

MAJOR MITCHELL, EXPLORER

Memorial Drinking Fountain Unveiled

Yesterday afternoon Sir James Barrett (president of the Historical Memorials Committee of Victoria), with Messrs C. Daley (secretary), C. Long (representing the Education Department), A. C. Kenyon (State Rivers and Water Supply Commission) and others visited Benalla to perform the unveiling ceremony of the Major Mitchell memorial erected inside the main entrance to the Botanical Gardens by the Shire Council and citizens of Benalla. The attendance was small, due no doubt to the intense heat. Several councillors were also present, including the president (Cr. A. Harrison), who apologised on behalf of Cr. E. F. Cleary, M.L.A., who was unable to attend.

In opening the proceedings, Cr. Harrison extended on behalf of the Shire Council and citizens a hearty welcome to the visitors, and introduced the speakers individually. He explained that the council had readily agreed to fall into line with the Major Mitchell memorial scheme, and had decided that it take the form of a drinking fountain, a very desirable and useful form of memorial for their gardens.

Mr. C. Daley expressed pleasure at being afforded the opportunity of taking part in the unveiling ceremony of this memorial, and congratulated the shire council and people of Benalla on its erection. He then spoke at length on the educational value of marking the routes of Australia's early explorers. It was a fine thing for the rising generation to know what their forefathers had done for them in the early pioneering days of Australia. (Applause)

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Mr. C. R. Long gave an interesting address on the educational value to school-children of these memorials, which would act as inspirations to them. He referred to the history of the late Major Mitchell that he himself had written for the School Paper in 1903, and advised the children to persuade their teachers to obtain copies of these, and also of other articles on early exploration of the northern part of Victoria. The fact that the late Major Mitchell had camped on this very spot on October 13th, 1836, was worthy of recognition and he was pleased to see this appropriate memorial erected. (Applause).

Sir James Barrett, who was well received, gave some interesting details of the early explorations in Victoria, explaining the various routes taken by Mitchell, Hume, Hovell and Sturt. He pointed out that the object of the Historical and Memorial Committee was to trace these lines and mark them at given points for historical purposes, and as a permanent record for the information of future generations, regarding the men who opened up the northern park of Victoria. There were about 100 erected already, and this one which they were about to unveil was on the line of the late Major Mitchell. It must be of interest to all to know that in 1836 the noted explorer camped on the spot indicated by this appropriate memorial. The Historical Society was having prepared exhaustive information maps, denoting all routes of the several explorers, and one of these should be placed in every shire hall and every State school. It was indeed a great education to read the diaries of Sturt and Mitchell—they were indeed great men. (Applause).

Sir James Barrett then performed the unveiling ceremony, as the party stood around the memorial fountain. It is a neat brick structure, with one of the latest hygienic drinking bulbs, and in a slanting position on top is a marble slab, the inscription on which indicates that the late Major Mitchell camped there on October 13th 1836.

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camped there on October 13th, 1836.
In a brief and appropriate speech,
Cr. T. V. Cowan moved a hearty vote
of thanks to the members of the party,
and this was carried by acclamation,
and acknowledged on behalf of the
visiting members by Mr. A. C. Kenyon,
of the State Rivers.
Prior to the ceremony the party was
entertained at luncheon by the shire
president and councillors, at the Be-
nalla Hotel.