

St. James', Binda: Patronal Festival

The Patron Festival of St. James' Church—the parish church of the Parish of Binda—was celebrated on Thursday last, July 25th, the occasion being indeed a memorable one.

THE celebrations included a service of Holy Communion at 10.30 a.m., Evensong at 4.30 p.m., a parish tea at 6 p.m., and a concert and social, which occupied the period from 8 p.m. till midnight.

The special visitor for the festival was Ven. Archdeacon C. S. Robertson, of Canberra; but no less welcome were two of the previous rectors of the parish—Rev. H. Hawkins (of Marulan) and Rev. Canon G. A. M. Nell (of Crookwell).

An apology for the absence of yet another former rector, Rev. E. Cutcliffe—who is still engaged in military duties—was received.

Main interest attached to the occasion was that in connection with the opening and dedication of the Lych-gate, stone wall and imposing entrance to the church, which ceremony was performed by Ven. Archdeacon Robertson.

A large number assembled at the very ornate entrance gate for this ceremony, after which an abbreviated Evensong service was held in the church.

Ven. Archdeacon Robertson, who delivered the special address, reminded the members of the congregation that their forefathers—pioneers of the district—had builded a church where they could come and worship, where they could be confirmed, where they could be united in marriage—and in doing so had chosen St. James' as Patron Saint.

To-day, said the speaker, we are worshipping in a place where those grand people once worshipped, and we think of the laying of the foundation stone. Somehow he felt their presence.

He recalled that he had visited the parish twenty-one years ago and, he said, you were building then. He had visited the parish on a number of occasions since and always he had noticed evidence of progress. There had never been stagnation.

He referred to Rev. Canon Nell and Rev. Whiting as two former colleagues whose work in Canberra he valued highly.

former colleagues whose work in Canberra he valued highly. Both had ministered in the Parish of Binda, and both had left their mark.

The parishioners should be very proud of the Lych-gate. All concerned were to be congratulated, including the architect and the builder. The gate was a symbol of the generosity of the generation and the love in their hearts.

The gate was dedicated as a memorial to past worshippers of St. James' Church.

The parish tea, which was served in the Binda Memorial Hall, was a very happy and well-attended function.

Speeches were made by each of the clergy present.

The Rev. T. E. Whiting, rector, welcomed the guests, and in doing so, paid a fitting and graceful tribute to the work of his predecessors in the Parish of Binda.

Ven. Archdeacon Robertson expressed his keen appreciation of being invited to Binda for the occasion. It was a source of great personal pleasure to him to be associated again with two of his former assistant priests. He congratulated the people of Binda not only on the progress which the occasion marked, but on the achievements of the past.

In convincing manner the Rev. H. Hawkins expressed his admiration of the Parish of Binda, which he described as the best parish by far in his experience of the rural parishes.

He recalled many happy and sacred memories of the past, and paid a glowing tribute to his old rector, the Rev. N. Hetherington, in whose place he had been appointed in 1912.

Rev. Hawkins also spoke feelingly of the late Mrs. Harry Branson, better known as "Aunt Tom," whose memory, he thought, should be commemorated in some tangible way.

The Rev. Canon Nell endorsed all that had been said in relation to his old parish, his predecessors, and the very fine people whom the memorial Lych gate commemorated. He, too, supported the suggestion of a memorial to the late Mrs. Harry Branson.

At this stage the rector asked the Rev. Hawkins to present to Mr. and Mrs. J. I. Webster, late of "Hyde Park," a gift from the people of St. James' Church, at which Mr. Webster served for many years as rector's warden.

The gift, a silver cake dish,

was suitably inscribed.

In asking their acceptance of the gift, Rev. Hawkins expressed the hope that Mr. and Mrs.

the gift, Rev. Hawkins expressed the hope that Mr. and Mrs. Webster would enjoy many happy years in their retirement.

In reply, Mr. Webster, on behalf of himself and Mrs. Webster, thanked all their old friends for their kindness, adding that he hoped to return often to Binda, his old parish.

He recalled with pride great people of St. James' in the past and spoke feelingly of the late Mrs. Harry Branson.

Mr. James Carr (rector's warden) proposed a vote of thanks to the visitors, which was supported by Mr. Geo. King.

An impromptu concert followed, most acceptable items being contributed by Messrs. H. Herbert (senior and junior), Misses L. Branson and H. Bates, Mrs. S. McMahon and Messrs. G. Kerridge, N. Pagett, C. Branson and E. Davies.

Music for the dance which followed was provided by Mrs. J. Baxter, of Crookwell.

A very happy party was brought to a conclusion at midnight, when Rev. T. E. Whiting expressed thanks to all who had assisted in making the day's festival such a happy success.