

J Rozynek

# NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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**NEXT MEETING** – Wednesday August 11th, 1971 in the Coffee Room, Civic Centre, Whitehorse Road, Nunawading at 8 pm.

Our Guest Speaker for this meeting will be Mr Lloyd Holyoak. The title of his talk – “Walhalla Heyday”.

**SEPTEMBER MEETING** – September 8th, 1971. Guest Speaker Dr K. Bowden speaking on “Early Settlers at Westernport”.

**TRIP TO MALDON.** Our second outing for the year will be to Maldon on Sunday September 19th, 1971. Further information will be available at our next meeting. It is expected we will travel by private cars so if you can take a passenger, or require transport let one of the committee know. As much information as possible is being collected about this historic town, in order to ensure our visit will be an entertaining and educational outing.

**THE ONE DAY SEMINAR** arranged by the Victorian Committee of Affiliated Historical Societies was held at Camberwell on Saturday July 31st. As several of our members planned to attend we expect they will be anxious to put into practice, what they learned from it. One item on the program should interest our Society very much, “Seeking, Finding, Preserving”. So much of it we have yet to do.

**ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM** Historical slides belonging to members will be shown with comments on each, so pick out your best – no more than six each please and advise the secretary accordingly. Our special guest on this occasion will be Cr Oakley who will conduct the election of office bearers for the following year. *Remember the date Oct 13th.*

**Report on our July meeting** which was planned for the benefit of Higher Certificate Students of Australian History. We were fortunate to have as Guest Speaker, Professor Martin, Professor of History, La Trobe University, speaking on “Federation”, an important topic in the curriculum. Invitations were posted to all High Schools in our municipality and many Independent Secondary Schools to which students from this district attend. These schools were well represented among the audience of approximately 100 people, who listened intently to Professor Martin. He was very interesting and easy to listen to, as he told in great detail of the part played by the political leaders of the day, Henry Parkes and Alfred Deakin. Although Parkes was considered the “father” of Federation he died before it became a fact. Question time, which followed the talk, was put to good use by the students, some very intelligent questions being asked and satisfactorily answered. At the conclusion of the evening the committee and Society members entertained Professor Martin at supper.

**Our Treasurer Reports** Subscriptions have been received recently for new membership from the following:

Mr Goble, 21 Shady Gve, Nunawading

Mrs G. Errey, 70 Orchard Gve, Blackburn

Cr & Mrs Shepherd, 114 Koonung Rd, Nth Blackburn

We look forward to meeting these new members at future monthly meetings.

### **CHURCHES OF NUNAWADING (PAST AND PRESENT) Series 3**

#### **The Methodists (Part 3)**

**Blackburn Methodist Church.** The only area in the City of Nunawading where two branches of the Methodist Church existed was in Blackburn. These were the Wesleyans and the United Free Methodist Church, whose difference was in administration and organization, not really in doctrine.

At Blackburn the United Free Methodists began their work on September 3rd, 1888, after receiving a gift of land in Chapel St. A wooden building was erected and opened for services early in 1890 by the Rev. John Barton of Box Hill.

During the same period the Wesleyan Methodists at Blackburn held a meeting, chaired by the Rev. W. E. Bromilow of Box Hill, to discuss establishing a cause in the area. This meeting was at the home of Mr McComb on Sat. December 7th, 1889. An allotment was purchased in George St and an adjoining block was donated to the Church by the Freehold Investment & Banking Co. of Aust. Ltd. who were subdividing the land. Plans for building the brick church were based on the Mornington Methodist Church, omitting the porch. The foundation stone was laid on February 20th, 1891 by Mr James Callagan. The opening service was on Sunday April 26th, 1891, and on the following Tuesday night a Tea and Public Meeting was held in Recreation Hall, Blackburn, this procedure being repeated annually for many years to come.

Although it has not been possible to find any record of the union of the United Free Methodist Church in Chapel St and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in George St, it can be assumed that the union was accomplished, in 1902. In a record of a Trust meeting of the Blackburn Wesleyans on August 19th, 1896, trustees present agreed to the union.

The Methodist Church in George St, Blackburn, grew very slowly at the turn of the century. The Trustees were faced with a large debt on the building and this limited their progress. However, by 1906 a vestry had been added, most of the money having been raised by the ladies of the church. In 1911, three allotments of land were purchased from the Freehold Investment Co., in Railway Rd, for £75. In 1914 the church was wired for electricity and the old kerosene lamps dispensed with. In the same year a tennis court was constructed on the Railway Rd property, which had recently been fenced

Following World War 1 there was an increase in population in Blackburn, so more accommodation for the church and Sunday School was required. For this reason a former YMCA Rest Room at Caulfield was purchased and re-erected on



the Railway Rd property at a cost of £852. The Sunday School moved into this building and, with the purchase of another adjoining block of land, more tennis courts were constructed.

In 1932, it became obvious that the church in George St was too small for the congregation and requiring a great deal of maintenance, so for these reasons, by 1939 the church had been sold and was converted to a dwelling.

For the next twenty five years the old hall in Railway Rd became the centre of the activities of the Methodists in Blackburn. During this period the Trust became aware of the need for more accommodation for the church and Sunday School so, in 1954, land at the corner of The Avenue and Main St was purchased. Plans were prepared to build a church and halls to meet the growing needs of the congregation and its various activities. On Sunday 3rd Feb. 1957, the last services were held in the Railway Hall, the property having been sold to the Blue Moon Co-operative.

On Sunday, February 10th, 1957, the new buildings in The Avenue were opened and dedicated. The tennis courts were constructed on land, given and purchased, in Rosslyn St Blackburn. The cause of Methodism at Blackburn continued to flourish and grow in the new building, and at the same time a nearby Presbyterian Church in The Avenue experienced a similar growth, and a large brick church was built to accommodate their congregation.

In 1966, the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches discussed together their growing causes, with the result that, in March 1966, both churches resolved to share a common Sanctuary, and combined services began in the Presbyterian Church, and the large Methodist Hall became Wesley Hall, as part of The Avenue Church, Methodist and Presbyterian.

Today 1971, Wesley Hall is a very important part of the community life in the City of Nunawading. With its three halls, two executive meeting rooms, well equipped kitchen and all necessary furnishings, the many local organizations and commercial groups, to whom it is available, find it admirably fills their needs.

#### **Blackburn North and South Methodist Churches**

The Box Hill Circuit became acutely aware of the need for new churches for the increasing population of North and South Blackburn. In 1955, land was bought by the Circuit, in Koonung Rd, North Blackburn, and a "folding church" was erected in July of that year. This church served an area of approximately two square miles, in which there was no church of any other denomination. Morning services were crowded into the small Church and 40 young children attended the Sunday School. This new cause thrived quickly under the care of Rev. N. Park, the Minister at the Blackburn Church, so on the completion of a new hall in 1957, the folding church was disposed of.

Late in 1963' three blocks of land were purchased by the Circuit in Fulton Rd, at the corner of Jenner St, South Blackburn. Plans were prepared for an all-purpose hall, which was opened and dedicated on Saturday May 30th, 1964. Working bees from the congregation and the neighboring churches assisted to prepare the amenities for this newest of the Methodists of Blackburn.

*Researched and Compiled by M. Chatwin (Vice-President)*

#### **SWAN HILL PIONEER WEEK**

Three of our Society members visited Swan Hill in April for the opening weekend of this celebration, and returned with a glowing account of the events. The organisers of Pioneer week were so pleased with the support and enthusiasm of the townspeople, that it could become an annual affair. If this is so, there could be no better time to visit Swan Hill. Remarkable progress has been made at the Folk Museum since its opening, and the new innovation , "Sound & Light" will make a night visit a unique experience.

**"A Short History of Nunawading"** compiled by Eleanor Ronaldson is selling well at 30 cents. Arrangements are in hand to have this booklet available at the Blackburn Newsagency, South Parade, Blackburn.

A. H. Poussard (Editor) 89 3383