

Duplicate

# BOROUGH OF RINGWOOD

Election Day: Next Thursday, 25th August, 1927

Polling 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

To the Ratepayers,

Borough of Ringwood.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the first Election of Councillors for the Borough on December 4th, 1924, we had the honor of being returned at the head of the Poll, and since that time we have endeavored to justify, by our actions, the confidence reposed in us. The term for which we were elected has now expired, and in response to a requisition, signed by a very representative body of Ratepayers, we agreed to again nominate and place our services at their disposal.

The fact that the new Borough had to be launched, its foundations laid and various policies adopted, all meant hard work for the new Council. In less than three years we find an efficient staff organised and carrying out its duties with courtesy and ability; a policy of street construction and drainage adopted, and a scheme of Public Works laid down and being carried into effect.

Ratepayers who have studied the work of the Council know what has been accomplished; but there are some who have not had time to do so, and we desire to make them conversant with some of the principal happenings of the past three years, so that they may cast an intelligent vote on Polling day, Thursday, August 25th; and we also wish to reply to an "Open Letter" addressed to the Ratepayers by our opponents, Messrs. Madden and Wieland.

This Open Letter purports to give information on Municipal affairs; condemns almost everything the Council has done since its inception; complains that the North is favoured at the expense of the South side; objects to the appointment of a Permanent Engineer; laments the lack of progress in the Borough, etc. It is from beginning to end full of inaccuracies and misstatements, and is absolutely misleading. All through the Open Letter there is personal abuse of the Councillors and the Borough Engineer, and reflection on their honour and integrity; but, without doubt, the Ratepayers will treat the references with the contempt they deserve.

It is unfortunate for the so-called Reform Party that the able eligible men referred to by Messrs. Madden and Wieland have not come forward, and that it has to rely upon the rejects of past elections to champion their movement. This is Mr. Madden's third and Mr. Wieland's second attempt to enter the Council, so probably the motive behind their candidature is something more than a protest against the "wasteful and extravagant use of Public money" provided for in the Loan of this year.

This Open Letter complains that five Councillors reside in the Northern portion of the Borough, but we fail to understand how the election of Mr. Madden would alter the representation, even if it

were advisable, as he also is a resident of the Northern portion according to their own division of the Municipality.

We wish to say at the outset that we stand for a united Ringwood. We believe if all pull together the resources of the Borough are such that progress is assured, and cannot be retarded. Our opponents are for dissension; they would divide the people and pit the South against the North, and prevent us being a strong, happy and contented community.

REPRESENTATION AND EXPENDITURE.---Our opponents divide the Borough into two sections, taking the Main Road and Railway line running East and West as the boundary, and then raise the bogey of unfair representation and unfair expenditure; but the figures will show conclusively there is no truth in the statement of unfair treatment to any portion of the Borough. The Council stands for no sectional interests, and all works have been dealt with entirely on their merits. The following figures are correct, and give a true indication of the way the ordinary revenue and loan moneys have been spent and allocated, and they need no comment;---

EXPENDITURE FROM REVENUE (FOR DAY LABOUR AND MATERIAL) AND LOANS (SCHEDULED WORKS) FROM JANUARY 1st, 1925, TO JULY 30th, 1927.

NORTH.		SOUTH.	
Labour and Material . . . . .	£727	Labour and Material . . . . .	£2095
Loan No. 1 . . . . .	262	Relief Work . . . . .	55
Loan No. 2 . . . . .	4566	Loan No. 1 . . . . .	1248
	<hr/>	Loan No. 2 . . . . .	4254
	£5555		<hr/>
			£7652
Parks—		Parks—	
Reynolds Avenue . . . . .	£500	Heathmont . . . . .	£500
Balance . . . . .	1000	Dawes Park . . . . .	1000
	<hr/>	Lake . . . . .	210
	£1500		<hr/>
			£1710

NOTE.—Total expenditure on roads, paths and drainage since the inception of the Borough shows that the South side has the advantage of £2097. This is for Public Works only.

We would point out that the above figures do not include any money contributed by property owners for special footpath construction.

Plant, Main Road and Town Hall are divided equally.

The above figures should convince any unbiassed individual that all the talk of cliques, unfair representation and expenditure has no foundation in fact.

Referring to the Reformers' remarks about disgraceful roads within sight of the Town Hall, our opponents, had they taken any interest in the Council proceedings, would have known that for two years we have endeavoured to get the Main Road completed, but it is only during the past three weeks that the Country Roads Board has consented to pay its share, and, since then, tenders have been called for the work.

TOWN HALL AND DAWES (RINGWOOD) PARK.---The Council was faced with the problem of providing adequate accommodation for itself and staff, and decided to erect a building worthy of Ringwood, and one which would serve the Municipality for many years to come, and as the Interest

and Sinking Fund amounts to only £8 per week, we are purchasing the Hall for less than we would have to pay in rent for the same accommodation if it were available; and, as to the £1000 loan money for Dawes Park, of which our opponents make a great deal, this is to pay off the amount owing on the Park which was obtained some years ago when Mr. Madden was one of the foremost in urging the Lilydale Shire Council to purchase it, and which he appears to have forgotten.

The Borough Estimates gazetted March 2nd, 1927, mentioned in the Open Letter, we know nothing of, and they can only exist in imagination, as estimates are never gazetted. Possibly "Notice of Intention to Borrow" is what the Reformers mean, but, if so, they have either misquoted it or do not understand figures, and it seems most extraordinary that men should have the assurance to come forward as Reformers when they do not understand the difference between Estimates and a Notice of Intention to Borrow. In that notice, in addition to the amounts mentioned by them for Bedford Road and Wantirna Road, appears £1189 for Canterbury Road, £620 for Alexandra Road, £560 for Pitt Street and £500 for the purchase of a recreation ground at Heathmont, all in the Southern section.

The finances of the Borough are on a firm and sure footing, as a perusal of the Annual Balance Sheet will disclose. When the rate of 2/- in the pound was first struck it was general comment outside the Borough that we could not carry on with it. We have proved we can. With £22,500 worth of Public Works provided for in the way of roads, paths, drainage and new Borough Chambers, the Ratepayers are not asked to pay one penny more in rates. The loan of £22,500 was raised without any commission being paid to anyone, and the interest, £5/12/6, is lower than the rate payable to-day. The flotation of this loan was not arranged at the right time by mere chance, but with some knowledge of the money market and on good advice.

ENGINEER.---Here, again, the Reformers are at fault. The Engineer is not highly paid, as they state, and, as a matter of fact, his salary is considerably lower than the log rate, and we have been fortunate in being able to retain his valuable services by an arrangement whereby he acts as Consulting Engineer to the Shire of Doncaster and increases his salary without further cost to Ringwood. The time occupied by Doncaster work is not more than one day per week, and probably less, and as a set-off the assistant in the Engineer's office is paid for by the Engineer from his own pocket. The Engineer does not receive any commission or travelling expenses as in other Municipalities, and to employ a Consulting Engineer as suggested by our Reformers for three days a week, plus commission on works and travelling expenses, all of which would have to be paid, it would cost the Municipality, based on the work of the Borough since its inception, at least £640 per annum more than the present arrangement.

The raising of all the questions of road construction, paths, Parks, Town Hall, etc., must have been with some motive other than that set forth by these Reformers, who offer you "honest practical service," because the right time to deal with these matters was months ago. At that time, in accordance with the Local Government Act, under which the Municipality works, the notice of Intention to Borrow £22,500 was gazetted, together with a schedule of the proposed works, and ratepayers had one month within which to lodge objections. Not one single objection was lodged by a ratepayer to anything in the schedule, and now, when the Hall is completed and in occupation, and many of the other works well in hand, the Reformers come along with their destructive criticism of everything, but do not offer one single constructive idea worth considering.

In reference to the Reformers' statement that the progress of Ringwood has been retarded, we would point out that £98,000 worth of buildings have been erected in the Borough since March,

1925, which is proof that the Reformers know very little of what is going on in the Municipality.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, we wish to ask you to record your votes on Thursday, August 25th, in a commonsense manner, and not to be led astray by the promises of inexperienced men. You honored us with your confidence in 1924, and we have not failed you, and we have no doubt that when the numbers go up at the close of the Poll next Thursday, they will prove that our efforts on behalf of the Ratepayers of this Municipality during our term as Councillors have met with your approval.

Yours faithfully,

A. TEMPLE MILES.

J. B. McALPIN.

Ringwood,  
August, 1927.