



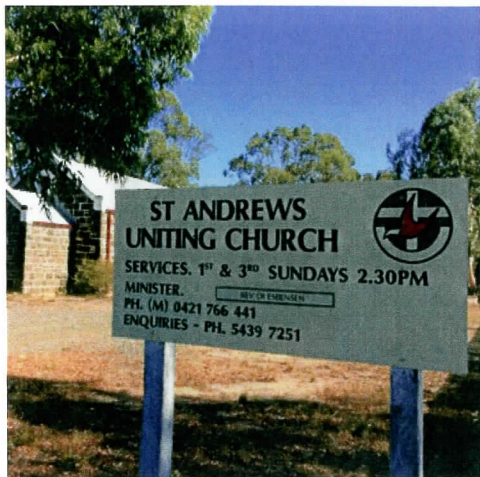
ST ANDREW'S UNITING CHURCH

AXEDALE

150TH ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATION

10 March 2019



The first hundred years of St Andrew's Axedale were summarised in a small booklet prepared for the centenary service. This is available separately and I will not duplicate the contents here. Instead I include some transcripts of contemporary accounts found in local newspapers - of the building and opening of the church and significant events such as Sunday school anniversaries and children's picnic day. These are transcribed from the Trove newspaper archives made available by the National Library - spelling has not been changed but spacing has been adjusted for ease of reading. They are in chronological order.

This booklet focuses on contemporary accounts of the early years and memories and reflections from the last 25 years. There are many other stories that could be gathered of the years in between!

Special thanks to Glenis Dyason, Di Esbensen, Tim Angus, Nancy Bomford and Keryn Mathews for sharing their reflections and/or photographs. I have also drawn on Margaret Temple's book: 'St Andrew's Church Bendigo 1854-1965', Neptune Press 1984.

Frances Ford

We acknowledge that the land on which St Andrew's Uniting Church Axedale is built has been cared for by the Dja Dja Wurrung people for countless thousands of years, and pay our respects to their elders; past, present and emerging.

There are many rich signs of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Axedale area, including a large number of scar trees and other heritage sites. The Campaspe River marked the boundary between the land of the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungurung people.



The first record of Presbyterian church activity in this area is found in the writings of Rev Dr James Nish, the first Presbyterian minister in Northern Victoria, who later in life shared this story of being rescued by two Aboriginal women in the late 1850s:

"On one occasion I had camped on the farther side of the Campaspe on a Friday night. It has been raining heavily all day and during the night the river had risen fifteen feet; of course I had made no provision for the Sabbath before leaving home." James Nish was with a squatter who also needed to return to Bendigo, and goes on to recount that some Aboriginal people camped close by cut two sheets of bark 'such as they thought suitable for the purpose'.

Two Aboriginal women, one seated in the middle of each sheet of bark, sculled them across while "our saddles were placed at one end of the sheets, and we sat very quietly at the other. Our horses were made to swim over and were taken possession of when they landed, by the occupants of a bark hut on the other side. This pool across which we sailed was very deep, I should

suppose twenty-five feet deep and very smooth" (ref Margaret Temple's book pp 40-41)

A number of church services were conducted by Dr Nish in the Axedale area 'somewhere in the shade of the gum trees'. Some years later, in 1868, Dr Nish laid the foundation stone of St Andrew's Axedale.

Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser, Friday 25 September 1868, page 2

AXEDALE (FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

September 22nd, 1868. We are glad to see signs of progress, as every new bridge and road are the means of helping to develop the resources of the Colony, and we would wish that the construction of roads and bridges were much more rapid than they now are, as it would materially assist in opening up the country.

Another feature of progress, which we are always delighted to observe, where the people are settling, is that they have not forgotten the good old institutions of their Fatherland, such as the church and the school. Axedale has had for many years a Roman Catholic Church, and now the Presbyterians have begun, what promises to be a very nice church of bluestone, which will be an ornament to the township of Axedale.

We understand the ceremony of laying the foundation stone is to be performed by the Rev. J. Nish, of Sandhurst, to whom most of the people of that persuasion belong; but it has recently been connected with the Heathcote district, and the minister, the Rev. D. Renton, also the Rev. J. W. Inglis, of Sandridge, and J. M. L. Abernethy, of Eaglehawk, will take part in the proceedings.

There has also been an application to the Board of Education for a grant to a Common School, which will no doubt be complied with, and thereby supply a want much felt in that place; so that before long the township of Axedale will be able to boast of two substantial churches and a common school. The Foresters' Hall has, for the present, been kindly placed at the disposal of the committee, and the school will be opened on Monday next, under the management of Mr. George McKay.

Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser, Friday 23 April 1869, page 2

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, AXEDALE.

This church was opened on Sunday last, by the Rev. J. Nish, of Sandhurst, who took his text from Malachi 3rd chapter 8th verse, "Will a man rob God," from which he preached an excellent and impressive sermon, and was listened to with great attention by a full congregation of earnest worshipers, and no doubt will be long remembered in this district, where the Protestant population have not before had the privilege of worshipping God in a house set apart for his service.

On Tuesday evening, a tea meeting was held in connection with the opening services; after tea, which was served in the Foresters Hall, the people retired to the church, when the meeting was opened with praise and prayer.

The Rev. D. Renton, (the pastor of the congregation), then took the chair, and reported the various steps that had been taken towards supplying a want long felt by a portion of the community, viz., that when he first came to the district, in July last, he called a meeting of those favorable towards providing Axedale with a Presbyterian church, at which a committee was formed and subscription lists opened, and after a little exertion they found they were warranted to call for tenders of the comparative cost of a building of blue stone, of brick, and of wood: when the tenders came they chose blue stone with white brick facings of the windows and door, and they accepted contracts for labor only, the committee themselves undertaking to provide all the materials, which they promptly commenced about the beginning of September, and the foundation stone was laid by the Rev. J. Nish, of Sandhurst, on the 30th of the same month, and here the chairman remarked that but for the energy and zeal put forth by the various members of committee, the building would not now have been what it is, as they freely gave of their means, and spared neither time nor exertion in obtaining the needed funds to carry on and complete the church - a building which would be an ornament to any country district.

The amount at their disposal has been £258 4s. 6d., leaving a debt of £51 1s. 2d., which it was hoped would almost if not altogether be removed by the proceeds of the opening services. The total cost of the building being £309 5s. 8d. This of course does not complete all that is necessary, as a vestry, a stable, and fencing are still required, which no doubt will be had in due time.

Interesting addresses were then delivered by the Rev. J. M. Abernethy, of Eaglehawk, Rev. J. Westacott, (of the United Methodist Free Church) Heathcote, the Revs. G. Taylor, and J. Nish, of Sandhurst; and some sacred music was rendered by Messrs. Adamson, Alsop, and Foyster, of Heathcote. We have not learned what was realized from the opening services, but from the large attendance on both occasions, it must be something considerable towards reducing the debt. We most heartily congratulate the Protestants of the Axedale district on their new church, which is very finely finished, and certainly one of the neatest country churches we have seen for some time.

Its dimensions are thirty-eight by twenty-one feet, and has seat accommodation for 110 people. It has four stained glass windows on each side and one in the end gable behind the pulpit, which are in beautiful harmony with the other parts of the structure, the pews are all stained and varnished, the pulpit and doors dark oak, the walls of stone color, the roof a delicate blue; the whole reflects great credit on the architect and workmen; and we have no doubt but it will prove a blessing morally, intellectually and spiritually to the district.

Margaret Temple provides some more information about the building of the church in her history – pp168-9:

"In 1863 two settlers named David Mill and Nathaniel Ingham were members of these early services. As Nathaniel Ingham had blue-stone on his property, he quarried and donated the stone. Because they had only simple tools and so little spare time, it was five years before they had the stone cut and carried to the site where they had cleared and levelled the ground".

After the laying of the foundation stone 30 September 1868 "it took only seven months for David Mill to build the church – doubtless with the help of other members of the little congregation".

Bendigo Advertiser Tuesday 3 September 1878, page 2

AXEDALE (FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Monday evening

The weather for the past few days has been splendid. On Wednesday I took a drive as far as McCormick's saw mill, but found that it had been removed two or three miles further up the creek to where there is a better supply of timber. The timber cut is mostly for claims, though there is machinery for cutting all kinds of timber.

Much difficulty is experienced in getting the timber to Sandhurst. The roads are heavy; in fact almost impassable. In coming home I encountered a terrific thunderstorm. The rain fell in torrents, and the lightning at times was very vivid. The weather is again splendid.

The church-going people of Axedale are determined not to keep their church door open. The gentleman who drew up the "code of laws" respecting the management and conducting of the business—inviting the minister, etc. —has only put in an appearance once since.

The minister has been weeding out the sheep from the goats, and has so effectually done his work that very few remain to be converted. In consequence of this, he announced that if no more penitents could be found the doors would have to be closed.

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AXEDALE (FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

Monday, 9th September.

The Presbyterians have at last thrown off their lethargic habits, and are now not only convinced of their wrongdoing in keeping a nice little church closed, but on Sunday they actually had a minister officiating, and he is, I believe, to officiate every Sunday.

...The splendid weather of late has made a marked improvement in the crops and orchards. There is a magnificent show of blossom, and should the frost not prove very severe there will be a fine fruit harvest.

Bendigo Advertiser, Tuesday 17 September 1878, page 2

AXEDALE (FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT)

Monday, 10th September.

I believe that my remarks concerning the congregation that attends to hear the lay reader who conducts the service at the Presbyterian Church here, on behalf of the Episcopalians, have been taken to heart by that gentleman. I stated nothing but facts in my remarks about the church. I now understand that that gentleman says that if only ten persons come to the church the service will be conducted.

So much for perseverance; but why should the number who attend be so small? I am sure that the singing of the conductress of the choir alone would be sufficient attraction to induce more than that number to come.

The ploughing match is advertised to come off on the 25th instant in Conroy's paddock, at the rear of the Perseverance Hotel. It promises to be a decided success, should the weather be propitious. About £30 are to be given in prizes, and the committee are most assiduous in their desire to carry the affair off well. Our Sandhurst friends will find it a fine drive, and the Wednesday half-holiday should cause it to be well patronised by people from the city.

to the chairman.

AXEDALE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Friday, 17th December.

The well-known Campaspe Hotel here had a very narrow escape from destruction by fire on Wednesday evening last. From what particulars I could glean, it seems that a lighted candle was burning in one of the bedrooms near an open window, and a gust of wind must have blown the curtain on to it. The curtain was in flames, and the ceiling had caught, when young Master Drake rushed in, tore down the curtain, and threw a basin of water (which luckily was in the room) on the burning ceiling. His prompt action had the desired effect, and a serious conflagration was averted.

Those unfortunate anglers who have tried their skill in our river without success may take fresh courage. A party from Sandhurst a short time ago landed a magnificent specimen of the finny tribe, which was estimated to turn the scale at half a cwt. They caught a number of other fair sized fish besides.

Most of the farmers in this district are busily engaged cutting their crops, but very few seem at all sanguine as to the result. However, the threshing machine will soon settle the matter, and that, let us hope, in their favor.

The anniversary of the Sabbath school connected with the local Presbyterian Church is to be celebrated shortly. The children have been busily engaged for some time past in preparing a service of song, entitled "The Children's Messiah." These annual gatherings have always proved a source of pleasure and profit, and this one bids fair to equal any of its predecessors.

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1887

Bendigo Advertiser, Wednesday 13 July 1887, page 1

AXEDALE (FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT) Friday, 8th July.

Mr. Welsh, the young student at present officiating for Dr. Nish, and lately appointed by the Presbytery to occupy the pulpits of the Presbyterian Churches at Axedale, Toolleen, and Barnadown, preached his first sermon here on Sunday last. It is his intention to preach every Sabbath at Axedale and fortnightly at the other places mentioned.

Robberies from the tents of those working on the local railway line are becoming very frequent. Only lately the whole of the contents of a tent — were stolen during the temporary absence of the occupants. The wet weather is proving a serious drawback to the railway works, and most of the navvies are barely making half time.

The bachelors of Axedale gave a ball in Drake's assembly rooms on Wednesday evening last. There were visitors from miles around, including some from Sandhurst, and the night being fine and the arrangements perfect, all enjoyed themselves thoroughly.

Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser, Friday 28 October 1887, page 2

AXEDALE. WEDNESDAY, 19th October.

The Anniversary of the Sunday School connected with the Presbyterian Church here was celebrated on Sunday last by a service of song entitled "Christienna", rendered by about thirty-five of the Sunday School scholars, under the direction of Mr Ferber, the superintendent. The church was crowded, and the excellent way in which the children sang their parts was highly enjoyed by the adults, and reflected great credit on Mr Ferber, who must have spent much time and energy in drilling the children.

Everything was well done, but especial mention is deserved for the piece "Is this the way, my Father." Mr Ferber as father, with his fine voice, giving the reply, and the whole blending finely to the finish. "In the peaceful home

above." After the service, about thirty prizes were distributed to the children by Mr Welsh, the minister, who usually officiates at this church, and whom, I ought before to have mentioned, did the reading part of the service effectively. Mr Ferber is the head teacher of the State School here, and it occurred to me while listening to the service, that if all State School teachers were like him, there would be no necessity for the agitation about the Godless rearing of children in Victoria.

Bendigo Advertiser, Tuesday 1 December 1891, page 4

AXEDALE (from our own correspondent.) Monday 30th November.

THE ANNIVERSARY of the local Presbyterian Sabbath school was celebrated yesterday by a service of song entitled "Whiter than Snow" being rendered. For some months past the children have been carefully trained by Mr. E. R. Ferber, the superintendent, and Miss Cahill, the organist, and as the weather was fine a very large congregation assembled.

The church is a fine stone building, and will comfortably seat over one hundred persons, but yesterday its seating capacity was taxed to the utmost. The appearance of the church was also rendered very attractive by numerous wreaths and other floral decorations tastefully distributed over the walls, conspicuous among which was the text "God is Love" worked in ivy leaves.

The floral decorations were the work of Mrs. Ferber, the Misses Cahill (2), McRobert (of Toolleen) and Anderson, while Miss Craike, of Bowmont Vineyard, sent a basket of beautiful flowers. The service, which is a very beautiful one, was carried through from start to finish without a hitch. The solo parts were taken by Miss Cahill and Miss McRobert, while the connective readings were given by Mr. Ferber.

At the conclusion of the service prizes to the number of 45 were distributed to the children by the Rev. Mr. Cox. the minister of the church, and after the singing of the doxology and the pronouncing of the benediction, the large gathering separated.

1892

Bendigo Advertiser, Friday 8 July 1892, page 4

The council then adjourned.

AXEDALE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Wednesday, 6th July.

A WORKING BEE.—When the local Presbyterian Church, a fine stone building, was erected many years ago, it was enclosed by a neat picket fence. As time wore on, however, this fence became very dilapidated, so much so in fact that it became necessary that some immediate action should be taken towards improving its appearance. The funds of the church would not permit of the broken pickets being replaced, nor of much money being spent on the renewal of the fence. A working-bee was suggested, and the idea was heartily taken up. On Monday last, therefore, Messrs. Paton (2), A. Mill, T. Strachan, junr., T. Craike, junr., and O'Loughlen (an employe of Mr. T. Craike), assembled to carry out the necessary repairs, and willing hands made such progress with the work, that ere nightfall, all the necessary repairs were completed. I ought also to mention that Mr. T. Drake rendered valuable assistance during the day.

I MENTIONED in a previous letter that over 50 tons of firewood had been forwarded by the local residents for the poor of Melbourne. It is but right to state that this has been increased to over 70 tons.

FRATERNAL.

1894

Bendigo Advertiser, Friday 9 November 1894, page 3

OUR COUNTRY SERVICE (From Our Correspondent)

AXEDALE, Thursday.

On Holiday.—The lovely weather tempted a large number of Bendigo folks to picnic on the picturesque banks of the Campaspe. The annual Presbyterian Sunday School picnic also took place on the racecourse, and was well attended. The parents and friends had made ample preparations, and games, races (for which handsome prizes were given), and a tea, described by one of the boys as "a dream of luxury", helped the children to pass a thoroughly happy day. Prominent among the managers were Mesdames Strachan, Doak and Cahill, Misses Doak, Cahill, Paton and Ingham. Messrs. Cox and Paton were in charge of the racing.

1904 Bendigo Advertiser, Monday 4 July 1904, page 5

PERSONAL.

A pleasant evening was spent in the Axedale Presbyterian Church on Wednesday evening, the occasion being (writes our correspondent) a farewell social and presentation to Mr. and Mrs E. A. Whitelock.

Owing to the inclemency of the weather the attendance was not so good as it would otherwise have been, and the vocalists who had volunteered their services were unable to attend for the same reason. The musical programme that had been arranged had to be abandoned, but it speaks volumes for the popularity of the guests that on such a wild night a goodly number of friends and well wishers assembled to say good-bye.

The Rev. T. Ray was appointed chairman. A few items were rendered by the local quartet party. Parlor games were indulged in, and just before coffee and refreshments were announced Mr. Ray presented Mr. Whitelock with a handsome entree dish on behalf of the members of the church, and in doing so referred in eulogistic terms to the many sterling qualities of that gentleman.

Mr. Whitelock has filled the post of organist to the church during the four years of his stay here, with credit to himself and satisfaction to the members and adherents, and he always took a lively interest in all matters connected with the church and Sunday School. Mr. Whitelock has been appointed to the State School at Ellenbank, near Warragul and leaves Axedale this week.

1914

Bendigonian, Tuesday 24 March 1914, page 11

AXEDALE. 16th March. **HARVEST THANKSGIVING**

A harvest thanksgiving service was held yesterday afternoon in the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. S. Thompson, of Goornong, giving a discourse on the harvest. The church was well filled. A good display of fruit, vegetables, and cereals was made. The decorations had been nicely carried out by the ladies, who were specially thanked by Mr. Thompson at the close of the service. Appropriate hymns were sung. Mr. T. Bisset presided at the organ.

A busy scene was witnessed on Saturday, when a strong working "bee" assembled at the Church of England ground, and put in the whole day in cleaning up debris from the building and clearing and burning scrub, which quite transformed the scene. Afternoon tea was served by the ladies.

A nice stream of water, which has been released from the Coliban Reservoir, reached here on Saturday, and is much appreciated by those who are dependent on the Campaspe River for domestic supplies.

17th March. The following have been nominated to act on the school committee for the ensuing three years:--Messrs. E. P. Drake, S. Doak, P. Donnellan J. Hamilton, J. Brandie, D. Towns, and Mrs. Towns.

A social evening was held in the Presbyterian Church last night in connection with the harvest thanksgiving. The church was filled. A pleasing programme was gone through items being contributed by Misses Hennessy, Elsie Hennessy, Cletus, Jean Drake, Lily and Isabel Ryan, and McGoldrick, and Masters Frank Hennessy. Jack Donohue, and Leo Cullinane. The gifts of produce were then disposed of and the church will be considerably benefited thereby. Mr. G. Hamilton acted as auctioneer. Forty continental pictures were

shown by Mr. S. Thompson, of Goornong, assisted by Mr. V. Deane. Supper, provided by the ladies, was served at the close of a pleasant evening. Miss Whelan and Mr. T. Bisset were the accompanists.

19th March. Some good catches of fish have been obtained since the fresh supply of water was sent down the Campaspe from Malmsbury. One party secured 20 lb. weight of fish with the spinner.

Line-repairer J. McInerney, of the Victorian railways, who has been stationed at Axedale for some years, has received notice of transfer to Kangaroo, and took his departure to-day. He will be missed by a large circle of friends, on account of his jovial and kindly disposition.

CHILDREN'S DAY 1916

Bendigo Independent Sat 11 November 1916, page 2

Wednesday, November 15, has been set apart as Children's Day, and the Sunday schools of the district will take advantage of the public holiday to hold their annual picnics. Some schools thought that, considering the present war crisis, it was inadvisable to hold picnics, but the majority considered that it could serve no good purpose by depriving the children of the day they look for annually.

The following is a list of picnics to be held :

AXEDALE. The annual united picnic of the Forest Street. Quarry Hill and Calvin Street Congregational Sunday Schools will be held at Axedale on Wednesday next. The committee has made every arrangement possible to provide for the comfort and enjoyment of its patrons and with fine weather a most pleasant day should be spent.

The train will leave Bendigo at 9.25 a.m., returning from Axedale at 7 pm., and the fares are, adults 2s, children 1s. Tickets are now obtainable at Bolton Bros., Mitchell Street. A plentiful supply of hot water will be available free of charge. St. John's Presbyterian Sunday School Picnic will be held at Axedale on Wednesday next. A special train will leave Bendigo at 10.15 a.m., and Axedale on the return journey at 7.50 p.m.

St. Paul's Picnic to Axedale will be held on Wednesday next, Children's Day. The outing promises to be very popular, as besides St. Paul's, St. John Presbyterian. Congregational, All Saints, Holy Trinity and Strickland Road have chosen Axedale for their picnic. Stalls will be conducted in aid of the Red Cross Fund. Tea, hot water and milk will be free. Tickets may be obtained from Mr. J. Leaney, Williamson street, or the Cambridge Press, Market Square.

[there are also details given for picnics in Ravenswood and Castlemaine]

LATER YEARS

Axedale formally became a part of St Andrew's Bendigo with a Presbytery decision in 1941 (it had earlier been attached to Heathcote Home Mission station which included Goornong and Barnadown, but was closed for a few years from 1929).

In 1960 a Ladies Guild was formed. "For 21 years this gallant little band worked and provided the Church with such amenities as the Christening font, electric lighting and power, a new fence and new guttering. The interior of the church was repainted, the church was connected with the water-main and in 1962, a front porch was added, using blue-stone supplied by Mr John Randell from the old Kimbolten homestead".

"With the opening of Eppalock, the congregation grew and when the Rotary Camp was inaugurated by Mr Bill Galvin (a member of St Andrew's Bendigo) the young people became interested. When they held youth camps there, they usually joined with the Axedale congregation on Sunday afternoons".

The Centenary service was conducted by Rev John Aitken 15 September 1968 (one hundred years after laying of the foundation stone by Dr Nish). At this time the minister from St Andrew's Bendigo was conducting a service once per month, with communion celebrated twice each year. The Presbyterians and Anglicans shared a Sunday school.

(ref Margaret Temple, pp 169-170)

MEMORIES OF THE 1990s

Dear members and friends of Axedale Uniting Church

Congratulations on 150 years of worship, mission and service.

I am very sorry I am unable to join you. I want to share with you just a few memories. Please forgive any inaccuracies or oversights.

I remember when my mum and dad were over visiting from New Zealand, we were invited back to the Paton's for afternoon tea – with hot water from the kettle on the wood stove, and the best scones. I remember the church sometimes feeling like it was made up of Patons and Wallises and Townrows and a few hangers on like me. And then the Lambs came. I remember cooking flat bread in an electric fry pan one communion Sunday. Did we have to turn the heater off to avoid blowing a fuse?

I remember visiting Lucy Lamb and at her request singing the Iona Song 'In a byre near Bethlehem' with its wonderful refrain, with her recording it. I remember Faye Wallis introducing us to songs from CRE classes. I remember passing babies (mainly Wallis babies) from arm to arm as part of the Baptismal promises and blessings – one of the wonderful things about being part of a small church. I remember the shock of Lucy Wallis' accident, and how good it is now to see something of her beauty and courage (mainly on Facebook!).

I remember the move to meeting one Sunday a month at 8am – rural people are early risers, aren't they? That meant in winter months some very frosty mornings and the low winter sun right in my eyes on McIvor Highway as I drove with Merle out to Church.

I remember the smell of damp plaster, and the efforts to make the church bit more waterproof. I remember Frances rescuing large pieces of good quality blue bank carpet from being put in a skip at a Bendigo Bank branch that was being refurbished. This will be perfect for Axedale, she thought.

It was always good during the week to head out of Bendigo to see if any of the Axedale members might be at home. And if, in the last year, that meant being

able to drop in to the block at Sugarloaf Road, so much the better!
I remember the congregation gathering at our home there for a BBQ lunch as part of our farewell before we headed off down to Sale. I hope we can repeat that experience, but this time as a welcome home when I finally make the move back up to Axedale to join Frances and Martin later this year.

Thank you for such a rich set of memories, and for continuing to be a congregation of God's people in this part of the world.

Grace and peace,

Tim Angus

(Minister at St. Andrew's Bendigo and Axedale 1993 – 2000)



HOUSEWARMING AND FAREWELL TO TIM AND FRANCES 2000



Lucy Lamb and camp oven cooking at Tim and Frances's place



Ian Paton and Ozzie Wallis (below)

Ian was elected Elder in 1962 – grandson of Mr J. Paton, member of the original Board of Management and committee that built the church



AXEDALE CHURCH 2001

Joint service St Andrew's Bendigo and Axedale below, including Rev Ian Collings.

Ian was a supply minister prior to Rev Lyn Barnes commencing, and this may also have been a welcome or farewell to Ian and Marcia.



CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE PATON'S WOOLSHED

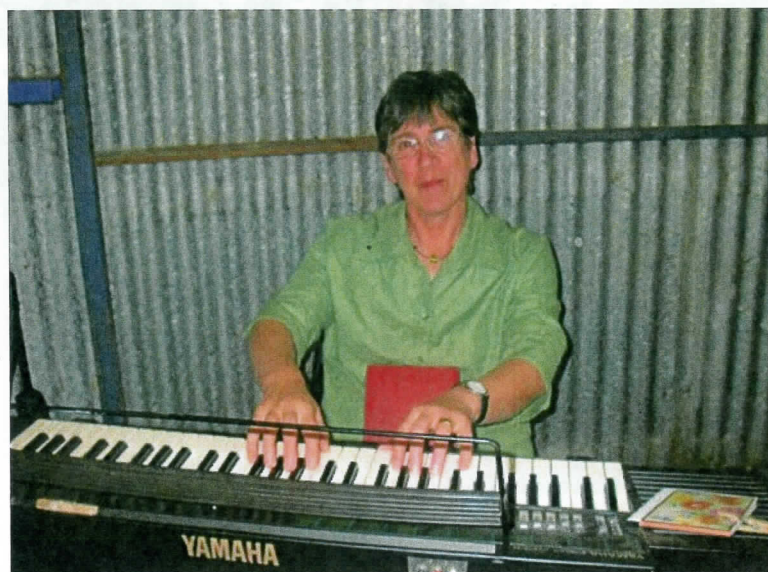
(1990s-2000s)



Can you see the shearing equipment in the background ?

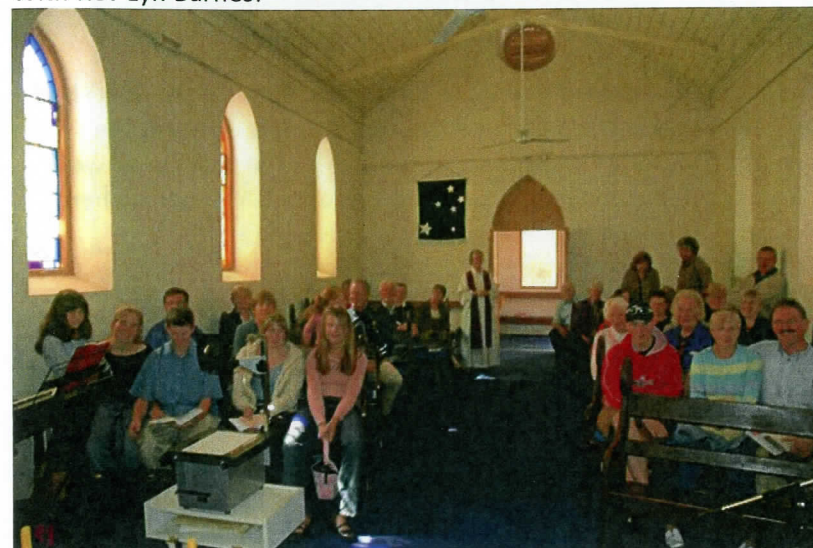
Christmas services in the Paton's working wool shed were a highlight.

Below: Liz Paton at the organ in the woolshed below



MEMORIES OF 2000s

With Rev Lyn Barnes:



St Andrew's Uniting Church Axedale and Bendigo were able to sell off half of the land next to the Axedale church and use the money procured to up-grade the kitchen off the main church hall in Bendigo and to build a meeting room and toilet in Axedale. The Rev Jon Watson opening this new facility in Axedale on 26th October 2008.

This was a momentous moment in time as up till then Axedale members had to either keep their legs crossed or run down to the public toilets at the Axedale Park which was a bit of a sprint. So for the last ten years or so we have been able to offer hospitality in the meeting room which has kitchen facilities and is large enough for small groups to meet and share refreshments.

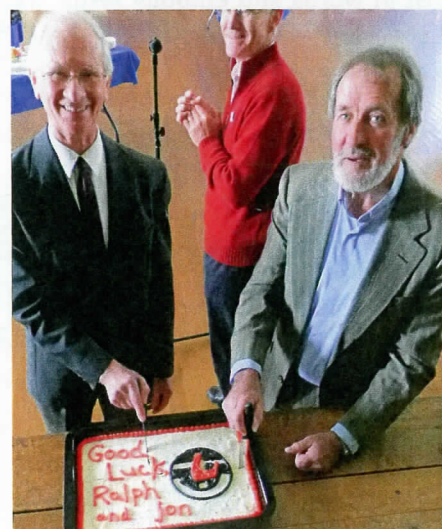
We have hosted BBQs and luncheons for things like The Flying Doctor Service and welcome baptismal families for a cuppa. The Axedale Primary School has used the room for play group, and the local CWA meets there on a monthly basis. Its heating and cooling is a big bonus, with cushioned comfort chairs and a lovely bushy outlook! This addition has enhanced our fellowship and presence in the Axedale community. Constructed of steel frame it is designed to deter the ever present white ants in the district.

Glenis Dyason

Opening of meeting room 2008:



Tom Townrow's 80th birthday (with Rev Eseta Meneilly)



Farewell to long term supply ministers Jon Watson (St Andrew's) and Ralph (Forest St) at St Andrew's Bendigo

CLOSING REFLECTION

As we look through the photos and reflect on the stories which share some of the life of St Andrew's Axedale Uniting Church (Presbyterian until 1977), we are inspired by the people who have celebrated and been nurtured in this place. We give thanks for all those who have been supported and cared for here, for so long.

Communities of faith over 150 years have celebrated with each other in all the joyful occasions of life, have comforted each other in times of grief, challenge and crisis, and have offered welcome and inclusion to friends and strangers who have joined them on the journey. We give thanks that each and every person who has been part of St Andrew's Axedale, has contributed to the thread of faith, mission and ministry that we are custodians of today.

As people who comprise the church of the present, we continue the legacy of living out the gospel in this place. Axedale is a vibrant, engaged, growing and diversifying community. It is committed to caring for each person in the region, by creating a community engaged with issues of the environment, inclusion and justice. And all these issues are central to the expressions of faith in our church.

Looking back and giving thanks, inspires us to look forward and hope as well. Our church seeks to be involved with our community in hospitality, justice and respect. In this way we will share the gospel of Christ in words and embody Jesus' way in our living. We look forward to new ways of sharing and serving, in the generations to come.

May God bless us
and the Axedale Community,
as we look back and give thanks.

May God bless us
as we celebrate life and faith,
expressed and shared for 150 years.

May God bless us
as we look forward with confidence and hope,
that we may be God's people of love, courage and generosity,
as we continue the heritage of faithfully living the gospel
from this beautiful bluestone church,
which is part of the community in which we live.

Amen.

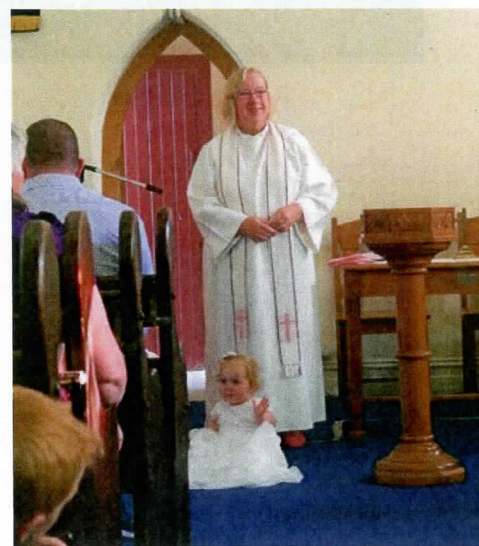
MINISTERS AT ST ANDREW'S AXEDALE SINCE 1969

Rev Nevin S Vawser	December 1966 – August 1972
Rev Dr J Stuart M Murray	February 1975 – December 1981
Rev Ian D Porter	January 1982 – December 1988
Rev Bruce Prewer	July 1989 – February 1992
Rev Tim Angus	September 1993 – October 2000
Rev Lynette Barnes	August 2001 – August 2007
Rev Eseta Waqabaca-Meneilly	May 2011 to Dec 2013
Rev Di Esbensen	April 2015 to present

Associate Ministers:

Rev J Alistair McLean	1976 – 1985
Rev Henry J Hartley	February 1986 – August 1991

A number of ministers have also served as supply ministers. Since 2007 Rev Jon Watson has filled this role for extended periods.



Thanks to Naomi Boyd for
compiling this list.
Ministers during the first 100
years are listed in the centenary
booklet.

Rev Di Esbensen at baptism of
Jessica Paton 8 April 2018
(more photos on back cover)



Baptism of Jessica Paton

(great great great grand-daughter of the Patons who were part of the beginnings of the Axedale church)

8 April 2018

