

DEATH OF MR WILLIAM BARKEL.**NOTED BAND CONDUCTOR.**

The death occurred yesterday of Mr. William Barkel, who was a resident of the Newcastle district for the past 43 years, and one of the best known band conductors in Australia. He was 74 years of age.

The late Mr. Barkel died rather suddenly. He was on a visit to Boolaroo in the morning, and took ill when in the train. He took train straight back from Cockle Creek, reached his home in Lawson-street, Hamilton, at about half-past one o'clock, and died a few minutes afterwards. He is survived by his widow, three sons, and one daughter. His wife was present with him when he died. Mr. John Barkel, of the teaching staff of the Hamilton Superior Public School, is one of the sons.

There was no better known conductor of bands in Australia than the late Mr. Barkel, and in his professional career his achievements included thirteen inter-colonial championships, which he won with the old Fourth Regiment Band of Newcastle district, and the Newcastle City Band. The first band he took charge of in this district was that of Morpeth, where he lived for some time prior to coming to Newcastle. He first came into marked prominence in Newcastle more than thirty years ago, when he got together a scratch band of a number of his old friends, and accepted a challenge from the Great Northern Band (conductor, the late Mr. George Hardy) to play for £100 a side. The competition was played at the old Crystal Palace Gardens, Waratah, and Mr. Zimms was the adjudicator. Mr. Barkel's band won. About two years later he was given a commission by the Government to form the Fourth Regiment Band. His record shows what a great success he made of the work. He met with ready support from a number of players, and the band held an unbeaten record in various contests under his baton. The band's greatest performance was winning the Centenary contest held in Sydney in 1888 against all-comers throughout Australasia. Other big victories won by this band under the late Mr. Barkel were two contests at Wollongong, and two at Newcastle against all-comers. When he resigned from the conductorship of the Fourth Regiment Band, he formed the Newcastle City Band and the Barkel Model Band. In the first contests in which these two bands took part they won first and second prizes respectively. This was at Wollongong, and the contest was open to all-comers. Early in the 90's he took the Newcastle City Band to Melbourne to compete in the Druids' contest, and the band scored another victory. The band made a wonderfully good impression. In the following year the band declined to go to Melbourne, owing to the expenses being so heavy, but a number of Melbourne residents had so enjoyed the band's playing on the occasion of its previous visit that they got together and subscribed sufficient money to enable the band to come again. The band accepted the offer, and the trip was well worth while, for this fine combination added another win to its list. Other successes of the band were at Ballarat, Bathurst, Ar-

midale, Moree, and Sydney. In the council room of the Newcastle City Council is to be seen the fine shield won by the band at the Ballarat South-street inter-colonial championship competitions, in which bands from various parts of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand took part. The adjudicator was the noted English musician, Mr. J. Ord Hume. The shield was awarded on a three years' aggregate. The Smythe Cup, which was won at Ballarat by the band, was presented by the members to the late Mr. Barkel, and it is a treasured possession of his family.

There was no man more ready to do anything in the sweet cause of charity than the late Mr. Barkel. Frequently on Sundays he and the band would visit various parts of the district and play in some deserving cause. On many occasions the Newcastle Hospital has benefited in this way. There are very few of the original members of the band now living.

The funeral will leave his late residence this afternoon for Sandgate Cemetery.

The first five Presidents of the United States ended their terms of service each in the sixty-sixth year of his age.