

13/10/80.

Memo for: Gill Handers

Re: St Johns Church (Presbyterian)
Fowst-Street Bendigo.

I spoke today with Mr Lyle Shepherd (Tel 435193). He has most relevant information regarding the history of the church building. The other contact, Mr A. S. Pegler (Tel 436034) is the current minister but has been at the church only about 3 years.

Relevant points made by Mr Shepherd were:

1. In the "Annals of Bendigo", in either chapter 2 or 4, there is a section on Churches of Bendigo which he referred me to.
2. The church was bought by St. Johns in 1949 and additions made in 1951. About this time the seating was changed around. Seating prior to that was for 450.
3. The church used to be Congregational but apparently at least one other owner between then and when purchased by St. Johns.
4. Architect: W. C. Vahland V.I.A.
 Builder: N. Longstaff.
 Date: on Memorial Stone 23 April 1890.
 Opened: 20 Feb 1891.
 Tender Price: £2,481.
5. The construction style was Gothic, built for the Congregational Church to "replace an earlier building of unpretending character built in 1858". (This is very early).
 In 1902 it is recorded that part was used as a school room.
6. The original St. Johns church which was nearby became the church hall but was pulled down "years ago".

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7. Mr. Sheppard mentioned two other possible contacts with good historical knowledge: Lew Bennetts and Alec Stone. Also the interesting fact that Ray Anderson used to be the

organist at St. Johns. The organ was at some time moved to Quarry Hill and replaced by an electronic organ.

8. In 1972 St. Johns held their centenary and for the occasion a booklet was published. Mr Shepherd is endeavouring to obtain a copy for me, or alternatively to type an extract from his own copy. He has my 'phone no. 437810 and will phone when details are available to collect. His address is: Thompson Cres, Bendigo.

I will forward any further details on to you.

Jack.