

NUMERALLA'S DAY**OPENING OF SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HALL**

The opening of the Soldiers' Memorial Hall recently erected at Numeralla, brought together a gathering of about 300 residents on Wednesday last, which was Numeralla's "Day" of recognition of her contribution to the forces which left Australia to do battle for the British Empire and its dominions, in the cause of freedom and civilisation. A programme of school sports preceded the opening, which was followed by a ball in the hall.

The structure, which is a substantial building 50 feet in length, by 30 feet in width, is of local sawn timber, set on concrete bases, with an excellent hardwood floor. The contractor was Mr E. Thomas, of Numeralla, who is to be congratulated upon the result of his labours, which occupied about five months. The building was constructed at a cost of £450, and of this amount about £250 has been collected. A committee of about 30 residents took the matter in hand, and secured a block of land as a Government grant, upon which the hall was erected. Mr R. F. Godfrey undertaking the multifarious duties connected with the honorary secretaryship. The hall is situated on the main road leading from the Numeralla Post Office to the Umeralla Station, and is nearly opposite the site of the churches. It is regarded as a monument to the efforts of the local residents, who are looking forward to the time when the building will be free of debt, which it is hoped will shortly arrive.

The proceedings opened with a programme of school sports, including footracing, skipping, throwing at the wicket, and numerous events forming the outdoor pastimes of the juveniles. The prizes totalled £10 and the competitors included numbers who live in the areas surrounding the centre, there being about 150 children present. There is an average attendance of about 70 at the public school, which is in charge of Mr Godfrey. All

in charge of Mr Godfrey. All the children, as well as the adults, were guests at the mid-day meal, which was served in a marquee near the hall.

The official opening took place shortly after 4 o'clock when the representative gathering proceeded to the hall. The central pillars were decorated with Empire flags, and the war trophy, a German machine gun, occupied a temporary position near the centre of the floor. The chair was occupied by Mr Arthur Scullin, who opened the proceedings by calling upon Councillor A. J. Agnew of the Manaro Shire to make the announcement.

Cr. Agnew explained that the hall was erected in memory of their fallen soldiers, and he had much pleasure in declaring it open. (Applause)

The Rev. H. S. Brown was the next speaker, and who complimented the residents upon the fine hall which would be a lasting memento of the soldiers who had fallen and those who had returned. He considered that the hall was one the best forms the memorial could take, and far better than a monument of stone such as was erected at Nimmitabel. He wondered what the soldiers would say if they saw that hall, which was of far more service and could be used on every occasion. It was for them to keep it in repair, and suitable for their soldiers, which would shew them that they were still kept in memory. He thanked them for the invitation to be present that afternoon. (Applause).

Mr J. J. Bailey, M.L.A., said it was a great pleasure to be present to meet so many friends and supporters, and he endorsed the remarks of the

previous speaker that the hall was far better than a stone monument. It spoke volumes for those who had subscribed the money. He thought they sent about 30 men to the war, and the percentage compared favourably with many other parts of the State, and Australia. He thought it was satisfactory to all of them who had taken up the position of anti-conscriptionists, to have sent over 400,000 men to the

sent over 400,000 men to the way: who had made a great name, and placed Australia on the map, and it shewed what energetic, hard-working men could do if they made up their minds. Many of their brave boys had been killed; that would be the last war in which Australia as part and parcel of the British Empire would take part; and while they were part and parcel of that Empire the most humble man or woman received the same protection and treatment as the richest man. (Applause). A huge amount of money had been spent on militarism throughout the world and in the manufacture of all kinds of man-destroying implements. They considered that the good sense of the civilised nations of the world would guide them, and see the necessity of settling disputes something on the lines of arbitration, and not on the battle field. He claimed to be the founder of anti-conscription in Australia; his party took up the stand that it was far better to get volunteers, as each of those was better than ten pressed men, and their arguments had proved to be correct. He had always been opposed to militarism, but the opening of the hall had nothing to do with that. He had some difficulty in getting away from Parliament on Tuesday night. There was a great wrangle on, and the House was divided into four or five different forces. If he had had the opportunity of visiting them during the elections they would not have seen him there that day. They would recognise that they had a change of Government, at the last election the Labour Government was defeated, and no Government took office under more adverse conditions or did more for the people in the two years the Labour Government represented them. During the election the sectarian issue was raised, but he was quite sure that when the gallant boys enlisted for the war they did not ask their comrades whether they were Catholics or Protestants, but went out as a united body, and their work went to build up a great nation, they did not want to quibble about religion. All

quibble about religion. All those issues should be brushed aside, and they should look at it from the point of Australia, and try to make the country better than it was at the present time. (Applause.)

Cr. G. S. Goodwin agreed that the hall was a better memorial than a monument of stone; it would be used for hospital balls and other functions, and would be a lasting memorial to their soldiers, some of whom died at Gallipoli, and whose relatives were present that day. (Hear, hear.) He would ask them to remember those boys, and to do all they could for those who returned. (Applause.)

Mr E. Crisp, president of the Manaro Shire, apologised for the absence of some of the Councillors, the clerk, and engineer, who were unable to be present. He was pleased to see they had erected a memorial to their departed soldiers, and the people had shewn that they appreciated those who had not fallen in the war. (Applause). They must remember that although they had erected the hall in memory of the fallen, they had a number of returned men, and a pledge was given them that they would be looked after when they came back. (Applause). The people of New South Wales and Australia had to see that those boys did not want for anything. They must see they were looked after. (Hear, hear) The hall they had erected would be an object lesson to the rising generation, it would remind them that they were part of the great British Empire, of which they would be loyal subjects, and be worthy of the protection which the united Empire would give. (Applause). He thanked them for the invitation to be present that day at the opening of the hall. (Applause).

Mr. Godfrey said the people of Numeralla deserved everything that could be said. He had taken a very great interest in the movement in connection with the recognition of the sacrifices made by their soldiers, their mothers and sisters. Every member of the community had shewn a very keen interest in the matter. As to the machine gun—he was not a militarist—they were asked if they would accept it in

he was not a militarist—they were asked if they would accept it in memory of the soldiers who went to the front. They had only 300 in their community, and 30 went to the war. (Applause). The gun would be found a prominent place in the hall. They had in mind that the hall would be used for assisting patriotic, charitable and religious movements; and he thanked them for the whole-souled manner in which they had come forward and helped. (Applause).

Mr E. Thomas said the hall was started under some difficulties, and they had an overdraft of £200 as the bank. They had had so much to do that the gun had not been properly mounted. The proceeds of the dance that evening would go towards the building fund. (Applause.)

The proceedings then terminated. There was a large attendance at the dance held that evening, about £30 being taken at the door. The Messrs Scullin rendered the greater portion of the dance music, with violin and accordion. Mr W. Thomas acted as M.C., and as dancing did not conclude till about 5.30 on Thursday morning, was fully occupied. Supper was served in a marquee near the hall. A number of Cooma residents arrived at night and took part in the dance.

After a festive night drink Sharland's Kola Nip. All Hotels and Clubs *