

IMPOSING NEW HALL OPENED OFFICIALLY AT LOCHABER

Five Hundred See Culmination of Three Years' Determined Effort

An imposing new Memorial Hall was opened officially at Lochaber last Friday night, when a crowd estimated at more than 500 saw the culmination of a grand district effort over the past three and a half years. The new structure, which cost over £7,000, is one of the most modern in the State, and is fitted and equipped with the latest fixtures.

During an interval in the dancing, Cr. E. R. Williams, who is a representative of Lochaber Ward in the Naracoorte District Council, cut a ribbon stretched across the stage to declare the building opened officially.

An imposing building, it was scarcely large enough to hold the crowd that attended the function, which was a successful tribute to the committee which carried through this project in difficult times for the erection of any building.

The stage and supper room were tastefully decorated with large troughs and vases of pink gladioli, red hot pokers, agapanthus and gysophylla.

Dancing was suspended at a few minutes after nine o'clock when, after the National Anthem had been sung, the Chairman (Mr. Jim McIntosh) extended a welcome to all, with special mention of the older residents, among whom were some who had been present at the opening of the previous hall in 1902.

Apologies came from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. M. O'Halloran), the Mayor (Mr. N. V. Wallace) and numerous others.

The Hon. N. L. Jude, M.L.C., briefly addressed the gathering, congratulating all associated with the building, and pointing out that this effort reflected the progressive spirit and prosperity of the district.

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Mr. R. McLachlan, M.P., followed with his best wishes for the success of the Memorial Hall in the future. He said the residents of the district had every reason to be proud of their building, which was a credit to their initiative and enterprise. He trusted that the committee would see that the hall would always be used for things good and healthful, as in that could be fostered a strength needed in the world to avert the dangers which threatened in these chaotic days. Mr. McLachlan suggested that a copy of "The Call to the Nation" be hung in a prominent position in the Hall.

Cr. I. M. Bourne, Chairman of the Naracoorte District Council, said that the Hall was built for the coming generation by the older members, and stressed that they must help to carry on the work which had been so well commenced.

Mr. A. C. DeGaris, in speaking of his long association with the people of Lochaber from childhood, mentioned Mr. Harry Wilkin as having attended school in the district as far back as 1886, and expressed his pleasure at seeing Mr. Wilkin present at this function. Mr. DeGaris also found

MR. WILLIAMS present at this jubilation. Mr. DeGaris also found what he thought was probably unique in that the family name of Williams, which had been represented in Lochaber from early days, was still strong in members and had been very active in this movement.

OPENING CEREMONY

Cr. E. R. Williams, President of the committee, then opened the hall by cutting a broad white ribbon of satin which stretched from one side of the stage to the other. In doing so, he said the Memorial Hall was to perpetuate the memory of those who fell in World Wars I and II. He paid a tribute to the people of the district who saved at least £2,500 by pulling together and working together with the tradesmen, by voluntary efforts, to give Lochaber a hall that was not equalled in this large district of Naracoorte.

Cr. Williams also gave a brief outline of the events which led up to the planning and ultimate construction of the new building. He specifically mentioned the numerous working bees and paid a tribute to the Building Committee, comprising Messrs. Laurie Rowe, Fred Williams, Seth Laurie, Ron Kelly and Allan Major. Others receiving special mention were Messrs. Colin Shearing, Jim Hay,

Stan Stanton, Harry Middleton, Ross Chenoweth and Jack Crago, the young people of the district for their special efforts, the entertainment committee and last, but by no means least, the ladies for their special efforts. A special tribute was also paid to the Secretary (Mr. A. Major) for his untiring work.

A pleasing feature of the kitchen was the fact that the cupboards and sink had been presented by the young people out of their own efforts, and these were their contribution to the hall, added the speaker.

Finally, Mr. Williams said that much credit was due to the ladies of the district, without whom the task would have been much harder, as they had made accommodation available to those working as tradesmen on the building, as well as working hard in many other ways.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

On behalf of the Committee and district, Mr. W. L. Rowe then presented two wooden pedestals, suitably inscribed, to Mr. Williams and Mr. Major in recognition of their work, and with the request that the stands be permitted to remain in the hall as a reminder of the work they had done as President and Secretary. The recipients suitably responded.

Mr. A. C. DeGaris then led the committee, who had been seated on the stage, down the steps to the dance floor, after which a sumptuous supper, prepared by the ladies of the district, was served. Dancing was then resumed to the music of Sander's Band from Lochaber's own residents, and Holliday's Band from Naracoorte.

Many favourable comments were made during the evening on the very complete nature of the appointments of the hall, and the excellent surface on the dance floor.

Items were rendered by Messrs. Tom Boord and Eob Staude and were well received.