before the end 1958. Stage 1 provides for a structure 90' x 50' at a cost of £5,000, and the ultimate scheme is intended to double that area with a final cost of over £15,000. (See Plan 4 included in Appendix).
74. It is anticipated from the existing demand that the Club will be required to provide youth club facilities each and every night of the week.
75. The post-war migration program in Australia has had its greatest effect in Victoria. It naturally followed that a large number of our new citizens desired to find homes of their own. With land prices as they were close to Melbourne, another corollary was that a big percentage of migrants decided to settle in the outer perimeter in areas such as Ringwood.
76. Aware that the problems of assimilation were great, and had to be overcome if the migration policy were to be successful, a small band of Ringwood citizens formed the Ringwood Branch of the Good Neighbour Council.
77. Their efforts have been untiring, not only from the precept of self-help, but also that of help-thy-neighbour. Such has been the success of this branch, which formerly consisted of old Australians attempting to help New Australians, that the pattern has changed to some extent, and one now witnesses some of the New Australians, formerly helped by the Good Neighbour Council, taking a leading part in the branch and assisting in the assimilation of even newer Australians.
78. A feature of the activities of the branch has been the annual Christmas party for these newcomers to our land. Last December over 700 of these people attended the party, many in national costume, and all expenses for the occasion were borne by the Ringwood Branch of the Good Neighbour Council.
79. That their attempts have been successful in inducing migrants to become better Australian citizens, one has but to note the eight Naturalization Ceremonies conducted



in the Borough during the past three years, and the 266 new citizens that have resulted therefrom.

80. In Australia, and particularly in recent years, the value of learn-to-swim campaigns has been stressed more and more.

81. Ringwood has been fortunate in having a number of people prepared to donate their services for the purpose of teaching children in this regard, and the Council has indicated its support by granting free admission to school pupils at the Ringwood Baths.

82. The number of free admissions during the past three years is as follows:—

1956	—	6,066
1957	—	5,716
1958	—	5,821

The figures vary a little, but this is probably accounted for by variable summer conditions. The value of the services provided by these instructors can only result in saved lives in the years to come.

83. Self-help in Ringwood, it will be seen, has emerged mainly from the willingness of the people, through their voluntary organizations, to accept the challenge of their own development. Business-houses as such have not contributed to any marked extent until quite recent times, but the reason for this may fairly easily be discerned.

84. Businesses existing in the Borough until about 1950 were of the type necessary only to serve a town of its then stature. They could not visualize that so much development could possibly occur in so short a period.

85. To their credit it should be stated that their efforts in the past few years to provide the community with businesses of the highest class have even tended to outstrip the development that promoted those efforts.

86. We now find those businessmen, united through the Ringwood Chamber of Commerce, offering to assist the Borough Council in many ways.

87. The Chamber has indicated its willingness to serve with the Council in the organisation of Civic Week, and, indeed, in the presentation of this submission. In addition, the Junior Chamber of Commerce has assisted during the past two winters by distributing to pensioners firewood provided by the Council.

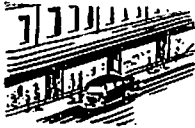
88. Perhaps the greatest contribution made by business towards the welfare of the community has been in the exceptional calibre of the businesses established during the past two or three years, and these will be described in Section 5 of this submission.

## SECTION 5 — TOWN PROMOTION

89. It was not desired that in this Section individual businesses should be particularised, but such is the publicity value of their enterprises from a municipal viewpoint that justice would not be done if their efforts were unrecorded.

90. Approximately 20 years ago, Ringwood Timber and Trading Co. Pty. Ltd., moved out to the Ringwood District to decentralise from their original North Melbourne plant. The company today occupies over 15 acres of land fronting Maroondah Highway, and employs a staff of over 150 people. The range of products produced includes joinery, building and kiln-dried timbers, cases for fresh and dried fruits and mouldings of every description. Timber is imported from America, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Tasmania. Almost three years ago the Company built the first Hardware Drive-In to provide builders, tradesmen and homeowners with the most comprehensive range of building materials in Australia. This building is over one acre in floor area. Twelve months ago the Self-Service Hardware and Showrooms were opened based on the very latest ideas in hardware merchandising from the United States.

The Directors of the Company obviously have the utmost faith in Ringwood and its surrounding districts, and have backed this opinion by the immense capital outlay of their buildings and plant. (Photographs of the enterprise appear in the Appendix).



91. Alan Coffey Motors Pty. Ltd., is another organization based in Ringwood, with subsidiary companies and branches scattered throughout the metropolis, reputedly making it the largest company of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. The Company controls four separate and distinct business areas in Ringwood, two in the eastern section and two in the western section of the town. The former include a modern motor showroom, workshop and spare parts division on the northern side of the highway, and a large used-car display on the southern side; the latter include a handsome lubritorium and workshops on the southern side with an up to date body works on the northern side. These businesses have a striking effect on passing traffic, officially counted at over 8,000 vehicles per day between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., and are of tremendous publicity value to Ringwood, providing service as they do from areas extending many miles from the Borough.

92. Another huge venture at present continuing is the decision by Stokes & Sons, Pty. Ltd., to transfer the whole of their existing business at Brunswick to a 30 acre site in Heatherdale Road, Ringwood. The functions of the Company include die sinking, silver-plate and general engineering, as well as brass and aluminium foundry work. The ultimate cost of this decision by the Company will involve the expenditure of approximately £350,000, and the first stage of the transfer has recently been completed.

93. A rather unusual type of business is about to commence in the Borough due to the energy and imagination of a young local resident. Known as Academy Film Productions the Company will concern itself with all types of documentary and animated films, TV commercials, sound recording and the cutting of discs, and generally speaking everything connected with the motion picture world. The studio will entail an outlay of £20,000. The studio is reputed to be the most up to date in Victoria, and second only in Australia to one of a similar type at present operating in Sydney.

94. Joseph Oberman and Sons, Pty. Ltd., is also an example of the enterprising type of business that is doing so much to put Ringwood "on the map". Originally operating a timber yard and hardware business within 100 yards of the Town Hall, the company last year converted portion of the site into a fine group of shops known as the "Olympic Shopping Centre", providing a number of very necessary business premises of high quality, and having the dual effect of beautifying that particular section of the highway. A month ago the Company transferred its timber and hardware business to a site 800 yards in a westerly direction, and converted to an American drive-in style, which will contribute a great deal towards reducing traffic problems.

95. Further evidence of the growing establishment of Ringwood as a commercial centre was the decision by the S.E.C., some two years ago, to purchase a site and erect a modern showroom and branch office opposite the Ringwood Post Office.

96. It is not intended to imply that the foregoing are the only large business expansions, as one could include H. G. McLean (Motors) Pty. Ltd., (who recently acquired the Volkswagen franchise); Bill Patterson Motors Pty. Ltd., (Agents for Holdens); Hassett's Pty. Ltd., (Austins), and many others, not to mention what has almost amounted to an invasion, in recent years, by banking interests. Banks now include E.S. & A. (2 branches and 2 agencies), N.S.W., A.N.Z., Commercial, Commonwealth and National, as well as the State Savings Bank of Victoria. It may well be interpreted that the interest shown by banking interests is a valuable barometer to the commercial strength of the Borough and its businessmen.

97. The point that is strongly made, however, is the tremendous value to the Borough of the individual and combined efforts by all businesses to expand their own affairs. The confidence they express breeds further confidence, and the publicity of their efforts virtually promotes them to roles of "publicity officers" for the Borough.

98. Collectively, through the Ringwood Chamber of Commerce and the Junior Chamber, they are now taking an increasing interest in local affairs, have contributed much original thinking to current problems, and are ever-willing to cooperate with the Council in affairs of mutual interest.

99. One sporting body in particular must also be credited for its part in promoting Ringwood — the Ringwood Cycling Club. In 1956 the Club promoted the Australian Cycling Championship, an event held in a different State each year. The race commenced and finished in Ringwood and attracted leading riders from all over Australia, including Russell Mockridge. Such was the success of the conduct of the event that strong efforts were made to have the Olympic road events held on the same course, but the difficulty of traffic control on Maroondah Highway mitigated against these efforts. The Cycling Club guaranteed prize money for the Australian Championship and local traders were generous in their support. Similar support is given to the annual "Ringwood 60", which also attracts the best cyclists in the State. These events are of tremendous value from a publicity angle, and it is certain that people all over Australia first learned of Ringwood in this manner.

## SECTION 6 — TOWN BEAUTIFICATION

100. Some years ago a phrase was coined which was to become a by-word — "Why Ringbark Ringwood". That phrase is typical of the thinking that prevails in this very tree-minded municipality, and if there is one subject most likely to cause Councillors the greatest alarm it is the desecration of trees. The Council has pursued a lively tree-planting program and in the past three years has planted 1,998 trees from its own nursery. The figures are as follows:—

1956	—	678
1957	—	602
1958	—	718

101. The trees planted include *Tristania*, *Lillipilli*, English Ash, *Prunus*, Plane, Liquidamber, Japanese Maple, Flowering Gum, Mahogany Gum, Wattles and *Titree*. The majority have been planted in private streets following construction, and replace some of the natural beauty that had to be removed to allow construction to take place. The trees are provided free by the Council, and generally maintained voluntarily by the ratepayers who have appreciated Council efforts to beautify their streets.

102. One particular beauty spot is the Ringwood Lake, which attracts many people from outside the Borough. Sited about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of the Town Hall at the junction of Maroondah Highway and Mt. Dandenong Highway, the lake nestles in a beautiful natural setting. It has recently been drained to enable the removal of weed-growth, and is the scene of the Ringwood Henley Carnival. Frequently it is required by outside bodies for Sunday-School picnics, and only a week or so ago was the venue for the Victorian Fly Casting Championships.

103. The Ringwood Horticultural Society plays a leading role in encouraging town-beautification. Annually it conducts spring and autumn shows and takes over the Ringwood Town Hall for this purpose. Such is the success of these functions that the Town Hall is crowded with exhibitions of floral beauty and the attendances are in accordance.

104. In conjunction with the Autumn Show the Society this year conducted a Home Garden Competition, with 6 sections. This created tremendous interest and encouragement, particularly when some entrants opened their gardens for exhibition for charitable purposes. Probably no better avenue exists to educate people in horticultural affairs and induce them to improve their own gardens, with the result that the Borough as a whole must increase in beauty.



105. Mention has previously been made of Jubilee Park in connection with Town Planning and Community Self-Help. However, it also plays a most important role in Town Beautification. So far Jubilee Park is only in the embryonic stage with sporting facilities in their infancy, and little or nothing done to beautify. But the general intention of the Council

in this regard must be considered. Plan 5 in the Appendix indicates the sites occupied or to be occupied by sporting clubs, but it is the announced intention of the Council to leave as much as possible of the remainder in a natural state of Australian bushland. Areas immediately surrounding club areas are to be beautified and the Ringwood Tennis Club has reached agreement with the Council in this

regard concerning the area in the environs of the new courts, as soon as the proposed new pavilion is erected. Similar treatment is to be made in the vicinity of the new Croquet pavilion.

106. In the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme an area, known locally as "Hunt's land", was reserved as open spaces and the M.M.B.W. has compensated the owner accordingly. Under the Scheme the Council may, if it wishes to develop the land for the purpose indicated, purchase such land from the Board. The Council has decided to adopt this course and this year placed the land in condition for use by sporting bodies. This has had the effect of beautifying the area concerned, and efforts are to be made to achieve further improvement.

107. The site of a disused clay pit in East Ringwood is also a fine example of municipal beautification. The first step was to use the pit as a disposal tip for heavy refuse, other than household garbage. Not only was local industry provided with a means of disposing of its refuse, but the dual effect was the reclamation of a valuable site. This reclamation is virtually completed and the Council plans to now beautify the area which is contiguous to the East Ringwood Community Centre, and allows for the expansion of the Centre in garden surrounds.

108. The policy of reclaiming similar land, and also providing disposal sites for industrial refuse, is to be further undertaken as the result of a survey conducted some months ago by the Borough Engineer, and the necessary legal steps are now being taken to allow this policy to proceed.

109. The Council is also of the opinion that its adoption of the land-fill method of garbage disposal must surely be considered as evidence of its determination to beautify the municipality. By this method, household garbage is buried in trenches and immediately covered, with two distinct advantages. One is that unsightly and unpleasant garbage is less exposed to flies, etc., and is less offensive; the other is that low-lying land, which would otherwise be difficult to improve, may now be recovered and made a place of some beauty. The method has been particularly advantageous in Jubilee Park where the surrounds of the main oval are now taking the shape of a natural grandstand, whereas previously they sloped sharply downwards from the edge of the oval to a deep depression. It is intended that this method will later be applied to other waste-land in the Borough. It is important to note that whereas previously the Municipal Tip had been the subject of constant complaints from ratepayers and the Health Commission, the current project has been free from complaint with one exception, and that was caused by an accidental fire.

110. The proposed civic square previously mentioned and shown on Plan 2 of the Appendix, should also serve as an illustration of Town Beautification. It is not intended to amplify the information already supplied regarding this proposition, as it is considered the improvements will be obvious.

## SECTION 7 — HOUSING

111. Probably the most important step taken by this municipality to improve housing conditions, was its sponsorship of the compulsory full construction of private streets by sub-dividers.

112. In August 1955, through its representative on the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Council proposed to the Metropolitan Sectional Council of the Association that the Government be asked to amend the Local Government Act to enable Councils to compel sub-dividers to fully construct streets before the Plan of Sub-division be sealed. The Government subsequently amended the Act, and this was probably the most important effort made to date to combat the horror of "heart-break" streets.

113. The effect has been that when subdivisions are now made drainage and road problems are obviated before houses are occupied, to the great advantage of the home-owner, and also to the Council who is not required to construct those streets, in a period when finance for the purpose is most difficult to obtain.

114. The policy has also had the effect of controlling development, in that thought must now be given to the supply of services, whilst previously subdivision took place without any great consideration being given in that regard.

115. The Council has supervised the complete construction of subdivisonal roads under this plan and to date these include:—

McLean's subdivision	—	5,400 feet
Lee Court	—	400 feet
Ware subdivision	—	1,700 feet
Dickson's subdivision	—	1,000 feet
Barrow's subdivision	—	250 feet
McKay Court	—	500 feet
		9,250 feet

116. During the past three years the Council has also undertaken the following Private Street work:—

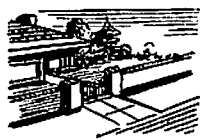
William Street Group	—	5,300 feet, at £2 10 0 per foot
Nelson Street Group	—	850 feet, at £2 3 6 per foot
Barkly Street	—	1,200 feet, at £3 10 0 per foot (approx.)
Dickason Road Group	—	5,800 feet, at £3 6 0 per foot
Grant's Estate	—	9,400 feet, at £4 0 0 per foot (approx.)
Heathmont Road	—	4,800 feet, at £4 10 0 per foot (approx.)
Patterson Street Group	—	6,900 feet, at £4 10 0 per foot (approx.)
		34,250 feet

117. It is considered that the construction of nearly 7 miles of Private Street work in three years, with finance so difficult, is an effort that has contributed largely to the improvement of housing conditions in the Borough.

118. As an indication of the progressive attitude adopted in this regard it should be stated that the Ringwood Council was the first in Victoria to adopt Cement Stabilisation for private street construction, and to date, Heathmont Road, Grant's Estate and Patterson Street Group have been constructed by this method, which has provided improved roads at less cost.

119. The Council has also been most active in its approaches to the M.M.B.W., firstly for inclusion in the Board's area (this was effected from 1st October, 1955) and secondly, in its requests for sewerage facilities. The Council was favourably received as a deputation by the Board in 1957, and it is pleasing to record here that indications now are to the effect that tenders for the first stage in the construction of the Ringwood Outfall Sewer will be called in the coming month.

120. The Council has investigated the possibility of creating its own sewage disposal scheme for the business section of the town, pending the ultimate sewerage by the Board, and has approached the Department of Health and the M.M.B.W. in this connection, but until now legal difficulties have prevented this scheme from progressing.



121. These propositions are considered to be intimately connected with Housing, in that modern society demands a high standard of services to home-owners, comparable with the increased high standards of living within homes, that have become the normal standard in post-war years.

122. Building permits for new dwellings have decreased slightly during the past three years, but this is typical of the trend in nearly all areas. Figures supplied by the Government Statist, for the 12 months ended 31st December in each year, are as follows:—

	Ringwood	Melbourne Metropolitan Area
1955	504	14,305
1956	473	13,023
1957	466	13,628



123. The tendency for building permit figures to ease slightly is quite likely a favourable one, as opportunity may be provided for some consolidation to be made of the advances achieved in recent years. If development were to continue at a freak rate the position may well be reached that Local Government, required as it is to provide an increasing variety of services, would be unable to cope.

## SECTION 8 — TOURISM

124. Ringwood, like all other Metropolitan Municipalities, is hardly to be considered a worth-while tourist proposition, if one is to define that term as applicable to mean tourists from interstate or overseas.

125. It is becoming more and more a metropolitan suburb. But it does have advantages if one is to consider its attraction to people from outside the Borough. Situated at the junction of the Ferntree Gully and Lilydale railway lines it provides a centre for commercial and business activities that is appreciated by residents of outer areas, and business proprietors have been quick to appreciate this fact, as has been borne out by earlier comment.

126. Also, as it still retains much of its natural beauty and the policy of the Council is to ensure that this state continues, it has become a stopping place for many week-end travellers.

127. One of the purposes in the development of Jubilee Park was to provide something of a breath-taking nature that would attract not only citizens from within the Borough, but from the whole of Melbourne and beyond. That is why its development is being tackled with imagination and high ideals, as it is considered that no other municipality in Melbourne will be able to provide in one continuous area 60 acres of parkland devoted to all types of sport, in surroundings such as exist at Jubilee Park.

## SECTION 9 — SUMMARY

128. This submission has been of immense value to the municipality, in that it has provided the required initiative to take stock of the situation — to understand the shortcomings as well as the advantages in the things done or left undone in our attempts to improve community life.

129. Mention has been made of very many organizations within the Borough that have assisted the Council in so many ways, and it is regretted that others may be doing equally fine work but have not been recognised in this submission. The Council of the Borough of Ringwood, in presenting its case as Victoria's Premier Town, does so on behalf of all its citizens, and in grateful acknowledgement of their assistance in so many varied directions.

### GENERAL.

Your Council hopes the case for Ringwood has been of interest and invites your assistance in order that it may continue to be regarded as one of the most progressive municipalities in the Metropolitan area.

### FIRE HAZARDS.

At this time of the year, when everything is tinder dry, ratepayers are invited to use every endeavour to see that land which they own or are responsible for is kept clean and does not constitute a fire hazard. Permits for controlled burning may be obtained at the Town Hall provided that the time of proposed burning is not an "Acute fire danger period".

### DOG NUISANCE.

From time to time your Council has trouble with uncontrolled dogs. Sometimes they follow the kiddies to school and subsequently become a regular nuisance, more particularly to the shopkeepers and of necessity the Dog Inspector has to take action and seize them. As a result owners are inconvenienced and become upset when this happens; ratepayers are therefore invited to assist by instructing their children to see that they are not followed by the household pet when going to school.

**RATES AND CHARGES FOR**

1957-58	General .. .. .	7.125d. in £ on U.C.V.
	Sanitary .. .. .	£4/5/-, weekly service.
	Garbage .. .. .	£1/8/3, weekly service.
1958-59	General .. .. .	7.375d. in £ on U.C.V.
	Sanitary .. .. .	£4/17/6, weekly service.
	Garbage .. .. .	£1/15/-, weekly service.

**THE COUNCIL INVITES YOUR CO-OPERATION**

The Council is at your service within the limits of its resources. The various Departments and Officers of the Council are available, and anxious to assist you in your civic and communal problems. Make use of them at the appropriate times. If in doubt on any matter, telephone WU 6616 for friendly service.

**YOU** can complete the chain of co-operation in many ways—

Continue to beautify your premises.

Keep dogs out of the shopping areas—unless on leash.

Keep your premises clean and tidy.

Destroy rats and vermin.

Prevent trees and hedges from overhanging footpaths.

Display conspicuous house numbers.

Use off street parking areas where possible and comply with all parking notices.

Assist the Council in the prevention of damage by vandals by reporting any case which comes to your notice.

Report any breakdown of Sanitary or Garbage Service, so that the Contractors may be notified immediately.

If you have a Municipal problem regarding which you have been unable to obtain satisfaction through the normal channels, write to the Town Clerk, who will place the matter before the Council.

Make suggestions which you feel are of value, **AND IN ALL WAYS, TAKE AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF YOUR COMMUNITY.**

**YOUR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

Mayor: Cr. R. O. Spencer, J.P. (North Ward).

**North Ward—**

- Cr. D. J. Baxter.
- Cr. B. J. Hubbard, J.P.
- Cr. R. O. Spencer, J.P.

**South Ward—**

- Cr. A. G. Lavis, J.P.
- Cr. L. H. McLeod.
- Cr. W. T. D. Roberts.

**East Ward—**

- Cr. R. C. Horman, J.P.
- Cr. J. F. Hodgkins.
- Cr. Peter Vergers, J.P.

Authorised by the Council of Borough of Ringwood.

**ALFRED KELLY, F.I.M.A.,**  
Town Clerk and Treasurer.

