

SPECIAL SERVICES THIS WEEKEND

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Centenary

On Sunday next, September 13, at 11 a.m. the moderator, the Rev. W. A. Alston, will conduct the first of a series of services and meetings to mark the centenary of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cecil Street. Mr Justice Dean will be the speaker at 3 p.m., and the Rev. R. W. Stephens will be the evening preacher.

A Re-union Social and Conversazione will be held on Wednesday, September 16, and a choral concert will be presented by the Presbyterian Oratorio Choir on Saturday, 19th. The week of celebrations will conclude with special services and a Sunday School reunion on Sunday, 20th.

The first services were held in 1853 in a boat shed where the Customs House now stands. One of the first ministers to officiate was the Rev. J. Reid, father of the Hon. George Reid. The first organised services were conducted by the Rev. Allan McVean, who officiated for six months. He was succeeded by the Rev. William Henderson, who was inducted into the charge as the first settled minister in September, 1853.

Notable for long pastorates, the church has had only six ministers in 100 years. Mr Henderson continued to be minister until 1857, when he accepted a call to Ballarat. In 1858 the Rev. John Clark began his ministry in Williamstown, and continued to be minister for the long period

of 37 years. It was in 1858 that the congregation commissioned Mr Ross, the architect, to draw up plans for a church similar to the Wesleyan Church in St. Kilda, with a spire like to that of the Rev. Mr Hetherington's in Collins St., Melbourne. This spire, however, has never been built. It was decided to open the new church on June 10, 1860. The opening was to be celebrated by a soiree and a special train was engaged to bring the visitors from Melbourne.

It soon became apparent that the masonry had not been well executed and in 1869 it was decided to rebuild the church which was reopened for divine worship on Sunday, 5th March,

1871.

In 1879 the Rev. John Clark founded the Literary and Scientific Association, popularly known as "the Lits," which played an important part in the cultural life of Williamstown for 60 years.

The Sunday School was established about the same time as the church and the first superintendent was Captain Ferguson (first harbor master). There were 17 teachers and 130 scholars on the roll. Other early superintendents were Mr James Russell (a headmaster of the Williamstown State School) and Mr D. Y. Syme. In later years Mr J. Cameron, Mr C. F. Geer, Mr J. Faichney and Mr E. A. Anderson acted

and Mr E. A. Anderson acted in this capacity.

In 1902 Mr Cameron inaugurated the Boys' Brigade and, under the instruction of Gunner Kearns, the brigade not only attained a great degree of proficiency, but was in request at public functions, and won well deserved praise.

The Rev. John Clark retired in March, 1895, and was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Murray. In 1905 Mr Murray was honored by being asked to conduct Dr. Rentoul's class at Ormond College, in the absence of the professor in the Old Country.

An excellent institution is the band of young men who act as ushers. It was on the suggestion of the Rev. Robert Murray in 1908 that this good work was begun.

The first mention of a tennis court for the young people was made in 1909, but it was some years later before the court was laid.

The Rev. Robert Murray passed away on October 9, 1915, after a lingering illness, to the deep sorrow of the congregation and the people of Williamstown. The Rev. Thomas Brown was inducted to succeed Mr Murray on April 27, 1916.

Following the return of servicemen from the First World War, a Memorial Hall was erected and opened by Capt. Mitchell on December 11, 1920. This hall has been extensively used by the young men of the church and by associated or-

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