

J Roynick

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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THE EASTERN SUBURBS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Wesley Hall, The Avenue, Blackburn

Friday April 30th, 1971, at 8 p.m.

Master of Ceremonies : Cr G. R. Oakley

PROGRAMME

- 8 p.m. Viewing of Exhibits in West Hall.
- 8.20 p.m. Assemble in Main Hall
- 8.30 p.m. President Mr K. A. Patterson
- 8.35 p.m. Roll Call of Visiting Societies Representatives
- 8.37 p.m. The Mayor of Nunawading, Cr H. E. Shepherd
- 8.45 p.m. Mrs Dorothy Goble MLA for Mitcham
- 8.50 p.m. The Forest Hill Folk Singers
- 8.55 p.m. "People for a Land" by the Mitcham Repertory Group
(A Colonial Pageant)
- 9.35 p.m. Blackburn-Mitcham Film Society present "Did August Schwerkolt dig
the Blackburn Lake one Sunday Morning"
- 10.00 p.m. Further Viewing of Exhibits in West Hall
Supper in East Hall

THE CHURCHES OF NUNAWADING – PAST AND PRESENT

Owing to the limited space we have in our newsletter we have found it necessary to present our *METHODIST CHURCH* history in several parts and also in an abbreviated form, instead of as our researcher produced it. However, the complete history will become a valuable addition to our archives, as will that of the other churches as they come to hand. We congratulate Mr M. Chatwin, who elected to do this work, on the painstaking way he went about it and the excellent result. It is a promising start for our 1971 Research Program. We still need members to volunteer to do research of CHURCHES OF NUNAWADING – PAST AND PRESENT.

CHURCHES OF NUNAWADING – PAST AND PRESENT (Series 1)

The Methodist (Part 1)

East Burwood Methodist Church.

It was through the efforts of the families of Methodists who established their orchards, early in 1850, in the vicinity of Blackburn and Burwood Roads that the East Burwood Methodist Church owes its existence. They built a wooden church on the northern side of Burwood Road near Blackburn Road. This church became a vital part of the lives of these early settlers. It was the church where they worshipped, gathered for Band of Hope meetings, sang in the choir and on Saturdays, played cricket against other church teams of the district. The wooden building was moved to the southern side of Burwood Road, its present location, in 1900. The foundation stone of the present church, a solid ultra-modern building we see today on the corner of Blackburn Road and Burwood Highway, was laid by Rev. Howard Kettle on Nov. 6th 1960. This church with the Rev. A. E. King in charge, serves the needs of the Methodists in the area today (1971).

Mt Pleasant Wesleyan Methodist Chapel

In 1864 a public meeting was held in the cottage of Francis Rooks in the forests of Nunawading to consider the "desirability of raising a Chapel in connection with the Wesleyan Body." Joseph Aspinall, who had been instrumental in having the Woodhouse Grove Box Hill Methodist Church established, was in the chair. The result was that a Crown grant was obtained on the Crown of Scotchman's Hill in Delaney's Road. Plans were made to build a Chapel and, whilst this was in progress, services were conducted in the home of Abraham Rooks by Mr Walter Brookes of the already established Damper Creek Wesleyan Chapel near Gardiner Creek, Burwood Road.

On June 4th, 1865, the wooden Chapel, built by voluntary labour, was opened for worship. Mr Kinsman, a preacher from Collingwood, conducted the opening service from a pulpit made of boxes. Sixty men and women attended the opening service and sang un-accompanied by any instrument. The following Wednesday a Tea Meeting was held to celebrate the opening of the Chapel. On this occasion, by vote, the members determined that their new cause should be known as the Mount Pleasant Wesleyan Methodist Chapel.

In 1872 the Circuit, of which this church was part, acquired a "Gospel Chariot"

in the form of a four wheeled horse-drawn cart to provide transport for its "Country" preachers. Each Sunday morning, this conveyance left the Bridge Road Parsonage, leaving a preacher at other Chapels on its way to Mt. Pleasant, arriving there before noon. After dinner at some nearby home and a service at 2.30 p.m., the preacher would set off in the Gospel Chariot for the return journey to Richmond via Damper Creek, Woodhouse Grove and Hawthorn.

Immediately after the opening of the Mount Pleasant Methodist Chapel a committee was formed to set up a day school for the children of the settlers living nearby. In June 1865 a teacher, Mr John Winter, was engaged to teach 38 children. When the School Board built a school, now the Vermont School, in 1870, this arrangement was no longer required.

The Mount Pleasant Chapel continued to prosper mainly from funds raised at the Annual Tea Meeting which was held on Melbourne Cup Day holiday each year. This was a Gala Picnic Day in the grounds of the Chapel. In 1888 when a railway platform was built at Tunstall (Nunawading) Rly Stn, a buggy met the steam train to take visitors to Mt Pleasant for the day's activities. Improvements were made at the Chapel including an underground tank to provide water for future Tea Meetings.

In 1889 a new and larger stable was erected with a lamp room, a manger and space for two horses and a buggy. In 1905 a church hall was built in line with the front of the Chapel, and 20 feet to the west, where it now stands. Until 1916, when plans for a new church were prepared, the original Chapel was continually improved, repaired and painted. In January 1916 the foundation stone of the new church was laid by Mrs J. T. Tweddle and the new church, to accommodate 150 people, was opened on 29th April that same year. The old Chapel was sold for £40-0-0 and carted away to become a packing shed in a local orchard.

The church hall built in 1904, was enlarged late in 1916 to meet the growing needs of the Sunday School and Girl's Club. A kitchen, including a chimney was added to the hall in 1929, again by voluntary labour, but under the leadership of Dudley Boyle, Secretary of the Trust and a builder. A day kindergarten began to meet in the mornings, in 1955 and afternoon sessions a year later, eventually receiving a Government subsidy as part payment of a teacher's salary.

The original Crown grant of two acres had, by this time, become surrounded by houses of a thriving suburb, and the need for a house for its own minister was evident. A brick parsonage was erected on the northern boundary of the property in 1957 and became the home of Rev. Howard and Mrs Secomb and family. In order to overcome the need for more accommodation on Sundays, two services 9.30 a.m. and 11 a.m. were introduced in 1960.

Today, in 1971, the Mount Pleasant Wesleyan Methodist Church continues to flourish through its members, who apply themselves in the same dedicated and industrious manner as did the pioneers who made it all possible in 1864

*Researched and compiled by M. Chatwin (Vice-President)
Abbreviated copy prepared by A. H. Poussard (Editor)*

NEXT MEETING

WORK NIGHT in the Coffee Room Civic Centre Whitehorse Road, Nunawading at 8 p.m. on April 14th. This will be in preparation for the Eastern Regional Conference on April 30th in Wesley Hall.

MAY 12th MEETING

Mr F. Pinchen will give a talk and show slides on Australian Flora and Fauna.

BALLARAT TOUR

Our first excursion for the year was a trip to Ballarat on March 14th, by private cars, visiting Sovereign Hill, then a three hour tour of Ballarat by bus. This trip was thoroughly enjoyed by fifty members and friends who took part. The courtesy and efficiency with which Mr Ian Davis and his bus commentator, Mr Arnold James, conducted the bus tour, left nothing to be desired. Seeing Ballarat, in this manner and at this time of the year, can be highly recommended.

REGIONAL MEETING APRIL 30th 1971

Members who have not yet had duties allocated to them for this occasion are strongly urged to attend our meeting next Wednesday night. Remember we are the host Society and expect to have about 200 guests. Our success depends on each one of us.

Brief History of Nunawading which was so popular amongst members, and local children for school projects, has been brought up to date by Committee member, Miss E. Ronaldson. This work will soon be available at a nominal cost.

A. H. Poussard (Editor) 89 3383