

CIVIC, CHURCH LEADERS GIVE PRAISE TO METHODIST HALL

THE people of Forbes had every reason to be proud of the new Methodist War Memorial Hall.

This was stated by the Rev. R. H. Doust, property secretary of the N.S.W. Methodist Conference, to more than 200 church people and guests gathered in the handsome £10,000 red brick, concrete and glass hall at the Forbes Methodist Church, which he opened and dedicated on Saturday afternoon.

"You must become increasingly proud of the hall as it gives service to the people," added Mr. Doust, in an address at the dedication held in the hall, which he had come from Sydney to perform.

The hall and its purpose to cater for youth were applauded by the Mayor of Forbes (Ald. M. H. Gunn), the President of the Jemalong Shire (Or. T. E. Cutcliffe) and several church leaders present.

A collection resulted in donations totalling £300.

An apology was received from Mr. F. Cahill, M.L.A.

The ceremony was begun in the church grounds where the Forbes Methodist Minister (Rev. W. Coates), standing on the steps at the entrance of the new hall, extended to the crowd of people gathered there a welcome on behalf of the War Memorial Hall trustees.

Rev. Coates introduced the Rev. A. R. Gardener, Chairman of the Methodist Western District of N.S.W., who came from Orange. Rev. Gardener said a prayer in which he expressed the hope of all that the hall might be a centre "of inspiration in the days ahead."

The loud beating of a drum in a neighboring street made hearing difficult but Mr. Jack Cundill, with his public address system came to the rescue of the ministers and their audience.

Rev. Doust then gave a short address before officially opening the hall.

He said that it was "dedicated to the memory of those who served in World War one and two, and to Sgt. James Clarke who was killed in Malaya on January 22, 1942."

HIGH IDEALS

"You have accomplished a fine work in building this memorial hall," said Rev. Doust, "and it will be associated with life and witness in this place."

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"May this hall serve you well and may the activities in it measure up to the high ideals we associate with a war memorial."

Then in the name of the Trinity, he opened the door "of this hall that will serve the interests of the people in the general life of the church and in the wider interests of the community."

The people followed the Ministers into the hall which they found to be a beautiful airy building with pale blue plaster walls, varnished woodwork, modern fluorescent lights, smooth cypress pine floors, furnished with gay-colored steel and plastic covered chairs of latest design.

As the crowd exceeded the seating capacity of about 150, some people stood in the entrance vestibule.

Guests and visiting ministers were seated on the stage which was decorated with flowers.

Most appropriately, as the hall is to be devoted mainly to youth activities, the dedicatory service was opened by Sunday school children and choir, including some very young ones singing delightfully the simple and touching hymn, "Bless this House," to a charming remote piano accompaniment played by Mrs. Thelma Woods.

DEDICATION TO SOLDIER

After prayer by the Rev. K. L. Doust all sang the hymn, beginning "Be with us gracious Lord to-day, this house we dedicate to Thee."

The Rev. Harold Barratt, of the Presbyterian Church, then read Psalm 84 which contains the verse: "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be still praising Thee."

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Rev. Coates then addressed Rev. Doust saying: "In the name of the trustees will you accept this hall dedicated in the name of James Ellis Clarke?"

Rev. Doust took formal possession on behalf of the N.S.W. Methodist Conference.

"We are met to dedicate this hall for the work of Sunday

"We are met to dedicate this hall for the work of Sunday school, youth work and social activities," he said. "Let us solemnly dedicate this place."

APPEAL FOR FUNDS

Mr. Harold Jennings, treasurer of the War Memorial Trust, paid tribute to Mr. W. E. Glasson, of Molong, who had donated £5000 towards the hall in memory of his late uncle, the Rev. William Glasson, formerly of Forbes, and who had laid the foundation stone on September 11, 1953.

Mr. Jennings appealed for aid to liquidate a debt on the hall of £2358, including a bank loan of £1000, that still remained.

Total cost of the hall, he said, would be £9997.

Rev. Coates supported the appeal for donations saying that all amounts donated over £1 would be deductible for income tax purposes.

He said that some of the joy of the day had been taken away by recent death and suffering of church members. Mr. Neville Pardy, whose funeral Rev. Coates had attended in Manly and Mr. Ian Davidson, who was injured and in hospital, as the result of a car accident.

The Mayor of Forbes (Ald. M. H. Gunn) tendered the apology of the Mayoress, who was attending a wedding.

"I think the Methodists of Forbes in the past and present have done great work for the town," said Ald. Gunn.

"I am a great believer in giving the young people a good foundation for life and you could not do better than you have done with this hall."

Ald. Gunn said the hall would be an added attraction to the town which civic administrators could proudly show to visitors.

The Shire President (Cr. T. E. Cutcliffe) said:

"I feel very privileged to witness the opening of this hall and congratulate the Methodist Church on erecting it.

"The builders can be proud of their work. There could not be a more fitting memorial for those who gave their lives because of the benefit it will be to young people.

"It moved me to hear of the association with the memorial of the name of Jim Clarke.

A.F.A. APPRECIATION

Sqdn.-Ldr. George Mendham, president of the Air Force Association, said:

"This is one of the nicest halls I have seen and many young people will enjoy themselves in it. May they never forget the men who made their enjoyment possible."

Mr. Gardener said: "I congratulate you on this beautiful hall. The man who brought me here said his father had come to Forbes in 1864 by bullock waggon and it took seven weeks to make

the trip from Orange. Since 1864 the town's progress has been unbroken for the purpose to which it is dedicated.

"This hall is probably unsurpassed in N.S.W."

Mr. Gardener added he hoped the young people who gathered here would become "spiritual Anzacs."

Rev. Harold Barratt (Presbyterian) said: "I hope the spirit of this day will get to the Presbyterians and stir them to do something of a similar nature to the building of the hall which would be dedicated to high ideals and principles.

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behalf of the Mayor (Ald. Gunn). Mr. Jennings said: "We hope to see you again when we build a new church."

Afternoon tea was then served in an adjoining hall.

Visitors included: Mr. F. Vere, Forbes District Inspector of Schools, and Mrs. Vere, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Barkin of Lindfield, Mr. and Mrs. Hastings, and Mr. and Mrs. D. Wythes and Miss Wythes, visiting her parents from Orange.

METHODIST HALL

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Rev. Keith L. Doust (Wellington), formerly of Forbes, said that he was pleased to be here. He had had a part in early planning of the hall.

"It is a splendid thing that our wishes for a permanent memorial have been realised," he said. He congratulated the architect and builders.

Rev. Errol Towner (Peak Hill) said the erection of such a beautiful hall for young people was tangible evidence of the loyalty of Forbes Methodists.

Rev. L. Badcock (Condobolin) said that recent events were a reminder of the need for the things that the hall stood for and the need for safeguarding "The British way of life."

Rev. Coates then expressed the high appreciation of the Trustees of the work done by the builder (Mr. Keith Ross), the architects (Messrs Brown and Mowbray), the honorary building director (Mr. Gar Jones), and all others who had helped with the hall.

Rev. Doust conveyed the good wishes of the Property Department. He said that Jesus was the Master of life. Jesus had said that God was the God of the living. Then men who gave their lives "lived on."

"It was the thought of life that was in my mind when I noted the interest taken by the children here to-day," he said. "It is in their interests that we are here."

LIFE AGENT

Rev. Doust added that there were evil forces that would wreck the Church but the Church had 2000 years of history behind it and if the Church were removed from life it would "tear the heart out of Democracy."

After the singing of a closing hymn, "Jesus with Thy Church abide," Mr. Jennings presented Rev. Doust with "An anthology 'Australia Writes' (T. Inglis Moore) and a book on Forbes on behalf of the Mayor (Ald. Gunn).

Mr. Jennings said: "We hope to