

Mil Lel Memorial Park

Opened by R.S.L. President

What is possibly the first memorial in South Australia, if not in Australia, was opened at the Mil Lel Show on Saturday by Mr. W. R. Hunt (President of the Mt. Gambier Sub-Branch of the RSL). This was the Mil Lel Memorial Park, which was designed to honour the men and women of that district who fought in World War II.

Mr. D. Dycer introduced Mr. Hunt, who said he felt it a great honour as President of the Mt. Gambier Sub-Branch of the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia, the largest sub-branch south of Adelaide, to have been requested by the Committee of the Mil Lel Memorial Park Incorporated to declare the Park open as a memorial to the men and women of the services from the district of Mil Lel who have fought for the freedom of the people of the British Empire and the United Nations.

In June of 1939 the first move to conduct a show at Mil Lel was made when the Committee of the local school decided to raise funds to improve the facilities of the school.

school.

SPLENDID PATRIOTISM

Mr. Hunt then spoke of the splendid efforts of Mil Lel people during the war period. The first Mil Lel gymkhana and show was held in Mr. Dycer's paddock at Peweena in 1939, and raised £116 3/7 for school funds. At the second show £106/4/7 was made available for Red Cross, School Patriotic Fund and School Fund; in 1941 the profit was £101/18/7; in 1942. £160/7/10; and in 1943 £167/10/11 was raised.

In 1943 the Committee purchased this property as a Soldiers' Memorial Park, and had the Association incorporated in 1944. The show in 1944 realised a record profit of £317/6/10. which was divided between the Red Cross and the School Committee. Since then the Mil Lel Gymkhana and Show Committee has become amalgamated with the Mil Lel Memorial Park Incorporated.

FIRST MEMORIAL

Plans are in hand for a beautification scheme to make the Park a worthy memorial to the men and women of this district who fought in World War II, and the erection of a Soldiers' Memorial Hall is contemplated. Returned soldiers agreed that the memorial is ideal for purposes of recreation. Mr. Hunt congratulated the citizens of Mil Lel district as being, he thought, the people to erect the

he thought, the people to erect the first memorial in South Australia, if not Australia, in honour of those who fought in World War II.

The erection of war memorials will not complete the job of the people, however, and it will be the duty of all of us to do our utmost to sympathetically help the men and women, particularly the prisoners of war, to rehabilitate themselves in civil life.
