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ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



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ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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1/46 Oatley Avenue,
OATLEY NSW. 2223.

October 1978.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:

- Date: Friday Evening, October 20th, 1978, at 8.00 p.m.
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.
Business: General.
Syllabus Item: Mr. A. Roberts will present: "A Study of Annandale".
 This will be most interesting, the Architectural aspect of
 Annandale is fascinating.
Supper Roster: Mrs. Tarlington, Captain, & Mesdames, Turton, G. Napper,
 H. White, L. Robb.
Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. A. Ellis,
President
 Phone 587.1159

Mrs. E. Wright,
Treas. & Soc. Sec.
 Phone 599.4884

Mrs. B. Perkins,
Publicity Officer
 Phone 587.9164

Miss A. Lang,
Secretary
 Phone 57.2608

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer
 Phone 587.1159

School is a building that has four walls, with tomorrow inside.

... Lon Watters.

2.

Many of our Members have been and still are ill. We are sorry to hear this and trust that you will all be well again soon, thinking especially of Mrs. Coote who has recently undergone a serious operation.

Miss Otton, Curator of Lydham Hall, is in need of Ladies and/or Gentlemen to assist with the weekend roster. Visitors come from far and wide to see this lovely old Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate the inspections. Ring Miss Otton, 'phone 59.4259. Your call will be appreciated.

Donated to Lydham Hall.

Mrs. M. Jones, Summer Hill. - Musical Jewel Box.

Mr. Munday, Sans Souci - Replicas of Mining Licences.

Mrs. I. Young, Bexley - Scottish Paisley Shawl, over 100 years old.

Mrs. McClure, Hurstville - Circular Tortoise-shell Knitting Needle.

Mr. Cartwright, Hurstville - Large picture of The Lord's Prayer, and The Ten Commandments, in colour. Small picture "The Light of the World".

Mr. & Mrs. Blom, Carss Park - Clothing & effects of the late Annie Richardson Palmer and her daughter Ernestine A. Palmer.

St. George County Council, Kogarah - Dictaphone Recorder, Player, and Quantity of Cylinders.

The Family of the late Mrs. Lilian Murrell, Rockdale - Gold satin wedding frock, trimmed with gold braid and old gold lace; Brown & White checked taffata coat and skirt, the Going Away outfit; 2 White Marcella Quilts, 1 White cotton petticoat with deep embroidered flounce;

Mrs. Watters, Brighton - Hand-made wooden wool winder, made by the late Mr. Watters, while working at Ricketts & Thorpe, Rockdale. The wool winder is 40 years old.

Mr. Browett, Bexley - 4 foot carpenters wooden rule.

3 " " " "

2 " " " "

Aluminium Swan Ink container; Brass Wax Matchbox; Collection of button hooks; Cork screw, bone handle.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The St. George Historical Society is pleased to announce that the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford H. Eardley, for the Society, have been re-printed and are now available.

Price: \$1.00 per copy. (Postage extra)

No. 2. "Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"

No. 3. "Saywells Tramway. Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach"

No. 5. "Our Heritage in Stone"

No. 6. "All Stations to Como"

No. 7. "Tempe and The Black Creek Valley" is also available. (Limited stocks only)

At a later date, Books No.1 - "The Wolli Creek Valley", and No.4 - "Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tramway", will be re-printed.

For your copy of the above books, please contact one of the following:

Mrs. E. Wright - Phone 599.4884.

Miss A. Lang (Sec.) - Phone 57.2608 (after 6.00 p.m.)

Miss B. Otton - Phone 59.4259 (after 8.00 p.m.)

Mrs. E. Eardley - Phone 59.8078.

Mr. A. Ellis - Phone 587.1159.

Copies of early Bulletins are available.

If you have any items of Historical interest will you give them to Mrs. Eardley for publication in the Monthly Bulletin. Your news could awaken memories for others.

ST. ANDREW'S BEXLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - 1887 - 1977.

Excerpts from the 90th Anniversary Souvenir -

Compiled as a tribute to the past and the present and as a hope and Inspiration to the future.

- Submitted by Helen Whyte.

This year of grace, 1977, we celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Bexley Presbyterian Church, re-named St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church on 23rd March, 1941.

The opening service is recorded as held in October 1887, when the Rev. Dr. Robert Steele, of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Sydney, preached to a large congregation. The 75th Anniversary Services were held on Sunday 14th October, 1962, when the morning service was conducted by the Rev. Professor John Haultain Brown, M.A., Ph.D., B.D., Professor of Exegetical Theology of the New Testament and Historical Theology and the evening service by the Rev. Neil McLeod, B.A., Minister of St. Giles' Memorial Church, Hurstville.

Our 90th Anniversary Services are to be held on Sunday 9th October, 1977, when the morning service will be conducted by the Rt. Rev. H.G. Durbin, Ed., B.A., N.S.W. Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and the evening service by the Rev. A.G. Ingram, Minister of the Presbyterian Church, West Strathfield.

Early Years.

About the year 1872, the first Presbyterian Church services in the St. George District were conducted by the Rev. William Ridley, M.A., a scholarly and great-souled servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A treasured pulpit Bible dedicated to his memory is stored in the Minister's Vestry at St. Andrew's, having been replaced for pulpit use by the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, dedicated to the memory of Mr and Mrs T.W.Hart, faithful members of St. Andrew's over many years. These first services were held in the home of Mr Carss of Kogarah Road, about two miles from the present Kogarah Station.

However, as an historian of the time relates .. "In the year 1886, the Home Mission Committee, finding that the opening of the new Illawarra railway line had created a rush of population to the suburbs along its route, decided to recommence services in the Oddfellow's Hall, Kogarah, that being the only hall available in the whole District of St. George." And it would seem from certain records that the Rev. Thomas Hill, M.A. conducted these services. "The majority of the people attending travelled from Bexley and Arncliffe, a few from Hurstville, and a very few from Kogarah." Thus a move was made to obtain a site for a church which would be more central for the majority of the congregation.

The Building of a Church.

In due course a site in Bexley, facing Forest Road, was purchased for the sum of 400 pounds, and a start was made with the building. The foundation stone was laid in May, 1887, by the Hon. James Inglis, Minister for Education. Others present at the ceremony included the Rev. Andrew Gardiner, M.A., and the Rev. John Miller Ross, the first General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in N.S.W., who gave the address, and, as recorded, the Church was opened for worship by the Rev. Dr. Robert Steele, in October of the same year.

In 1898 the Church was enlarged to its present dimensions. Other buildings followed in due course, namely, a wooden hall, now known as St. Andrew's Sunday School Hall. Then came the Manse in the year 1927, and in 1931 the Lowrie Hall was built. In 1958 the Church was given a tiled roof, and a Memorial Porch replaced the very small porch of the original building.

For over 50 years, the Church was known as the Bexley Presbyterian Church. However, on 23rd March 1941, it was named St. Andrew's and, to keep the historic sequence the Church is known to-day as St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church.

Calling a Minister.

When the Church was opened in 1887, the congregation was under the care of an Interim Session with the Rev. Andrew Gardiner, M.A., of Glebe as Interim Moderator. This Session met at Christie's in George Street, Sydney, on Saturday 1st October 1887, to talk over Church matters at Bexley and to take steps towards finding the mind of the congregation as to the Call of a Minister. Those present were: the Rev. A. Gardiner, M.A., Interim Moderator, and Messrs G. J. Christie and W. A. Crawford, Elders. The outcome of the meeting was that the congregation at Bexley duly met and agreed to call the Rev. Thomas Hill, M.A. as their Minister. Mr Hill was inducted in January, 1888, as the first Minister of the Bexley Presbyterian Church.

The Ministers of Bexley.

- . The Rev. Thomas Hill, M.A., continued his ministry for 25 years, resigning early in 1913.
- . The Rev. F.A. Darling succeeded Mr Hill and was inducted on 22nd July, 1913 and continued his ministry for 12 years, resigning about March 1925.
- . The Rev. Samuel Watson, M.A., followed Mr Darling on 9th September 1925, and ministered for four years, being translated to Auburn in October 1929.
- . The Rev. R. Campbell was inducted on 12th December 1929, and after a ministry of about 11 years, was translated to Henty, N.S.W., early in 1940.

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- . The Rev. W.A.Thompson, was inducted on 3rd October, 1940, and after a ministry of about 12 years, resigned in August 1952.
- . The Rev. G.R.Garner, B.A., was inducted on 29th April 1953, and after a ministry of 16 years, was translated to Fawkner, Victoria on 24th May 1969.
- . The Rev. A. G. Ingram, of the South Grafton Presbyterian Church was inducted as Minister of the Bexley-Rockdale Charge. Following a ministry of nearly 5 years, Rev. A.G.Ingram was translated to the West Strathfield Charge on 11th August, 1974.
- . The Rev. H. A. Olsen was inducted to the Bexley-Rockdale Charge on 15th October 1974, and resigned 12th September 1977.

The Session.

After the induction of the Rev. Thomas Hill, M.A., the Interim Session met on 2nd February, 1888, when there were present: The Rev. Thomas Hill (Moderator), Messrs John Sproule, Charles J Christie and W.A. Crawford (Elders). It was agreed to hold the first Communion Service on Sunday 4th March, and a Preparatory Service on Thursday 1st March.

The Interim Session now took steps to form a Session at Bexley, and after a Congregational Meeting and count of votes, the following were declared elected on 25th July, 1888, William A Crawford, William Taylor and James Glen. On Sunday 12th August, William Taylor and James Glen were ordained to the Eldership and with William A Crawford were inducted into the Eldership in the Congregation of Bexley.

At a further meeting on 30th August, 1888, Mr W.A.Crawford was elected as Session Clerk and held that office for six years. Bexley now had its own Session and was in all things a Presbyterian Congregation. From that day to this, 77 Elders, including the present members of Session, have served the Bexley Congregation.

On 23rd October 1969, following negotiations with the Rockdale Presbyterian Congregation and the Presbytery of Sydney South, the Charges of Bexley and Rockdale were amalgamated. The Sessions and the Committees of Management were duly combined and constituted, with Rev. A.G.Ingram as Moderator.

The present members of the Bexley-Rockdale Session, in order of date of ordination and/or induction are:

R.H.Moar - ordained & inducted 19th August 1933
G.S.Jolly - ordained & inducted 15th November 1936
G.A.H.Alleyne inducted 26th February 1950
J.W.Hart & A.L.Barr - ordained & inducted 25th November 1950
J.E.Burke - inducted 24th May 1953
E.Johnson - ordained & inducted 12th September 1954
T.H.Ransley - ordained & inducted 15th March 1959
R.P.Wilson - inducted 22nd October 1961
A.D.Finch - ordained & inducted 22nd October 1961
C.Roeder & W.Melville - ordained & inducted 12th April 1964
H.R.McDonald - ordained & inducted 28th February 1965
I.C.J.Thomas - inducted 20th August 1967
A.D.Tanner - ordained & inducted 23rd June 1968
L.Diamond - inducted 19th July 1970
J.S.Maitland & A.W.Keatley - ordained & inducted 29th October 1972
A.J.Baldwin, D.Barklay, D.Burns & W.Dixon - ordained & inducted
24th August, 1975
H.Feetenby & S.J. Gardner - inducted 25th January 1976.

The present Session Clerk is Mr J.W.Hart and the Assistant Session Clerk is Mr R H Moar. Other Session Clerks were: Wm. Taylor, G.A.Clifton, J.D.Gibson, J.J.Handerson, R.R.Dunsmuir, S.C.Morgan, F.Walker, J.McLean and T.H.Eansley.

The Roll of Communicants now stands at 161. Since 1958, 113 new members have been admitted to the fellowship of the Congregation on Profession of Faith. 66 have been admitted on transfer from other Congregations, 62 have been transferred from Bexley St.Andrew's to other Congregations and 47 of our members have passed to Higher Service. During 1961 the average attendance at the quarterly Communion Services was 144, and in 1962 the average was 130. In 1976 the average attendance at the quarterly Communion services was 146 and in 1977 the average was 150.

In 1973, the first St.Andrew's Day celebrations were introduced. The special Sunday service that year was conducted by the Rt. Rev. Alan Hewitt, and the St. Andrew's Day Dinner was followed by a concert, organised by Mr R H Moar, Mr L Diamond and a small committee. This concert and those in the years following gave scope to local as well as invited musical and dramatic talent, with emphasis on Scottish songs, dances and the swirl of the bagpipes.

The Sunday School.

Among the records of the Congregation, there is a Sunday School Register, which records that the Sunday School was opened on 24th May 1887, and that the Superintendent was Mr Thomas Irvine, who later became an elder of the Congregation. However, the first recorded minutes are those of a meeting held on Friday 3rd., June 1887, when those present were:

Mr Thomas Irvine, Supt., Miss A Elder (Mrs F Geeves) & Messrs. William Taylor & James Glen, who became foundation elders; also Messrs. John Richardson, afterwards the Rev. John Richardson, and A.R.Gray. Mr Gray was elected Hon. Sec., and Mr Glen, Hon. Treasurer.

Two important events which the Sunday School has held annually throughout its history are the anniversary services and the picnic. The first picnic was held at Sans Souci on 15th February, 1888. In later years the picnic was held at Gunnamatta Bay in the month of November. Anniversary Services were held for some years on the first Sunday in November during the morning, the afternoon for the Kindergarten School, and in the evening. St. Andrew's Bexley was certainly fortunate in the Guest Preachers invited during those years.

The Fellowship Association.

The first record of the beginning of a Fellowship Association at St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church is found in the minutes of a meeting of Session on 4th December, 1890, when the Rev. Thomas Hill reported that Mr D.L.Waugh, an elder associated with the Session, had spoken to him about a Fellowship in connection with the Congregation. Early in August 1891, the Association was formed, with the Rev. Thomas Hill as Leader. The first recorded meeting of the Fellowship was held on 27th September 1891, when office-bearers were elected, Mr T. McCubbin as Secretary & Miss N Brierley (Mrs W Orman) as Treasurer.

Organists.

The first organist was Miss Gray. Notable among the organists for length of service were Miss N Brierley (Mrs W Orman), Miss R McDiarmid organist from 1909-1931, and Miss McLaren. Our present organist, Miss June Perry, has held the position since 1958.

Bexley-Rockdale Committee of Management.

The story of the Committee of Management is an interesting one, as we read of certain transactions as far back as October, 1886. It would appear that the Rev. Thomas Hill ministered to the folk as they gathered in the Oddfellows' Hall at Kogarah, the first payment was a month's rent, namely one pound, and this was paid by Mr Hill himself. There is also a record of subscriptions made towards the building of a church at Bexley, and it is interesting to note that the sum of pounds 35.1.9 was laid on the foundation stone of the Bexley Church. Mr James Glen was the treasurer at the time, and the bondsmen were William Taylor, William Lewis and James Glen.

The first record we have of the election of members of a Committee of Management at Bexley is to be found in the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation held in the Church on Tuesday, 19th January, 1888, when the following were elected: J. Brierley, W. Fairweather, J. Glen, H.E.Hoggan, J.Y.Kerr, Dr Lamrock, A. Morton, J Staff, J.C.Thom, G.Taylor, Wm.Taylor and J. Watt. William Taylor was elected Secretary and James Glen, Treasurer. These men were

ordained elders in the following August, and held their offices as Secretary and Treasurer for a number of years. The custom of electing elders to executive office in the Committee of Management has been carried on at intervals throughout the history of the last ninety years.

The Women's Missionary Association.

The missionary spirit has always been alive within the Bexley Congregation and it is pleasing to note that a Women's Missionary Association was formed as early as 1903 with Mrs T Hill as President and Miss B McCall as Secretary.

The Women's Guild - The Presbyterian Women's Day Association.

The Bexley Presbyterian Women's Guild was formed during the ministry of Rev. Thomas Hill, with Mrs Hill as President and Miss Palmer as Secretary and Miss R McDiarmid as Treasurer. When Mrs Hill retired from Bexley, this Guild lapsed. The second Guild was formed in 1920.

Since 1961 the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union has been combined with the Women's Guild, re-named the Presbyterian Women's Day Association in April 1964.

The inaugural meeting of the evening P.W.A. was held on 3rd November 1966, with Miss M Cheetham, President of the day P.W.A. in the Chair.

Call to Christian Stewardship at Bexley St. Andrew's.

The impact of Christian Stewardship & Development is one of the fascinating stories of the Christian Church in this century, but its amazing appeal and remarkable achievements in Australia and other lands cannot be recounted here. In 1957, St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church, unable to meet its financial obligations and almost in despair about the deterioration of its properties and the spiritual impoverishment of its life and work, found a new stimulus and clear purpose in the call to Christian Stewardship. On March 28, 1958, the first Christian Stewardship Development Programme at St. Andrew's Bexley was commenced, with Mr Lloyd Nathan of Keavney Lucas Association as Director of the intensive part of the campaign. At the close of the campaign 71 families had promised to give pounds 10,251 to St. Andrew's Bexley during a period of three years. This was made possible by the Committee's plan to proceed with the renovations of the Church and the erection of the Memorial Porch, to the glory of God and memory of the Fallen in two World Wars and in Korea, and to which now must be added, Vietnam.

The work of re-construction proceeded apace - a new tiled roof for the church, exterior painting, new electric light and power system, interior structural alterations to the dais, pulpit and choir stalls, interior painting and the erection of a simple, dignified Memorial Porch. The day of Dedication and Remembrance was 19th October 1958. The Rev. Dr Cumming Thom, D.D., Ph D., STM., M.A., was the Guest Preacher on this special occasion.

Our Honour Rolls and Memorial Porch.

Two World Wars in one generation have taken toll of the manhood of St. Andrew's. As in 1914-1918, so in 1939-1945, the young men of the Congregation answered the call of King and Country. The names of those who went forth are inscribed on the Honour Rolls within the Church, in close proximity to the flags under which they served.

Those who paid the supreme sacrifice in 1914-1918 were: I.T. Armstrong, I.S. Campbell, J.B. Dunsmuir, G McPherson, T McPherson, O.F. Pomroy, F. Ritchie, G. Ritchie.

Those who gave their lives in 1939-1945 were: James R Donald, N.G. Gilkes, John S Lee, A.R. Mainerd, G Simpson, Joe C Smith, Jack I Thompson, W.H. Walker, Oscar L Wennholm, Donald M Whitwell.

Our Heritage and our Continuing Sustenance.

St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church has experienced both long and short pastorates from a succession of Ministers bringing a variety of gifts and talents to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the observance of the Sacraments and the pastoral care of members and adherents. We certainly owe much to the pioneering folk of the Congregation, who, with their Ministers, witnessed to the inspiration of Jesus Christ in this place.

That His witness has been fruitful is evidenced from the fact that St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church has given the Rev. John Richardson to the Ministry, R.T.C. Williamson, first to the Mission Field and later to the Ministry at home, the late Miss Netta Yansen to the China Mission, and more recently, Miss Mollie Williamson to Mission work in Schools in the New Hebrides and Ernabella, Mr Ron Sharp to the Ministry, Mr Greg Fox to the School of Linguistic Studies in Papua-New Guinea and Mr David Barklay as a student at the Bible College at Croydon. St. Andrew's Bexley Presbyterian Church as the Mother Church of the St. George District, has also nursed to independence the Churches of Arncliffe, Hurstville, Rockdale and Kogarah, and has enjoyed since October 1969, the fruits of its amalgamation with the Rockdale Presbyterian Church.

Rev. H.A. Olsen's 90th Anniversary Message.

How our hearts must rejoice at this time, as we celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the building of St. Andrew's Church here at Bexley! May this revised history of our congregational life give us inspiration to continue and strengthen the work!

When this Church was built, it was practically the only building in sight. This was indeed a forest road, well named.... There are members among us who can remember attending Sunday School in an earthen-floored annexe behind the Church. Walking to Church, they passed through paddocks where sheep and cattle grazed. On many

a peaceful Sunday, horses and sulkies stood in the shade of trees, as, to the praise of God, the strains of praise and music blended with the songs of birds. The congregation took its place in the long succession of the faithful, who have delighted to proclaim in every generation: "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God."

With the passage of time, our district has become a busy and well-populated suburb.... Many who have passed through the classes of our Sunday School have remained to teach following generations of children, and to serve in the various activities of the congregation. The same warm friendliness that marked our earlier members has continued to this day. Their families have grown up together in the happy environment of Christian fellowship, and are extending a welcoming and strengthening hand to all who will receive it. Many new families have moved to the district and have taken their places in the on-going work of God. The Sacraments continue to be administered, the Word is preached, and the congregation is nurtured and cared for by the combined efforts of minister, elders and people.

This year (1977) many congregations throughout Australia have felt a call to unite with others in the Uniting Church in Australia. We pray for the rich blessing of God upon them. St. Andrew's at Bexley wishes to remain in the tradition in which it was founded, and is challenged to be the vehicle by which past blessings and fresh insights may be handed on.

When we build let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for: and let us think as we lay stone on stone that a time is to come that men will say as they look upon them -

"See! this our fathers did for us."

- John Ruskin.
