

A Grand Achievement

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION'S BIG DAY

OPENING OF MEMORIAL REST ROOMS

The official opening of the Mary Roberts Rest Room and Baby Health Centre was carried out on Thursday afternoon last under most auspicious conditions. Even the weather gods smiled, bright, warm sunshine and a gentle breeze pre-aling, a happy augury indeed for the future of the Country Women's Association's ambitious venture.

The building itself is a most impressive structure. Standing well back from the footpath in the main street and fronted by an ornamented wire fence, it at once strikes the eye as a well built, commodious institution. A porch in front, with its handsome roughcasting and marble tablet, surmounted by the C.W.A.'s sign in gold with a royal blue background, lends immediately an air of distinction to the rest room. But if the outside is calculated to charm the eye, the interior can only be described as beautiful. On entering at once an air of good taste and refinement is apparent, not only in the general design and layout, but in the quiet, artistic manner in which it is furnished. Nothing has been overlooked in the direction of comfort, and the C.W.A. ladies should be an even happier band than before in such surroundings.

On Thursday the rooms presented a fine sight. Royal blue curtains adorned the large windows, white bowls and bowls of flowers (there must have been almost a hundred of them), blue sweet peas, lupins and golden Iceland poppies, lent a delightful touch of color to the rooms. These beautiful flowers, which were sent all the way from Wentworthville and Canley Vale by Mrs. Pinkerton and Matron Cregan respectively, formed a fine foil for the handsome stained Oregon panelling, white fibro-plaster ceilings, and stained floors. Actually there are two tea-rooms and one large meeting room. The two former are

separated by a grille, with heavy, handsome curtains suspended from a brass rod. These curtains were presented by Mrs. W. D. Gordon. Two folding doors screen off the large, cosy meeting room. Then there is a work-room fitted with a commodious cupboard made by Const. Snow, who, by the way, is a first-class carpenter, and a cedar table presented by Mr. R. Taylor. The baby health centre is all white, with blue curtains and venetian blinds, given by Mrs. Royds. A roughcast fireplace and tiled hearth add to the general appearance of comfort. The stone step at the entrance to this room, which faces the sun, is a relic from the old Braidwood Gaol, which is now no more. The furniture in the room was presented by Mrs. Macdonald, Mrs. Bensley, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Wilkinson and Mrs. Chapman. A compact little kitchen, with stove and appliances, completes the building. The whole of the furniture in the rooms, with the exception of the chairs, was donated by members and supporters of the C.W.A. In the tea-room there is a beautiful big table presented by the late Mr. J. H. Byrne, who originally had it made for his own dining-room at Nithsdale. There is also a visitors' book which was given by Mrs. Germer, of Crookwell, who was secretary of the Braidwood branch in 1933, 1934, and part of 1935. In connection with this book, the "Review" editor had the honor conferred upon him on Thursday of being the first one asked to sign his name in it, despite the fact that there were quite a number of notabilities in town that

day. Doormats were presented by Mrs. Sebbens and Mrs. Jagers, a table by Mrs. C. Stewart, and motto by Mrs. Hyland, flower bowls by Mrs. Alley, tablecloths by Mrs. T. H. Griggs, and blinds by Mrs. H. O. Roberts.

The cost of the completed building was a little over £400, and, we understand, after Thursday night's ball, there will not be a great deal of a debt to meet on it. That this is a truly wonderful result cannot be gainsaid. It speaks volumes, not only for the generosity of our residents, but for the self-sacrificing work and loyal co-operation of the members of the C.W.A. When the

members of the C.W.A. When the building of these rooms was first mooted there were many who absolutely ridiculed the idea. "It is too ambitious a scheme for Braidwood," they said. "The money will never be found to finance such a venture." Little they knew the unswerving faith and determination of the members. These ladies had set their minds upon erecting some permanent memorial to one of their most beloved members, the late Mrs. J. Roberts, and the rest room was the one which appealed to them as being the most suitable. It was the most expensive of those suggested, too, and that was why it was chosen. It meant making sacrifices, supreme efforts, hard, undeviating labors, but the ladies felt that all these, and more, would not be too great to show their love and honor of the grand lady in whose memory it was to be erected. That they succeeded in carrying their hopes to a successful conclusion did not surprise anybody. The C.W.A. had done so many good services in the district for other organisations; it had helped many deserving cases of sickness and distress, that it was not surprising it commanded the unanimous support of all when its own appeal went out. And so to-day the substantial rest room stands as a lasting tribute to the splendid work of these good ladies—a fine structure that will be found of inestimable value, not only to members as a rest room, but to mothers and their little babes. We congratulate the members of the organisation upon their very fine achievement. That they should have accomplished something which many towns of far larger pretensions have been unable to do stands to their everlasting credit.

When the opening ceremony commenced on Thursday afternoon there was a record gathering present, all the available seating being taken up in front of the rooms and on the porch. Visitors were present from all parts of the district and from all the surrounding centres, including Miss Yeo (President of the Southern Tablelands Group), Mrs. R. Downes (President of Camden Branch), Mrs. Germer (Crookwell), both Federal

and State members of Parliament, and many other notabilities. The attendance is estimated at well over 300.

The President, Mrs. J. F. Hyland, occupied the chair. After the singing of the National Anthem and the reciting of the C.W.A. motto, Mrs. Hyland, on behalf of the branch, thanked all those who had come to that day's function, some of them from far-off branches. She read a long list of apologies from people who found it impossible to attend, as follows:—Matron Cregan, Mrs. Maddrell (Bedervale), Mrs. Connellan, Rev. and Mrs. Champion, Mrs. Beveridge (Gundagai), Mrs. Pullen (Gundagai, 10/6 enclosed); Mrs. R. L. Thorne (Sydney), Mr. and Mrs. McKee (Waverley), Miss Maddrell (Sydney), Mrs. Minnett (St. Ives), Mrs. McDowall, senr., Mrs. S. Turnbull (Major's Creek, £1/1/-), Mrs. Lovejoy (Bega C.W.A. sec.), Mrs. Watt (Ashfield), Mrs. Nicholson (Rectory, Eden), Mr. and Mrs. Harding (Goulburn), Mr. and Mrs. Finch (Mosman), Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Reid (Wallerawang), Mrs. A. Byrne (Wagga), Mrs. Ramsay (Eden), Mrs. McInnes, Mr. and Mrs. King (Manly), Mrs. Broadhead (Bungonia Branch C.W.A.), Mrs. McInnes (Clifton, South Coast), Mrs. K. Roberts (Brisbane), Mrs. Mackellar (Bellevue Hill), Mrs. Proll (Goulburn), Mrs. Hindmarsh (Sydney), Mr. and Mrs. Gorman (Roseville), Mrs. Oliver (Roseville), Mrs. Smith and members (Bateman's Bay), Mrs. Davenport (Bowral), Mrs. J. H. Byrne, Nurse Rumncy, Mrs. Horton (Moruya C.W.A.), Mrs. A. Campbell, Sister Knox, Mrs. Thomas (Pres. B. dalla C.W.A.), Mrs. C. Dempsey (Araruen), Mrs. Pinkerton (Wentworthville), Mrs. Joyce Maddrell.

Mrs. T. M. Royds, who was the foundation branch president, then gave a brief outline of the history of the Braidwood branch. She said she considered it an honor to be asked to do this on such a memorable occasion. The speaker went on to pay a tribute to Mrs. L. Chapman, who, she said, had felt the need for a club in Braidwood where women could meet and chat when they came to town. This idea set to work with

meet and chat when they came to town. This lady set to work with this object in view. A room was secured and furnished, and this social club established. In 1925 it was suggested that a branch of the C.W.A. be formed, and Mrs. Laver and a couple of other ladies came along to expound the ideals of the Association. It was then unanimously decided to form a branch here. This done, they had to look round for some objective to work for, deciding upon the Hospital. Money had to be raised to pay rent, and the Association also had to help many necessary cases. Then different other organisations were assisted, and maternity cases helped, everyone appreciating the great help rendered by the C.W.A. This went on from year to year, but all the time the members desired to have a rest room of their own. It was only 18 months ago that this desire took concrete form, following the death of Mrs. Roberts, one of their most beloved members. They all had different ideas, but the most ambitious one won the day. Only the generosity of the whole district made the fulfilment of their ambition possible. "And aren't we just proud of being able to open our rest room to-day?" she added. "We'll have a fully qualified nurse to take charge at once to help our young Australians to grow up as they should." Mrs. Royds concluded by paying a tribute to the builder of the rest rooms, Mr. Reynolds, for the very excellent job he had given them. "Can you imagine a man working for a whole body of women and not losing his temper now and then?" she laughingly inquired. (Applause).

Mrs. Hyland (President) said it was her proud and pleasing duty to thank all those who had assisted to make their new building possible. The C.W.A. had been most generously helped in every way; the people had shown a wonderfully sympathetic interest in the work. The objective, of course, made a big appeal to everybody—it was a memorial to one of the members who to know was to love. Right throughout the members had been wonderful. They had ungrudgingly and unselfishly given of their best. The members had not lost sight of the fine work done in

their best. The members had not lost sight of the fine work done in connection with the project by the hon. secretary, Mrs. Doolan, and in appreciation of her efforts had placed a President's chair in the room. (Applause). The inscription on the brass plate on this reads:—"To commemorate the appreciation of the Branch of Mary Doolan's admirable work in connection with the erection of this building."

Mrs. Hyland went on to say that

the building had been erected as a memorial to the late Mrs. J. Roberts, who at the time of her passing to a higher sphere was their greatly loved President. As showing the extreme popularity of this admirable lady she mentioned that Mrs. Roberts had been a member of the Hospital Board, the Literary Institute, a life member of the P. and A. Society, member of the Red Cross, Parents & Citizens' Association, and last, but not least, a leading member of the Presbyterian Church. This list only showed in a small degree the wonderful public-spirit she possessed by her and the esteem and respect in which she was held throughout the district. Her keen brain and clear foresight and ability made her help and advice always valuable. In consequence her passing was a severe loss to the district. Loyal and loving, her life was best expressed in the one word, "Service." In the helping of those in need, those ill in mind or body, she wore herself out, leaving a blank in our public life which no other could fill. The fine building they were opening that day stood for service, especially for the women and children. Mrs. Hyland concluded: "We hope the spirit of her, after whom this building is named, may always be present in our rooms, strengthening our members in the grand qualities and ideals possessed by her." (Applause).

Mr. W. D. Gordon (Chairman of the Hospital Board) stressed his pleasure at being there to do honor to the late Mrs. Roberts. He was sure she would be pleased at the wonderful tribute paid her by the opening and dedication of this fine building to her. It was a wonderful performance indeed by the ladies of the C.W.A. and something that would

ance indeed by the ladies of the C.W.A., and something that would be appreciated by wives and mothers. The C.W.A. always found time to help all charitable institutions in the district. As chairman of the Hospital he could speak feelingly of the worth of the late Mrs. Roberts; she had been one of the pillars of the Hospital. He congratulated Mrs. Hyland and the members of the C.W.A. upon their wonderful achievement. The Association was a truly wonderful organisation, doing an enormous amount of kindness and good wherever its arms extended. "It is up to everybody to support the C.W.A.," he added. "I am a member of quite a number of other organisations, but I can safely say not one of them is managed nearly as well as the C.W.A." (Applause).

Mrs. G. C. Maddrell (President of the Red Cross Branch) spoke of the pleasure it gave her to be present at the opening of the Memorial Rest Room. The late Mrs. Roberts had been a foundation member of the Red Cross, the first meeting of which was held on 14th Aug., 1914. She had been an earnest and conscientious worker and one of the pillars of the movement. Mrs. Roberts was one of the first ladies to take up spinning. She also wrote a poem entitled "Our Boys," copies of which were sold and the proceeds donated to the Red Cross. It would be impossible to assess Mrs. Roberts' worth and assistance to the movement. The speaker congratulated the C.W.A. upon the erection of their rest room in memory of such a worthy citizen. (Applause).

Mr. R. T. Hassall (President of the P. & A. Society) stressed his pleasure at being permitted to add a word of appreciation of one of the district's most admired citizens, the late Mrs. Roberts. This fine lady did many wonderful things, her self-sacrificing, noble efforts endearing her to all sections in the district. As a member of the P. & A. Association she was indefatigable in her efforts to further its interests. Not only

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were her services invaluable here, but, in fact, towards any and every movement which tended to the advancement of the town and district in which she lived. She always had the district's interests at heart, as had her husband. "The passing of this estimable lady has been one of the biggest blows the district has ever received, and I do not think we have anyone in it capable of filling her position," he added. Mr. Hassall concluded by paying a tribute to the C.W.A. upon their very fine achievement in building such a magnificent rest room. (Applause).

Miss Yeo (President of the Southern Tableland Group) was given a flattering reception on rising to officially open the Memorial Rest Room.

She said she felt it a great honor to have been invited by the Braidwood branch to open the room and unveil the memorial tablet. She had listened to the different speakers and their eulogies of the late Mrs. Roberts, but she personally did not know much of her. She did know, however, that in the whole of the Southern Tableland Groups no member had been more attentively listened to or her opinions more respected, than Mrs. Roberts. In the whole of the branches in this group no one was better loved by the members. The Braidwood branch could have erected no more fitting memorial, nor could they have chosen one which would be more after Mrs. Roberts' own heart, than they had done. The rooms would be a wonderful asset to the district. She asked that the term Baby Health Centre be always applied to the building. "Please do not refer to it as a clinic," she said. "A clinic is a place where diseases are treated. This is a place where good, healthy babies are looked after and kept in proper health." She went on to refer to the opposition such rooms met with in different quarters, but claimed that since the C.W.A. commenced their excellent work in this direction in the country that dread disease, gastroenteritis, had been practically stamped out. Braidwood was more than 100 years old, and, if it could be accurately calculated how many babies had been lost thro-

how many babies had been lost through this dread complaint, she was certain the figures would be surprising. In Yass over 1000 deaths had occurred. "You will lose no more babies," she said, "from complaints of this and a similar nature if you bring them at once to the baby health centre and consult your trained nurse. You members of the C.W.A. could have done nothing finer or nobler to perpetuate the memory of one who worked so wholeheartedly for the ill and needy of your district." Miss Yeo then unveiled the Memorial Tablet in memory of a grand lady who was loved not only throughout the Southern Tablelands, but right throughout the whole State. The big gathering rose silently as the Australian Flag was slowly removed from the marble tablet, standing in reverent silence for a minute. The inscription read:—

"This Building is erected as a Memorial to our late esteemed President, Mary Roberts, in recognition of her valuable and sterling services.—August 13th, 1936."

A vote of thanks to Miss Yeo for coming from Yass to attend the function was moved by Mr. W. W. Hedges, M.L.A., who congratulated her upon the prominent and leading part she had taken in the affairs of the Association. He expressed his appreciation of the good work done by the C.W.A. throughout the State. This grand body had done wonderful work amongst women and children. The rest room they had opened that day would prove a fitting memorial

to the late Mrs. Roberts, who had done such splendid work in the district during her lifetime. The members of the C.W.A. could not have chosen a more fitting memorial, and he sincerely congratulated them on the completion of such a fine building. The rooms and baby health centre, he felt sure, would prove of inestimable value to the women and children of the locality. (Applause).

In seconding the resolution, Mr. W. U. Alley (President of Tallaganda Shire) extended his and the Council's thanks for the invitation to be present. Everyone appreciated the wonderful effort of the C.W.A. in this and other directions. The brill-

this and other directions. The building would prove a big asset to the district. He thought there should not be one woman in the district who was not a member of the Association, and he hoped to see those who were not join up at once. Mrs. Royds had made a statement in her speech which had tickled his fancy. She said the men kept their wives waiting about the streets till they were ready to go home, and that was one of the reasons why the rest rooms would be useful. Well, that practically admitted that the men were the cause of having the rooms built. He asked those present to carry the vote of thanks to Miss Yeo by acclamation.