

25 June 1996

RYDE CHURCH HISTORY (1880-1900)



(1880-1945)

TRAINS, BUSES, AND CARS

I THE LATTER NINETEENTH CENTURY (1880-1899)

1.1 The Coming of the Railway (1880-1889)

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Previous to 1882, the Ryde Wesleyan Methodist Church was part of the vast Parramatta Circuit. During this year, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of NSW formed a new Ryde Circuit with the first resident Methodist Minister was appointed. This Circuit had boundaries stretching to Dural! [Plaque] In 1882, Ryde village had 100 houses. [APFP124] A double storied Methodist parsonage was erected in Ryde during 1884. [APFP 105] In 1884, Ryde village now had 300 houses. [APFP124]

The Salvation Army arrived in Ryde on 25 July 1885. A Post Office was established at North Ryde on 1 September 1885. [APFP126]

The year 1886 brought radical changes to the area. When the Strathfield - Hornsby railway opened that year, Balmain's property "Meadow Bank" was subdivided into the suburb which retains the name [T&N2] and a railway bridge was built nearby. [APFP40] It was finished in the middle of August 1886 [APFP127] and Ryde Railway Station was opened the following month. [T&N44]

In 1886, the Hunter's Hill Congregational Church decided to erect a Manse for their minister. [HHCCCB1]

All Saints' Anglican Church, on the corner of Ferry and Ambrose Streets, Hunter's Hill was dedicated in 1888. St Andrew's Presbyterian Church was opened in 1889 on the corner of Victoria and Pittwater Roads, Gladesville. [T&N15]

1.2 The Depression of the Nineties (1890-1899)

Prior to 1890, development of roads in North Ryde was negligible. The roads shown on early maps had remained little more than tracks. [HNR38] The Field of Mars Cemetery was opened in 1890. [HNR47]

In 1890, Rev J Jones, returned from service with the London Missionary Society, came to live at Hunter's Hill. He was soon invited to take over the oversight of the Hunter's Hill Congregational pastorate for a year. This arrangement was extended for seven years during which time the debt on the Church was liquidated. [HHCCCB1]

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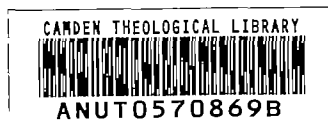
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"various regrettable causes", the congregation at St John's, North Ryde was reduced to half-a-dozen. About this time, Mr B C Martyn, architect, layreader and churchwarden of St Anne's began his connection with St John's as layreader. To fan the spiritual fire that was well-nigh quenched, he began a week-night Bible Class, which for six years attracted large numbers.[HNR19]

St Charles' Villa was opened by Cardinal Moran on 9 November 1890. In 1891, the Little Company of Mary, founded by Mary Potter in England built its hospice called Mount St Margaret on land donated by Mr and Mrs Thomas Dalton.[APFP153]

The North Ryde School of Arts and Literary Institute was established in 1891 along with a Library further down the street. The School of Arts was erected in Cox's Road opposite St John's Church on land donated by William Cox. In later years, the premises were to be used for many community activities. The Methodists began to use it regularly for Sunday services until their own chapel was built several blocks closer to Lane Cove Road in 1920.[HNR26]

On March 1892, a double railway-line ran on the Ryde - Eastwood - Hornsby Line.[APFP150] The Sisters of the Company of Mary took possession of their new quarters and ministry in April 1892, just as the Depression was making itself felt.[APFP153]

Congregational services had been held at Woolwich for a number of years previously with varying success. During a low interest point, the site was offered to the Presbyterians who had also worked in the area, but had stopped their services. In 1892, the Woolwich group decided to erect a chapel. It was built by Mr Clark at a cost of 218 pounds and was opened on 11 December 1892. In 1893, the first members were received into the fellowship.[HHCC CBI]

1893 and 1894 were depression years and for a time the Congregational Church in the Hunter's Hill area was unable to pay its minister, the Rev J Jones. Nevertheless, he continued as pastor through those difficult times.[HHCCBI]

The Depression hit local government hard. As a result of squabbling over diminishing resources, the Municipality of Marsfield broke away in 1894.[T&N2,45] A new organ was bought for St John's Church, North Ryde in 1894 at which Miss Charlotte Pope presided until 1903.[HNR20] Building still went on. Curzon Hall was built in Marsfield in the 1890s.[T&N20] Additions were made to Mt St Margaret's in 1895.[APFP153]

A pioneer named David Frew moved to Allengrove Estate, North Ryde out 1895. His son, David junior was to be an active participant in local affairs, leading the progress association and original trustee of the North Ryde Methodist Church.[HNR87] However, it seems possible that early Methodist services would have

been conducted from the Ryde Church at the North Ryde School of Arts.

A second Ryde Baptist Church was built in 1896 in Blaxland Road, facing the later Ryde Park on land donated by Edward Gallard. [HNR88] Rev J Jones left the Hunter's Hill Congregational Church to resume service with the London Missionary Society. [HHCCCB1]

Although the Field of Mars cemetery had been in operation for only seven years, serious consideration was given in 1897 for a second cemetery but North Ryde residents were cold to the idea, particularly if it were to cater for the expanding North Shore residents, dying to get in. As it was, most of the funerals in the early years came from North Shore suburbs, the first burial of a North Ryde resident not occurring until 1923. [HNR47]

Difficulties struck the Woolwich Congregational Church in 1897 so that their pastor could no longer be supported. The site was sold to the Church of England and the chapel became St John's Church hall. [HHCCCB1]

In 1897, the Ryde Methodist Circuit comprised Dundas, Castle Hill, Dural, Galston, Thornleigh, Beecroft, Carlingford, Marsfield, Arcadia and North Ryde. [APFP174] Presumably, the North Ryde services were conducted on David Frew's property on Allengrove Estate. [CNR] Holy Cross College was opened on 3 July 1898. [APFP198]

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- [75] Brochure, 75th Anniversary of Cox's Road.
- [@] Anonymous history.
- [APFP] A Place for Pioneers Philip Geeves 1970 994.4
- [AR] Annual Reports 1990-1994.
- [CB] Claire Bird.
- [CNR] Christopher N Ridings.
- [EH] Ena Handley.
- [Eskdale] Eskdale Archives.
- [FS] Foundation stone.
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- [HHCCCB] Hunter's Hill Congregational Church Centenary Brochure (No375 285.8944 HUN)
- [HNR] A History of North Ryde 1850-1950 George Redding 994.41.
- [OH] Olive Higgins
- [PP] Parish Profile 1981.
- [PWB] Philip W Bickerstaff.
- [RJ] Richard Johnson, Chaplain to the Colony of New South Wales by Neil K Macintosh, Sydney, 1978
- [SM] Rev Stuart Mason.
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RYDE CHURCH HISTORY (1880-1899)

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(Rev) Christopher N Ridings

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27 June 1996

RYDE CHURCH HISTORY (1946-1959)

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(1946-1989)

THE POSTWAR ERA

1 AFTER THE WAR (1946-1959)

1.1 Postwar rebuilding (1946-1949)

The Ryde Railway Station was renamed the West Ryde Railway Station in 1945.[T&N44] The area around Cutler Parade, North Ryde was opened up following the Second World War. The streets were named after famous soldiers and battles. Many returned men and women settled in this newer part of North Ryde.[PP81]

The Municipality of Eastwood was re-incorporated in 1949 back into the Municipality of Ryde.[T&N2] The residential development begun in North Ryde after the war accelerated by 1950.[HNR18]

1.2 Into the Fifties (1950-1953)

An enlarged stage was added in 1953 to the Trevitt Hall attached to the Ryde Methodist Church.[APFP175]

North Ryde, although 14 kilometres from the City of Sydney, had retained its distinctly rural community from the time of first Europe settlement until the 1950s. Its character now changed dramatically from a district of orchards, poultry farms and market gardens to one of intense development. The portion north of Epping Road, for instance, was to become a significant light industrial area.[HNRbackcover]

1.3 Rev H R Jefferies bring Congregationals to North Ryde (1954)

In 1954, the Rev H R Jefferies came from Naremburn Congregational Church and knocked on doors in North Ryde. After introducing himself, he told the householder the Congregational Church was thinking of coming into the area and invited the children to a proposed Sunday school. Most agreed if they were not already sending their children elsewhere.[JOM]

On 20 April, Mr Jefferies wrote to the Town Clerk in Ryde applying for Council approval to erect a tent for the purpose of holding religious services therein for a period of six months. The tent was proposed to be on Lot M in Cutler's Parade on land owned by Mr Jump. Council met on 12 May and approved the erection of the tent. Mr Jump was the Scoutmaster of the North Ryde troop.[JOM]

The Town Clerk, Mr M L Donnelly, replied to Mr Jefferies on the 14th granting the consent under the provisions of ordinance 71, Clauses 85 and 86 for twelve months, provided it had Mr Jump's written consent, that it was not going to be used for residential purposes and that a standard E.C and weekly sanitary service was provided for the convenience of the congregation.[JOM]

Mr Jefferies was now able to invite the residents to come to a Church service with Sunday School on Sunday 27th June, commencing at 10 am. This was held in this 12' x 12' tent about 4 doors along from the Manse at No 10. Present were 38 children and 8

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adults. [JOM, APFP177]

Mr Jefferies led the worship with Mr Morgan playing a portable organ while Messrs Poyett, Bellini, and Grace with the Misses Cowan and Heap all young teachers from the Naremburn congregation assisted with the children. [JOM]

The first meeting of the parents was held on 26 August 1954 at the home of Max and Joan Murray in Edmondson Street to discuss finance and a Sunday School picnic. The latter was enjoyed at Fuller's Bridge on 25 September 1954. The following day saw little Gwen Ingle, a neighbour of the Murrays, the first baby baptised in the tent. The first cake stall was held on 16 October at the Blenheim Road shopping centre around the corner. [JOM]

The first Christmas was celebrated by the new church with a Christmas tree at the home of Richard and Laurel Gagg in Cox's Road on 17 December with the first Carol singing a week later. [JOM]

1.4 Congregationals in North Ryde (1955)

When it was learned that Mr Jefferies was unable to continue his work in North Ryde, the Congregational Home Mission Board arranged pastoral oversight for this flourishing cause. During the following year 1955, he was replaced by ex-serviceman Mr Alan Garlick from Parramatta Congregational Church who travelled regularly to North Ryde from his home in Northmead. In a district where the new residents were predominantly ex-servicemen, he was particularly welcome. [JOM]

Because he was a lay pastor, the Rev Noel F Goodsell, BA was appointed as the superintending minister as well as being parish minister as well for Roseville and East Lindfield Congregational churches. Mr Goodsell was also a returned man. Before he withdrew from the scene, Mr Jefferies introduced these two new ministers to their new congregation on Wednesday 13 April 1955 at a meeting in the home of Marje and Noel Tyrell in Cox's Road in the street behind the tent. [JOM]

Mr Poyett from Naremburn stayed on as Senior Superintendant of the Sunday School, assisted by Mr Grace as the Junior Superintendant. Mr Brown was the Secretary and Miss Makin the Treasurer. The average attendance at the time was 50 scholars and 6 teachers including Mr and Mrs A Brown, like Alan Garlick also from the Parramatta church. [JOM]

The Home Mission Department of the Congregational Union secured a block of ground 58' x 160' at 2 Cutler Parade just along the road from the tent. The site was on the high ground where once the Army had a vehicle park, and where now new homes were rapidly being erected. [JOM]

The Home Mission Board loaned a portable building until a more

permanent structure could be erected. This attractive little building was opened and dedicated mid-afternoon on Saturday 21 May 1955 by Rev John Douglas, Superintendent of Home Missions who pronounced the words of dedication, "Peace be to this house and all who worship therein".[JOM]

The Chairman of the Union, Mr P C Williams delivered a typically practical address on "He took it upon Himself". The Secretary of the local church was Max Murray. The June edition of "The Congregationalist", reporter one "N F G", some 200 adults and 80 children were present, although another newspaper cited 300. Frank Downing, MLA and Alderman J A Mars were among the dignitaries there and scouts and cubs were seen in their uniforms.[JOM]

It was reported that the church and Sunday School would supply "a most urgent and important need" within the district. The paper was prophetic in its belief that with the support of the people there would be "every reason to believe that it will become in the best sense of the term, a Community Church".[JOM]

At that time, an evening service was regularly conducted within at 7.15pm with Sunday School at 9.30am. Mr Ward made the pulpit and other furnishings and donated them to be used in the church. The envelope scheme was introduced to the Management Committee.[JOM]

On 6 July 1955, Mr A Brown started a Boys' Club while his wife followed two days later with a corresponding Girls' Club. In August, the North Ryde Congregational Church joined with Roseville to form a combined Church paper issued monthly.[JOM]

On 13 November, the first Sunday School Anniversary was held in another tent, this one especially hired for the occasion. As was the custom those days, three services were held that Sunday with the traditional prize-giving and public meeting for the Monday children on the following night.[JOM]

Launched from this highlight was a Christian Endeavour group begun on 4 December. On 10 December, the first Fete was held by the church in the North Ryde School of Arts netting a total of L138/12/6.[JOM]

1.5 Congregational Fellowship (1956)

A new Sunday School hall was opened for St John's Church of England in 1956.[HNR20]

15 April 1956 was Foundation Sunday for the congregation in Cutler Parade and 22 members joined the North Ryde War Memorial Congregational Church when Noel Goodsell extended the right hand of fellowship.[JOM]

Registered as foundation members of the North Ryde War

Memorial Congregational Church as at 15 April 1956 were Mrs Iris Blundell, Miss Kathleen Collett, Mrs Shirley Collins, Lee P and Dorothy L Croft, Mrs Cynthea M Evans, Mrs E Ferret, Richard F and Laurel Gagg, Alan and Olga Garlick, Mrs Eva Holmes, Mesdames Adelaide and Elsie Jump, Max and Joan Murray, Mrs Eleanor Scott, Mrs Doreen Sheehy, Mesdames Hazel and Mal Smith, Mrs Marjorie Tyrrell, and Mrs Gertrude Wrench.[JOM]

Later that month on the 30th, the North Ryde church officially became a registered Fellowship with the Congregational Union of New South Wales.[JOM]

The Constitution of the church was adopted on 7 May 1956. It states,

"A Christian Church, according to the New testament, is a body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ banded together in His Name for the purpose of Worship, Fellowship, and Service. This view of the Church is the foundation of the Congregational order and necessarily implies as its first principle loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church.

"The members are therefore those who have made a credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, give evidence of their love and devotion in union and communion with Him and with each other, and earnestly endeavour, under guidance of the Holy Spirit to live the life of True Christians."[JOM]

On Pentecost Sunday, a church site was chosen on land on Cox's Road near Wicks Street for the Roman Catholic community.[NDT 12.6.96]

An impressive Lodge Service was held on 22 July when the Fellowship presented a Bible to the newly formed North Ryde Lodge No 898. The officiating minister at this service was the Rev C A Hibbard of the Pennant Hills Congregational Church. It was he who made the presentation to the Worshipful Master, Mr W Jump who then read from it the New testament Lesson.[JOM]

With the North Ryde Congregational Sunday School ever growing, a need for another hall was urgently pressing and negotiations were started to plan building a hall. Noel Goodsell had plans drawn up, but as the cost was considerable, the matter was allowed to rest. Finally, Lee Croft was able to secure a weatherboard building from the Caltex Oil Refinery at Kurnell at a cost of L540. This was purchased, dismantled, transported to North Ryde and re-erected by Fellowship members on 31 October 1956. Here again, the Home Mission Department of the Congregational Union came to their assistance and lent North Ryde L350 towards the purchase of this building.[JOM]

On 1 December 1956, Pastor Brookfield, a student of Camden College spent his four month long vacation sharing his time with North Ryde and West Pymble. Noel Goodsell retained his oversight of North Ryde but was finding it extremely difficult as along with his

Roseville parish he had now the newly formed West Lindfield congregation under his supervision.[JOM]

1.6 Change of Congregational Oversight(1957)

Sometime prior to 1957, the Gladesville Methodist Circuit commenced a congregation which built its place of worship at 47 Blenheim Road, North Ryde on the corner of Warwick Street.[DG]

The beginning of 1957 saw the North Ryde school embarrassed by the near doubling of its numbers. From 650 pupils, it had risen to 1280. To accommodate the influx, portable classrooms were installed and space for other classes was rented in St John's Church of England next door, the Methodist Church opposite, the Scout Hall, and in the School of Arts.[HNR18]

It became too much for the Noel Goodsell to oversee three Congregational churches, so finally on 5 May 1957, the minister of the Parramatta church, the Rev C D Torvell assumed oversight of the North Ryde congregation.[JOM] In all of this, no mention is made of the closer and long established Congregational Church at Hunter's Hill.[CNR]

Up until now, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church was the closest for Presbyterians in North Ryde. Late in April 1957 a new and closer Presbyterian Church was commenced on the corner of Cox's and Cressy Roads, North Ryde and named St Rowan's.[EH]

On Pentecost Sunday in 1957 the Sanctus Spiritus Church was opened for the Roman Catholic community one liturgical year since the site was originally chosen.[NDT 12.6.96] The Seventh Day Adventists completed their own church building in William Street, Ryde during 1957.[APFP177]

During Mr Torvell's oversight of the North Ryde Congregational Church, a group of mothers approached the Church Meeting with ideas of using the church property to run a day playcentre. This was agreed upon, and in November, the North Ryde Playcentre was formed, an independent body of the North Ryde Congregational Church.[JOM]

1.7 The coming of the Giffords (1958)

The next year 1958 saw the erection of a new state school in North Ryde in Truscott Street and the opening of a Roman Catholic School attached to Spiritus Sanctus in Cox's Road near Wicks Street.[HNR18]

On 10 March 1958, Rev Horace Reid, Secretary of the Congregational Union came to a meeting of all interested parties to decide the fate of the North Ryde Memorial Congregational Church. After much discussion, the position was left in abeyance.[JOM]

On 7 May 1958 at the church's 3rd Annual Meeting, laypreacher Mr Eric Hammill Gifford came over from Epping Congregational Church

to chair the meeting and from thereon changed the history of the North Ryde Congregational Church.[JOM]

Under his leadership, the North Ryde church paid off its debts, the Chapel and the main hall was built at 2 Cutler Parade. A brick manse, three brick classrooms and a number of other alterations and improvements were carried out. Foundations were also laid for active women's organisations and youth fellowships. Eric Gifford always preached "What did Jesus teach?"[JOM]

Mr Stanton, also from the Epping church came over each Sunday to be Superintendent of the North Ryde Sunday School with Miss Marchant leading the kindergarten. Miss Lewis, also from Epping, played the organ. Mrs Gertrude Evelyn Gifford played the organ during worship services, assisted by Mrs Tytherleigh and Mrs Wood. Rev H Wood from the West Epping Congregational Church came over and took one service a month, presumably Holy Communion.[JOM]

Together the Giffords gave 14 years of remarkable dedicated service to the North Ryde church until 1972.[JOM] A plaque to Eric Gifford's memory inside the Cutler Parade church describes him as the Moderator of his local church from 1958 to 1972. He was just under 60 when he commenced his long service within the Congregational Church at North Ryde and he survived another 15 years afterwards.[CNR]

Also during 1958, further down Cox's Road toward Wicks Road, Spiritus Sanctus was blessed by Bishop Freeman.[APFP180] State schools were opened in Truscott Street, North Ryde and Lincoln Street, Eastwood Heights bordering on Marsfield also during 1958.[APFP196]

1.8 Lifted by Epping (1959)

At the beginning of 1959, Miss Lynette Ward from North Ryde took over leadership of the kindergarten with Mrs Gifford playing piano. Some of the North Ryde senior girls, namely Miss Beverley Holmes and Miss Sue Scott became teachers in 1959, with Christine Sheehy and Diane Traynor as assistants also from North Ryde. As well as playing the piano, Mrs Gifford now took a class. When Mr Stanton was ill, he was helped out by Mr David Cunliffe-Jones also from Epping. At this time there were 80 children enrolled.[JOM]

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- [75] Brochure, 75th Anniversary of Cox's Road.
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1 HIGH SCHOOL OPENED (1960)

A High School was opened in Ryde during 1960.[HNR19] During the year, a new church hall was completed for the North Ryde Methodist Church. It was officially opened by Mrs B Frew, wife of David Frew an original trustee. It was dedicated by the Rev A Robens, son of Alfred Robens who was postmaster from 1922 to 1942.[HNR22] About the same time, the West Ryde Methodist Church was renovated.[APFP175] The East Chapel Wing, including an office was added to the original Northern Suburbs Crematorium in 1960.[HNR 48]

Also about this time Presbyterians were meeting on the hill along Lane Cove Road on the hill leading from North Ryde down to Ryde on a site that was formerly Dobson's Dairy.[NB] In the early 1960s, the North Ryde Girl Guides, who had formed in 1932, moved from the Scout Hall to the Methodist Hall with a newly formed Brownie Pack. Another company was formed in East Ryde about the same time.[HNR80]

2 CHAPELS ON THE WAY (1961)

On 21 January 1961, the foundation stone was laid for Alexander Memorial on the corner of Lane Cove Road and Dobson Crescent. "To the glory of God, and to commemorate the laying of the foundations this stone was set by Rev George Nesbitt." The minister was Alex Alexander.[FS]

In February 1961, Eric and Evelyn Gifford officially became members of the North Ryde Memorial Congregational Church. Eric took over the position as Superintendent of the Sunday School, freeing Mr Stanton to remain working at Epping.[JOM]

There were some happy times raising the money for a stained glass window for the new church to be. A back yard fete hosted by the Murrays on 22 April netted L23 while a car drive to Bobbin Head on 25 May raised L4/12/6.[JOM]

In July 1961, the Congregational Youth Fellowship was formed with Mr Russel Walker from Epping as leader. As space was becoming very limited, plans were now being drawn for the building of a Church. Teaching was becoming almost impossible.[JOM]

The Roman Catholics finally got a church named St Therese's. A beautiful structure dedicated to this saint was opened in Denistone in 1961.[APFP25] Public Schools in Twin Road and Kent Road were opened in 1961.[HNR18]

3 NORTH RYDE MEMORIAL CHURCH OPENED (1962)

North Ryde High School opened its doors in 1962.[APFP196] On 18 March 1962, the Junior C Y F commenced with Heather Innocent and Joe Berghouse from Epping as leaders. During the year, Lyn Ward

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resigned as kindergarten Superintendant owing to heavy studies at the University and Beverley Holmes filled the position admirably. Christine Sheehy had now taken over from Mrs Gifford playing the piano for the kindergarten.[JOM]

The Sunday School now had an active membership of 117 pupils with 10 teachers, including Miss Marillan Miller, Mrs Stewart along with Richard and Laurel Gagg. On 19 March 1962, foundations started on the church building.[JOM]

Not long after on 12 May 1962, the foundation stone was unveiled to the glory of God by Dr H Maynard Rennie, FRCP FRACP, Chairman of the Congregational Union of NSW.[FS] The service was led by Eric Gifford and the address was given by Mr Maynard Davies, President of the Congregational Union of Australia. The General Secretary, Rev J F Dickinson offered the prayer of dedication. Oh! How it rained! Marje Tyrrell was the Parish Secretary at the time and was succeeded by E Butler. The concluding hymn was "Rise up, O men of God" and the Church ladies got up and made afternoon tea.[JOM]

The church was designed by Brian Mowbray of Messrs Brown & Mowbray. The builders were Messrs A Still & Son.[JOM]

The new North Ryde War Memorial Church was opened on 18 August 1962.[JOM] The Chapel itself was dedicated as a "memorial" church to bond with the ex-service population around it.[PP81] The Act of Dedication was performed by the Rev A P Campbell, OBE BA.[JOM] The communion table commemorated Mrs Lorna Page. A stained glass window was installed, a gift from the women of the church and district. The communion chairs were given by Killara Church, while Pitt Street, the "Mother" Church gave the minister's chair.[JOM]

4 UNIVERSITY SELECTED (1963)

A site between Epping and Herring Roads was selected in 1963 for Sydney third University.[T&N16]

5 RYDE CIVIC CENTRE OPENED (1964)

The year 1964 began with the leaving of Bev Holmes and Mrs Bate became Superintendant of both the Kindergarten and Primary Departments. The final payment on the land at Cutler Parade was made and three new classrooms commenced to be built.[JOM] The Ryde Civic Centre was built and opened in 1964.[APFP72]

6 ADDITIONS AT MEMORIAL CHURCH (1965)

The three classrooms and toilet block at the Congregational Church were dedicated during 1965. The first wedding took place in the church on 21 August 1965.

7 FIVE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES (1966)

In 1966, the Congregational church bought the property at the back of the Church block in 117 Cox's Road.[JOM]

There were about this time no less than five Presbyterian churches within the Ryde area and it began to be thought that valuable resources were spread around too thinly. As a result, the Alexander Memorial Presbyterian Church under the Rev Arthur Long decided to sell its building and unite with St Rowan's Presbyterian Church.[NB] They were two Home Mission stations and with their amalgamation in 1966, the Presbyterian parish of North Ryde was formed.[JOM]

This was not achieved without considerable pain, still felt more than 20 years later. Only a few chose to come into St Rowan's. A lot were lost to other churches. The Seventh Day Adventists bought the building. Later, a Baptist Church with an attached Community school was built opposite.[NB] The Baptists had returned to build in the area where they'd first begun more than a century before.

8 MALVINA HIGH AND MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY (1967)

Malvina High School opened its doors in 1967.[HNR19] Macquarie University was also opened in 1967.[T&N16] A new De Burgh's bridge was opened the same year.[APFP25] A Physical Culture Club was begun at the North Ryde Congregational Church. Eric Gifford made 400-500 visits during the year.[JOM]

Also in 1967, St John's Church became a parish in its own right with Rev Arthur Kimmorley in charge. Their Sunday School building was converted into a chapel followed by two additional halls three years later.[HNR20]

9 MACQUARIE CHURCH OF CHRIST (1968)

The Macquarie Church of Christ began meeting in March 1968 in the North Ryde Scout hall also in Cox's Road.[APFP178]

10 NEW HALL AT MEMORIAL CHURCH (1969)

A new hall was started at the back of the North Ryde Congregational Church during 1969.[JOM]

REFERENCES & SOURCES

- [75] Brochure, 75th Anniversary of Cox's Road.
- ✓[APFP] A Place for Pioneers Philip Geeves 1970 994.4
- [AR] Annual Reports 1990-1994.
- [CB] Claire Bird.
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- [HHCCCB] Hunter's Hill Congregational Church Centenary Brochure (No375 285.8944 HUN)
- ✓[HNR] A History of North Ryde 1850-1950 George Redding 994.41.

2 August 1996

RYDE CHURCH HISTORY (1960-1969)

4

- [NF] Notice Board
- [OH] Olive Higgins
- ✓ [JOM] Joan O Murray
- ✓ [PP] Parish Profile 1981.
- [PWB] Philip W Bickerstaff.
- [RJ] Richard Johnson, Chaplain to the Colony of New South Wales by Neil K Macintosh, Sydney, 1978
- [SM] Rev Stuart Mason.
- ✓ [T&N] Then and Now Photographic Book Megan Martin 1992 994.41

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(Rev) Christopher N Ridings

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2 August 1996

RYDE CHURCH HISTORY (1970-1976)

6pp

(1946-1989) THE POSTWAR ERA
CONGREGATIONAL AND PRESBYTERIAN UNION (1970-1976)

1 UNITING YOUTH FELLOWSHIP (1970-1971)

The Ryde Centenary Library was opened in 1970 next to the Civic Centre. [APFP72] The new hall behind the Ryde War Memorial Congregational Church was opened in 1970. Talks began with the Presbyterians regarding uniting. [JOM]

About 1970, the North Ryde Uniting Youth Fellowship commenced under Russ Walker, involving the CYF and the PFA from St Rowan's. [JOM]

2 LOCAL CHURCH UNION (1972)

Meanwhile, the youth groups of St Rowan's Presbyterian Church and the Cutler Parade Congregational Church began meeting together in 1972 and recommended to each of their congregations that they do the same. They began combining their services, meeting at St Rowan's in the morning and at Cutler Parade in the evening. [EL]

According to church leaders in the area, there was about this time a marked return to family worship in North Ryde. This trend, coupled with growth of North Ryde as a residential area prompted the two churches to apply to the joint advisory council to form a joint parish. This move was independent of the efforts of the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches of Australia to seek union in a Uniting Church. [JOM]

The joint parish was soon inaugurated on 7 May 1972. The moderators would be Eric Gifford and the Rev P Boase from the Presbyterian Church. The Congregational Church became the centre for worship with St Rowan's set aside for youth activities. New blue pews were purchased for the Congregational Church, several bought by members in memory of loved ones, these pews were dedicated on 25 May 1972 at the first Joint Parish Meeting. [JOM]

A tapestry made by Mrs Pick was brought from Alexander Memorial and hung within the Cutler Parade building. Set in a background of light blue it featured special symbols. [NB]

The Congregational Church was found to be welcoming [GV], and the two congregations joined happily. [OH] Members joined from the Presbyterian Church in Herring Road. [CB]

3 JOCK YOUNG (1973)

The new joint parish required an ordained minister. Eric Gifford continued with its oversight and conducted Sunday worship services until the Rev George Morris (Jock) Young came from Tasmania to be its first parish minister. He was inducted into his joint charge on Thursday 8 February 1973 and the Giffords retired

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from the Parish after 14 years oversight.[JOM]

The year 1973 saw the formation of the Soccer Club, Adult Fellowship, Bible Study Group, Choir and a weekly intimation sheet. A lounge was set up at St Rowan's Hall to be used by the United Fellowship which had predated the joint parish. Curtains and blinds for the lounge were purchased by the Senior Citizens' Activity Group. The pulpit and Communion Table from St Rowan's were given to the Toongabbie and Putney Presbyterian churches respectively. A roster of cars to bring elderly folk from Shalom to church on a regular basis was commenced.[JOM]

Russ Walker resigned after many years as Youth Leader. He and Di always had an open door at home for the church's youth. Miss Margaret Milton now took over the group. A Christian Education was formed under the leadership of Malcolm Tanswell.[JOM]

Jim Christie was appointed works convenor to report to Ken Murray, the Property Officer. The property at 117 Cox's Road was let to church members at a low rent in return for caretaker responsibilities. This suited young marrieds saving for their first home.[JOM]

The year 1973 saw 10 baptisms, 2 weddings, and 11 young people becoming confirmed members of the Church. The Church Secretary was John Newell assisted by Joan Murray. Bill Burns was the Treasurer assisted by Nell Scott with Ken Stapleton as auditor. The Management Committee secretary was Margaret Isaacson.[JOM]

Max Ellis was Sunday School Superintendant while looking after the littlies fell to Jenny Bond. Vera Tanswell was its secretary with Joan Cam as treasurer. Helen Bond was secretary of the Youth Fellowship. The Girls' and Boys' Brigades were under the respective captaincies of M Hayes and Max Ellis. Judy Cross was President of the Women's Fellowship with J Ferguson as Secretary and L Partidge as Treasurer.[JOM]

At the end of the year, a superb Christmas pageant was written by Mrs Aurel Young, wife of Jock, and presented by the Sunday School led by John Robertson and Lindsay Partridge. A Carols by Candlelight service on the lawn at St Rowan's ended a good year. [JOM]

4 THE KOMBI BUS SOLD (1974)

The Kombi Bus which had started at Alexander Memorial to bring young and old to Sunday School and Church ceased to be economically viable and early in 1974 it was sold. Thanks were made to Alex Books and the many volunteers who had kept it going.[JOM]

The possibility of constructing units on the St Rowan's site for elderly members of the community was considered and a fund was set up. Its first fundraising event was a Hobbies and Handcraft

Happening. Two social evenings were held during the year in addition to the Christmas function and these were conducted by the Junior and Senior fellowship.[JOM]

There were 4 weddings, 10 baptisms, and 35 funerals (mostly at the crematorium). The Sunday School held its annual camp at Stanwell Tops with leadership from Jock Young and Les Brown. The Parish Picnic was well attended as was the Sunday School Anniversary with Jill and John Robertson, who was now Sunday School Superintendent, leading the music and singing.[JOM]

Captain M Mayes continued to lead the Girls' Bridage assisted by Cadet leader Jan Dargan while the Boys' Brigade continued to flourish under Captain Max Ellis assisted by Lieutenants Colin Crow and Jenny Bond, the latter also looking after the Kindergarten/Primary. Captain Hayes resigned after many years service.[JOM]

Bill Burns continued as Treasurer until succeeded by Brian Loundar. The Women's Fellowship was now presided over by Aurel Young with Mrs J Berriman as Secretary. The Christian Education Committee was convened by Robyn McKinnon while Mike Dillon and Adrain Lee-Archer looked after the Youth Fellowship.[JOM]

The 3rd North Ryde Scout Group presented the church with a flower stand in appreciation for their many years use of the Church premises. Carols by Candlelight continued on the lawns of St Rowan's but this year in conjunction with the North Ryde Catholic Church Choir.[JOM]

5 NORTH RYDE COMMUNITY CHURCH (1975)

5.1 No Union with the Methodists

Many discussions took place in 1975 regarding union between the Joint Parish in Cutler Parade and the North Ryde Methodist Church in Cox's Road. No firm commitment was made until September when the Methodts decided to join Ryde Wesley and Meadowbank. Afterwards the Joint Parish changed its name to North Ryde Community Church (Congregational-Presbyterian).[JOM]

Jock Young was invited to go on a roster for opening prayers at Ryde Council Meetings.[JOM]

A good quantity of goods from the Harvest Festival was shared with Eastwood Community Aid and the Shalom Baptist Home. The Homes for the Aged project held two successful money raising functions, namely an Auction, and Phil Skinner's Mandolin Concert.[JOM]

The first family camp, organised by Rus and Di Walker, was held at Mt Victoria with Ken Murray in the kitchen.[JOM]

5.2 Pilgrimage to California

During 1975, Jock and Auriel Young attended a special seminar on Church Leadership and growth. This was held overseas in

Garden Grove Church, California, USA. Parish members raised \$1788 to send them with Elsie Long and Joan Murray going also but at their own expense.[JOM]

A Visitors' Book was started to record all visitors to Church with Auriel Young writing and thanking them for coming. Parish Council members were now given specific portfolios on Evangelism, Mission, Education, Worship, Youth, Pastoral care, and Special Ministries. The Church Porch was closed in to improve the entrance to the Church. Two communion chairs were bought bonies donated by both Girls' and Boys' Brigades.[JOM]

A Drama Group was formed and an Arts and crafts Group started, with Judy Murray instructing. Joan Murray began a Church Library with many donations of money and books. Reference books as well as novels were now available. There were 12 weddings and 13 baptisms in the church that year.[JOM]

5.3 Community Church officers

John Newell was the Church Secretary this year assisted by Joan Murray while Nell Scott assisted treasurer Brian Loundar with Ken Stapleton as auditor. Margaret Isackson was Secretary of the Management Committee with Ken Murray as Property Officer. John Robertson superintended the Sunday School with Margaret Loundar leading the Kindies. Vera Tanswell was its Secretary and Joan Cam the Treasurer. The Boys' Brigade troops were led by Jenny Bond and Arthur Hill. Pat Smith presided over the Women's Fellowship with Auriel Young continuing as Secretary and Lorna Partridge as treasurer.[JOM]

Carols by Candlelight was held in the Psychiatric Centre grounds with combined choirs from North Ryde Community Church and Holy Spirit Church.[JOM]

6 (1976)

6.1 Australian Film Society

The building once constructed for the Lane Cove Heights Methodist congregation had remained empty since the people had decided to move to join either the combined Congregational-Presbyterian church in Cutler Parade, the Methodist Church of North Ryde, or the Gladesville Methodist Church.[DG]

About 1976, the Gladesville Methodist Circuit decided to house the Australian Religious Film Society there under its auspices, and this has continued for 20 years.[DG]

6.2 Eden Park Industrial Estate

In the 1970s, the land belonging to the religious group "House of David" since 1919 now became known as the Eden Park Industrial Estate losing all its religious significance![T&N26]

6.3 Thomas Bowden Homes

There were, of course, a succession of ministers for Ryde Wesley and North Ryde Methodist churches. Drew Hill, Bruce Noble and Trevor Barret were but three called to mind. The North Ryde church initiated a youth outreach to Macquarie housing area and formed a youth group known as Noah's Rowers. The church had an outreach to Gladesville Hospital. The Circuit had founded Thomas Bowden retirement village and Weemula with services conducted regularly there.[EWS]

6.4

During 1976, Jock Young attended the Bethel Bible Series lectures with a view to training Bethel teachers from the North Ryde Community congregation. An auction was held to raise the funds to pay for the Bethel Taching Seminar he attended.[JOM]

Mr Young's appointment was due to end mid-1976 but his term was extended for a further four years. A "Park and Stay" service was commenced to start at 9am, involving a talk-k Bible Study group for parents awaiting their children from Sunday School. Others also were attracted to this type of service.[JOM]

A Day Group Ladies' Fellowship began with 1/3 ladies from the church with 2/3 from outside. To have it sound more attractive to those outside the church, the group came to be renamed "Care and Share" and the name stuck! Joan Murray commenced Friday Coffee Shop for the group after their meetings with members of the Women's Fellowship rostered for sandwich making and serving.[JOM]

Because the Social Services were not funding any further projects for the Homes for the Aged for 5 to 7 years, the committee was put into recess. However, a Pastoral Care group commenced with Ron Cross as its convenor. A second Hobbies Handcraft Happening was held.[JOM]

A Thanksgiving Dinner was held in the North Ryde School of Arts where Phil Skinner entertained the diners with his Banjo-Mandolin Orchestra. The Drama Group presented an outstanding melodrama, "The Music Hall" over two nights. The Senior and Premier Youth Fellowship Groups, under Lindsay Partridge's musical direction, presented a successful pop Cantata.[JOM]

Three blocks of land adjacent to the Church became available during the year and debentures were to be issued to members to help finance buying them. There were 17 weddings and 13 baptism in the church that year. 3members were on the roll.[JOM]

Judy Murray edited the Messenger during the year and an arrangement was made with the "Northern District Times" for advertising on a monthly basis. Mrs Trodden was appointed Mission Co-ordinator to assist Mission Director, Mr Bryce.[JOM]

The Church Officers and Management Committee retained their

leaders, as did the Sunday School except that Elsie Long became its Superintendent. Julie Brackeeg led the Girls' Brigade. Jenny Bond ran the 1st Boys' Brigade group while Arthur Hill and Max Joyce shared the leadership of the 2nd group. Chris Long and Andy Jennings led the Senior Fellowship. [JOM]

Carols by Candlelight was held similarly to the previous year. [JOM]

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- [75] Brochure, 75th Anniversary of Cox's Road.
- ✓ [APFP] A Place for Pioneers Philip Geeves 1970 994.4
- ✓ [AR] Annual Reports 1990-1994.
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- [OH] Olive Higgins *[LVB] Notice Board*
- ✓ [JOM] Joan O Murray
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1996 August 4

RYDE CHURCH HISTORY (1977-1979)

5pp

1 BEFORE CHURCH UNION

The Bethel Bible Study course for Teacher/Trainees started with ten trainee teachers namely, Les Brown, Judy Cross, Angus Ferguson, Joan Murray, Pat Smith, Mal and Vera Tanswell, Marje Tyrrell, Bonnie Worsely, and Auriel Young. [JOM]

Other courses were available at North Ryde Community Church. 19 attended the "How to communicate your faith" course while 16 attended the "Youth Leadership" course as well as several visitors. [JOM]

The three blocks of land were purchased for \$68,000. The existing property was already being used by play-groups, the North Ryde Senior Citizen Activity Group, the creative Arts and Crafts Group, both Girls' and Boys' Brigades, and the Care and Share group. [JOM]

The property was used also by community groups, namely both the Labour and Liberal Parties, the Balmain Junior Rugby Football Club, the RSL Youth Club, the RSL Netball and many more. [JOM]

Church officers remained the same except for the custom of turning over Sunday School leadership. Robyn McKinnon was the Superintendent this year with Margaret Loundar in charge of the Juniors. Annette Bond ran the Senior fellowship while the Junior Fellowship enjoyed the leadership of Robyn Watt, Graham Ramsay and Lindsay Partridge. Julie Brackenreg led the Girls' Brigade while Jenny Bond ran the first Boys' Brigade helped by Gill Young, later Mrs Crow. Max Joyce continued with the second Brigade. Margaret Isackson was President of the Women's fellowship with Joy Berriman as Secretary and Marie Christie as Treasurer. [JOM]

Fun Days for the church included a Family Picnic to Centennial Park. The Senior fellowship ran a BBQ lunch with volley ball. The Junior Fellowship challenged the rest to a cricket match. A Church family camp was held in Deer Park. There was another Thanksgiving Dinner, Scottish dancing, Book Fair, Fete, another Hobbies Handcraft Happening, Lamington Drives, and a Fashion Parade. [JOM]

2 CHURCH UNION AND AFTER (1977-1984)

2.1 Effects of Church Union

Church Union between the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches arrived on 22 June 1977 and change hovered but did not necessarily occur within Ryde as one would have expected.

The Presbyterian Church on Herring Road opted to stay out of the Union and became the only continuing Presbyterian church in the area except for St Andrew's at Gladesville, and called itself the Macquarie Presbyterian Church.

The joint parish church in Cutler Parade stayed on its own following unsuccessful attempts to link with neighbouring parishes at the time of Union. [PP81]

The North Ryde Methodist Church now became known as the Cox's Road Uniting Church, remaining part of what was the Ryde-Meadowbank Methodist Circuit, now renamed Parish. [75]

2.2 After Church Union

Church Union Sunday 26 June was celebrated with joy and enthusiasm in North Ryde Community Church at Cutler Parade with all departments of the church participating. This was their day to celebrate the union of three churches and the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia. The program was designed to be attended all day or come and go throughout the day or even to attend only those functions of most interest. [JOM]

The program began with morning service with Sunday School and brass at 10.15am. An hour later saw a Sunday School activity "North Ryde Church Tomorrow" breaking at noon. What a great BBQ luncheon that was, some 250-300 people fed and satisfied in the most efficient manner. From noon until 5pm was a Photographic display and a Church Information Stall with a static Sunday School Display. [JOM]

Not everything was stat by any means. After lunch came the Boys' Brigade Display followed by the Girls' counterpart. Afterwards me the brass Quintet recital and puppet show. A sporting group display was next relieved by a Choir recital. All the displays were first-class. Soup, Tea and Coffee was served at 6pm, followed by the evening service with music by the fellowships. Supper was served at 8.15pm and people went home about 9pm. The Spirit that day was infectious. [JOM]

A Parish Youth Council was set up comprising representatives from Sunday School, both Girls' and Boys' Brigades, Senior and Junior Fellowships. [JOM]

The Debenture and Building and Development Fund stood at \$9,570. The St Rowan's property was sold to the Christian Television Association for \$45,000. The engagement of young enthusiastic architects, Warren and Associates to prepare plans for developing the whole of the property and land was exciting, practical, and keeping within the budget. [JOM]

Parish Council members spent a Friday night until Sunday morning at a workshop at Wamberal on the Central Coast planning and setting goals for the Parish for 1978 and onwards. Those participating found it a very worthwhile and meaningful experience. [JOM]

The visit to North Ryde of Gospel singer Algetha Brown from

California showed hearers her faith in song in a moving experience. Five members attended the Robert Schuller School for Church Growth and Successful Church leadership in Macquarie Church, Sydney. [JOM]

The Boy's Brigades closed at the end of this year due to many problems with the intention of commencing a Boys' Club in 1978. There were 20 weddings and 18 baptisms during the year and 19 Church members were shown on the Roll. "Carols by Candlelight" were again shared with the Catholics of Holy Spirit Church in the Psychiatric Centre Grounds. [JOM]

2.3 Developments

Proceeds from the sale of the former Presbyterian property were used to help finance the purchase of land at 10 Cutler Parade adjoining next but one to the original Congregational property on No 2. Negotiations proceeded over a long period with Ryde Council and culminated in an exchange of part of church and council land to give the church access at the rear between the old and the new blocks. Part of the change was Council's undertaking to create car parking facilities for both church and community use at the front. [PP81]

Study groups for the Bethel Bible course were commenced in the 1970s to nurture members of the congregation. The Care and Share ministry reaching out to others also began about the same time. Initially aimed at meeting the needs of women with young families, it met on Friday mornings. Over the years the members aged accordingly and the needs of the group became appropriate for mature women whose children had grown up. [PWB]

2.4 Commencement of Morning Teas (1978)

Tea and Coffee after morning worship was introduced by Marj Tyrrell who supplied all the tea, coffee and biscuits for the year. [JOM]

The Homes for the Aged Committee resolved that "the accumulated amount of \$1,828 allocated to our homes for the aged project be kept intact for this purpose, but the interest on the principal be used for Church development purposes and that the matter be reviewed in 5 years, in the light of the development that is to take place and will in the future." [JOM]

The Church Secretary was now Joan Murray with Brian Loundar continuing as Treasurer with Ken Stapleton as the auditor. The Management Committee leadership remained the same as did the Sunday School this year. Chris Williams, Mike Dillon and Jill Robertson led the Senior Fellowship together while Lindsay Partridge and Grahame Ramsay shared the Juniors. Chris Smith and M Dillon led the Young Adults. The Women's Fellowship and Girls' Brigade leadership remained the same.

2.5 New Members received at North Ryde (1979)

1979 proved to be another busy year. Education was high on the agenda. This year saw the start of Sunday School and worship being held at the same time of 9.30am. Ken Murray retired from being Property Officer and Clive Hinde took over. Arthur and Gwen Pelley took over from Marj Tyrrell organising the morning tea after Church. [JOM]

There were two evening Bethel Bible Study groups meeting and one during the day. The Possibility Thinking course was of 5 weeks duration. A christian fellowship group started and was named "Koinonia" while an equivalent day group called "Insight" under Jock Young's leadership attracted younger folk. Two Parish Council workshops were hosted by Helen and John Hocking and a Bible Study group met fortnightly. The Church sponsored two children through World Vision. [JOM]

Worship and Music also featured prominently. There was the usual Harvest Festival and Girls' Brigade services were held in March, July, and November. Margaret Ayres was the guest speaker at the Women's Fellowship service and the Youth Fellowship also participated in a service as did the Masonic Lodge. "Koinonia" group members led the evening service with the guitar group "The Orians". [JOM]

The choir sang throughout the year and commenced the new venture of singing during the passing of the elements during Holy Communion. On Palm Sunday, the choir sang "Story of the Cross" with Harold Dews as guest soloist. Ballroom dancing classes began in April and there was a Harbour Cruise also that month. A need was seen for all single people within the community, whether they were single of their own choice, widowed or divorced and a meeting was hosted by Elizabeth Stevenson so Positive Christian Solos was formed under her leadership also in April. There was an opportunity night held to share reasons why one becomes a Church member. [JOM]

There was a Scottish social dance held in May. Some 80 folk enjoyed the meaning of togetherness in the Church Family Camp at the Blue Gums in Springwood. [JOM]

An Italian style progressive dinner was held in June and dance and keep fit classes started that same month, but the highlight of the year 1979 in worship was the reception of 35 new Church members in July. 21 people had come in on transfer and 14 people joined on profession of faith. A BBQ was held for new members and families and friends bringing in 80 folk to enjoy this day sharing with the new members. [JOM]

During the winter concert season, 5 weeks of top artists arranged by John Robertson were first class entertainment. The Annual fete was held in August. There was a Home Hospitality night and the Hunter Douglas "Domus" inspection was followed by a Smorgasbord dinner. The Possibility Thinking reunion class of '78

and '79 held a get-together. The Sunday School and the Church family picnicked together at Putney. [JOM]

Parish Council agreed during the year to the use of one room of 117 Cox's Road at the back for the newly formed Community Aid Auxiliary and agreed to underwrite \$3,000 for staff and administration expenses for a period of 6 months. Judy Cross was appointed co-ordinator. [JOM]

Halloween Night was celebrated. "Bethlehem's Babe" was presented night and morning as part of the Christmas celebrations, with Lindsay Partridge back at the organ. Carols by Candlelight continued in the Psychiatric Centre grounds. [JOM]

There were 11 weddings and 17 baptisms during the year. Gill and Colin Crow moved to Wagga Wagga. Sunday School was led by Robyn McKinnon and Helen Hocking while the Kindergarten was in the capable hands of Robyn Turmeau, Pam Christie and Audrey Wybenga. Jan Dargan succeeded to the Girls' Brigade while Chris Bowles was the Youth leader. [JOM]

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