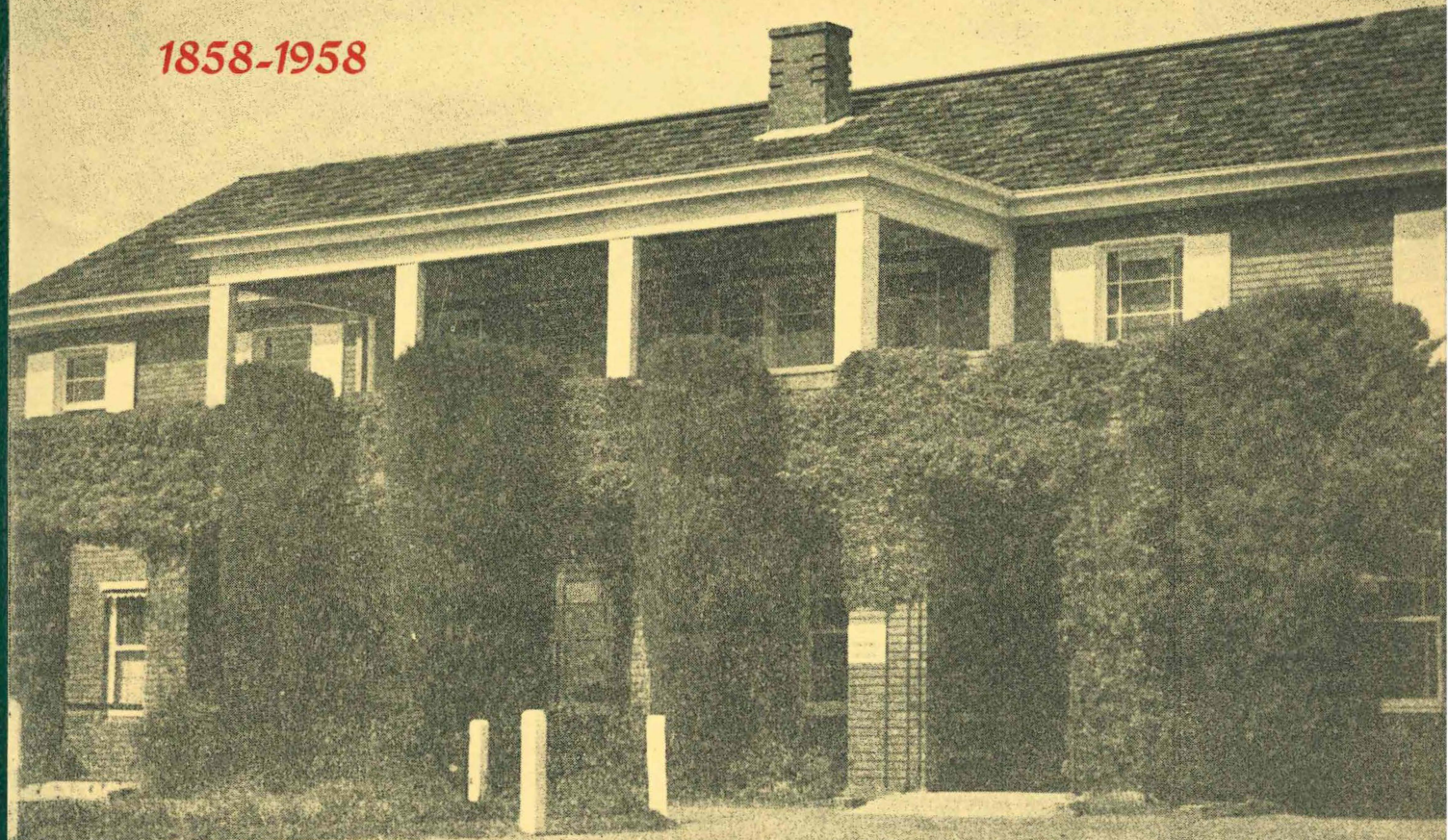


1858-1958



*Stawell District Hospital Centenary*

THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

*gratefully acknowledges the services of*

Mr. A. E. HEAL

*who compiled and wrote this History of the Hospital*

*and*

Mr. W. J. CHAPMAN

*who prepared and donated Photographs used in this publication*

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*Printed at the Office of "The Stawell Times"*

MR. G. P. FRENCHAM

*President of the Stawell District  
Hospital, 1958*



Mr. Frencham was elected to the Committee of Management in 1932 and has served the Hospital in this capacity for the past 26 years. During this period he has held Presidential Office three times: — 1937-38, 1945-46, and 1958.



# Stawell District Hospital 1858-1958

We are celebrating the Centenary of the Stawell District Hospital (1858-1958), but it is extremely difficult to envisage the scene when the emergency Hospital was erected on Doctor's Hill when there was a population of double that of the Town of Stawell as we know it today. It was canvas town in its most primitive surroundings. Dense scrub covered the countryside, large trees soared upwards, and tents were roped together to prevent children straying and becoming lost in the "wilder-ness". Tents were also roped to the trees to prevent them blowing away. A total absence of sanitation and poor water added up to much sickness and a high mortality rate. Was it any wonder that cries went up for the establishment of a Hospital to cater for the bodily needs of the people?

It was a modest beginning, but it was the foundation of the Hospital system which has gone on uninterruptedly for 100 years. First it was a small 12 bed Emergency Hospital, then it launched out as the Pleasant Creek Hospital, then came the Stawell Hospital and Benevolent Asylum; later the Benevolent Asylum was dropped and we had the Stawell Hospital, and finally its title became the Stawell District Hospital. That's as we know it today.

Throughout its long history capable medical and

nursing staffs have given tremendous service, and leading members of the community have always been ready to shoulder official positions and places on the Board of Management, and the same applies to the Ladies' Auxiliary. Service has always been the watchword.

Rather strangely, when the hospital movement was launched in 1858, a male nurse (Mr. Hayes) was in charge, and in the Centenary Year (1958) a lady (Mrs. F. Plaisted) was appointed to the Board of Management—the first time in its history.

In the Centenary Year we have a local native (Mr. G. P. Frencham) in the Presidential Chair, and there are a number of other "natives" on the Board and filling official positions. Mr. R. Stone, the capable Secretary, has done splendidly since he assumed office, and is a worthy successor to past Secretaries like C. B. Playford, Mrs. G. Wright and others.

The Hospital movement had a modest beginning. The Pleasant Creek Mining District spread from Glenorchy to Great Western, and fanned outwardly to the large runs held by the early selectors. The principal centres were Commercial Street, Quartz Reefs, and Deep Lead, and there were innumerable smaller rushes. The conditions under which the miners, their wives and families lived were

primitive, and sanitation and hygiene hardly counted. The idea of a Hospital to care for the bodily needs of the people of the Pleasant Creek Mining District was touched off by the fact that in March, 1858, there was a population of approximately 15,000, and the warden reported that there was a good deal of sickness and mortality was high. It made public men of the day think, and the result was that it was decided to explore the possibility of having a hospital—if only a temporary one—erected. All parts of the district were “sounded” and the result was that an all-embracing committee was formed; it consisted of 61 men. They had many preliminary meetings, and the outcome was that a unanimous decision to build the Hospital was reached.

On the 2nd August, 1858, the committee held its final meeting, and the minutes thereof are interesting. They show that Mr. Buchanan was in the chair, and Mr. Henry J. Smith was appointed Secretary pro tem. Mr. Jenkins thought there should be a public meeting. It was proposed by Mr. Jenkins, seconded by Mr. Campbell, “That a memorial be sent to Mr. Fenwick requesting him to convene a public meeting, to be held in the Olympic Theatre, Deep Lead, on Saturday next, 7th August, 1858. Carried. The following was the memorial sent to the Resident Warden (Mr. Fenwick):

“Sir,—We the undersigned, being members of a preliminary committee appointed for the pur-

pose of establishing a Hospital on Pleasant Creek, do hereby request that you will convene a public meeting for that purpose to be held at the Olympic Theatre on Saturday next at 3 o'clock.”

Messrs. A. B. Clemes, H. Buchanan and C. B. Playford were appointed to convey the memorial to Mr. Fenwick.

It was proposed by Mr. Jenkins that Mr. Fenwick, P.M., be President, and an amendment by Mr. Clemes favoured Judge Clark. Mr. Fenwick, however, gained the decision.

Mr. Buchanan was appointed Vice-President, as also was T. Jenkins, Esq., gold receiver.

Mr. Stewart was nominated as Treasurer, Mr. Clemes, Corresponding Secretary, and Mr. Smith, as Minute Secretary.

The Committee was: Messrs. A. B. Clemes (Deep Lead), C. Playford (Deep Lead), Halifax, Childe, Cr. Candiollis, McDonald, Smith, D'Arcy, Christian, Williamson, Inr., Walton, Johnson, Wells, Straus, McClure, Watson, Malcolm, Croker, Dr. Brisbane, Guitterrey (Rees), Campbell, Pond, Codd (Wimmera Machine), Douglas, Jenkins, Scallan (Reefs), Pace, Pine (Deep Lead), Crozier (Oriental Bank), Rose (Union Bank), Meredith (Four Posts), Blyth (Ledcourt Station), Campbell (miner), Patterson (miner), Cameron (miner), Nalder (Reefs), Arnold, P. Stewart (Stewart & Thomas), Dr. Colquhoun, Mr. Cameron, Kenneth Campbell, McCameron, Williams, Rev. Mr. Barrett, Hill, McAllister, Dermer, Simpson, McNamara, Sirr,



Mr. A. B. Clemes (left  
and Mr. R. H. Buchanan  
(right). Founders of the  
Stawell Hospital.



Davis, Broughton, Dean, Boyle, Gibbin, James Stewart (London Chartered Bank).

#### DECISION TO BUILD HOSPITAL

The meeting was duly held in the Olympic Theatre, Main Street, Deep Lead, and the attendance was fully representative of the different centres of the scattered district. Mr. W. Fenwick, the

District Warden, explained to the meeting that it was the desire of the promoters to have a temporary Hospital erected to cater for the bodily needs of the people of the Pleasant Creek mining district, and Messrs. Clemes, Buchanan, and Playford told of the work of a committee that had given considerable thought and study to the question. There was general agreement amongst

those present, and when a motion had been submitted and debated the Chairman placed it before the meeting and it was unanimously carried amidst scenes of great excitement. It gave the miners, their wives and families a feeling of confidence and security. The next step was the question of finance, and as a start the hat was sent round the room, and when the collection was counted it was found that amongst the coins and notes included there were no less than 60 golden sovereigns, some of which were minted in Sydney and others in England, and there were also pound notes, etc. It was an excellent start, and it gave the promoters great heart to continue the effort. Collectors were appointed to "comb" the different centres for donations, and Mr. Chas. W. Playford was appointed General Collector and Secretary, and a plan of campaign was drawn up so that the whole district would be covered. Money was freely subscribed, and it was decided to go ahead with the building. Plans were prepared and arrangements were put in hand to have the temporary Hospital in readiness for the reception of patients at the earliest moment. The site for the Hospital was quickly determined, and it was on Doctor's Hill, midway between Commercial Street and the Main Street of Deep Lead. (Doctor's Hill and Doctor's Point were named after a doctor who camped there about 1857.)

Before the end of the year over £600 had been subscribed by miners and the squatters.

The Hospital quickly took shape, and in slightly over 6 months from the date the meeting was held to consider the proposal, the Hospital was completed and the doors thrown open for the reception of patients, and what is worthy of note is the fact that it was free of debt. It was a great pioneering effort.

A provisional committee was formed at the meeting on 7th August, 1858, and it did an excellent job in having the Hospital erected, furnished and ready for patients by the 26th February, 1859.

A smooth start was made, and miners were able to sleep soundly and with the thought that if sickness or accident befell either them or their families the Hospital was there to care for them until they were restored to health.

#### PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT

In a period of 12 months, the population of the Pleasant Creek mining district had dwindled by 7,000—15,000 to 8,000—and the Warden reported that there were 5,550 males, 900 females, 1,000 children, and 600 Chinese on the field when the Hospital commenced to function.

In the beginning of March, 1859, the Provisional Committee, having set the wheels in motion, considered it was time that permanent officers were appointed, and at a meeting of subscribers on 5th March gave an outline of what had been achieved

to date and what was hoped for in the future.

Their report stated:—

“The Provisional Committee of the Pleasant Creek Hospital have called this public meeting of the subscribers and contributors to the Hospital in order that Trustees may be duly elected according to the Government regulations relating to the Charitable Institutions in order that the Government grant of land and funds in aid of the Hospital may be achieved.

“Your Committee have also to request that you will now elect a Managing Committee to carry on the affairs of the Hospital, as they consider that the object for which they were elected has been fully completed, viz., by the erection of the Hospital and furnishing the same ready for the occupation of patients, which was done on the 26th of last month (February, 1859).

“The present building has been put up as a temporary building. It contains three rooms adapted to hold from 12 to 16 beds, also an apartment for the nurse and his wife, a kitchen and a surgery, with the necessary outbuildings, the entire cost of which will be £365.

“Your Committee have furnished the Hospital sufficiently for the accommodation of 12 indoor patients, the cost of which will be £130—and beg to invite public inspection of same.

“Your Committee have also arranged for the medical treatment and medicines for out-door patients and the necessary arrangements for the

carrying on of the affairs of the Hospital until a Managing Committee shall have been formed.

“Your Committee beg to annex their account to the 4th inst. (March, 1859), by which it will be seen that the collections towards the Hospital have amounted to £618/9/11; of this sum they have expended £301 in the building of the Hospital and the extra outbuildings which are in course of erection will cost £63/10/.

“Your Committee have expended £41/16/- in furnishing the Hospital and there is also due for furniture the sum of £88. The expenses of printing, wages, stores, etc., amounts to £111/13/2. The above items, together with £5 that was afforded by way of out-door relief (the Hospital at the time not being near complete) to a man that had met with a serious accident, will reduce the available balance in the hands of the Treasurer to the small sum of £5/10/9.

“Your Committee have, however, much pleasure to inform you that the Legislative Assembly have voted £1,500 towards the maintenance fund of the Hospital, being three times the amount privately collected during the year 1858.

“Your Committee have endeavoured to make the Hospital as complete and useful as the smallness of its funds would admit, and would beg to take this opportunity to remark that, as the great proportion of the persons who will be desirous of becoming patients will be amongst the working classes, they would impress very forcibly on them



the desirability of an institution which will doubtless prove of such incalculable benefit to them, and trust that the appeal will create a determination on their part to contribute some portion of their earnings to its support.

"Your Committee feel it their duty to express their grateful acknowledgment of our late Warden; to Mr. Buchanan, to Mr. Clemes, and the several gentlemen of the Quartz Reefs for their assistance and liberality, particularly to Messrs. Broughton and Guterrez and the other gentlemen connected with the Amateur Performances which added so considerably to the Hospital funds.

"In conclusion, your Committee beg to submit a list of persons whom it is thought are well suited to the appointments for which they are respectfully named, and who will use their best exertions for the benefit of the Hospital should you desire to elect them, viz.:

Patron: His Excellency Sir Henry Barclay.

President: The Warden of the District.

Vice-Presidents: H. E. Jenkins and R. Buchanan.

Trustees: Richard Codd, Ronald Campbell, William Pond, David Scallan, Charles Williamson, Jr.

Hon. Treasurer: James Stewart, London Chartered Bank.

Hon. Surgeons: Dr. Robert Colquhoun, Dr. Archd. McDonald, Dr. Brisbane and Dr. Severimes Guscetti.

Secretary and Collector: Chas. B. Playford.

Committee of Management: A. B. Clemes, John Childe, P. D'Arcy, J. W. Guterrez, Jas. Wm. Nalder, Rev. Davis, Joseph Broughton, John R. McQueen, Jas. W. Rose, B. S. Dawson and G. Magnus."

All the above Officers were to become a Committee of Management.

The above was the first report on the Hospital Movement ever presented in the Stawell District (the Pleasant Creek Mining District) and it was signed by Chas. B. Playford, Secretary and Collector, and was dated 5th March, 1859.

The medical men generally were, like the miners (indeed some of them were as much concerned with the winning of gold as they were with the winning of people back to good health) birds of passage, and of the four mentioned as likely surgeons only Dr. Robt. Colquhoun remained long on the scene, and he had a long and honourable association with the Pleasant Creek Hospital.

## THE HOSPITAL

A photo. of the Hospital shows the main building set in rather inhospitable surroundings, with a large gum tree in the rear; on the left was the dispensary, and the right, side by side, were two rooms, one of which was the kitchen and the other for the male nurse and his wife. Further to the left was the doctor's "residence" and another framed tent. It was an interesting set up, and the miners were



Site of the temporary Hospital at Doctor's Hill

justifiably proud of their Hospital, which was the commencement of the Hospital Movement in this district. Though small, it did a great humanitarian service.

#### BOUNDARIES FOR COLLECTING

In 1859 the Pleasant Creek and Ararat Hospitals were functioning, and it was the desire of the two Committees to avoid overlapping in the matter of collecting. Accordingly, representatives of both Hospitals met and allotted boundaries in which

collecting for the two Hospitals should take place. It worked smoothly for a time, but Ararat soon broke the agreement and encroached on the Pleasant Creek Hospital's district. This led to the Pleasant Creek Hospital Committee having the following advertisement inserted in "The Pioneer Mooramabel and Avoca Advertiser" on Friday, 30th May, 1862 (there was no newspaper published in the Pleasant Creek district at the time):—

"The public are hereby informed that the *Boundaries* (Boundaries in capital letters) agreed to in 1859 by the Committees of the Ararat and Pleasant Creek Hospitals are as follow:—

#### Temporary Hospital erected 1858



Pleasant Creek to include Great Western diggings, Concongella, Six Mile Creek and Glenoroylen Stations, Navarre Township, Navarre Diggings, Glasgow Lead and all places to the Northward. Ararat to include Allanvale and Woodlands Stations, Crowlands Township, Glen Dhu Reef, Malakoff Diggings, and all places to the Southward. The residents of those places in the Pleasant Creek district are respectfully informed that Mr. Playford will continue to call on them on behalf of this Hospital. This notice is necessary in consequence of the Committee of the Ararat Hospital having intimated their intention of not adhering to the boundaries agreed upon. The above advertisement appeared over the signature of Ronald Campbell, President, and was dated 24th May, 1862.

#### MAP OF PLEASANT CREEK DISTRICT

When Mr. Playford was appointed Secretary and Collector in 1858 he drew up a map of the district to assist him in his work. It was carried out in his usual painstaking manner and showed the main centres in the large and scattered district, and any student of the early history of the district will not have any difficulty in seeing the large area he traversed.

Only the main centres are mentioned on the map, but there were innumerable small rushes, all of which were paid a visit by the Collector. It was obvious why some of the names were applied.

For instance, there were Starve Gut, Poverty Point and Poverty Hill, which were indicative of poor shows; Welshmans, Germania, and so on. All the tents, it is recorded, were visited, and the response was generous. The figures recorded in the early balance sheet showed how thorough had been Mr. Playford's canvass of the district.

#### THE HOSPITAL'S FIRST YEAR

A point of interest in the first year's operations of the Hospital was the fact that a male nurse (Mr. Hayes) was employed, and his wife helped on the domestic side, and they had accommodation provided for them in a room at one side of the Hospital. The miners on the field were a cosmopolitan lot and were representative of various nationalities. There was a period in 1860 when there were 600 Chinese on the field. The doors of the Hospital were open to all, and in that memorable first year (1859) quite a varying collection of humanity took advantage of the facilities provided. Although widely separated, Quartz Reefs, Commercial Street, Deep Lead and the smaller leads had the needs of their sick residents ministered and the consensus of opinion was that the Hospital had faithfully carried out the object for which it was erected. It was well that it was only intended as a temporary Hospital, for by the end of 1860 the Pleasant Creek Mining District had petered out. Deep Lead and Commercial Street were deserted, and the only section of the field with any permanency was Quartz Reefs.

## THE FIRST BALANCE SHEET

On the 11th January, 1860, the first balance sheet of the Pleasant Creek Hospital was presented, and it was rather an interesting document, with the proviso, E. and O.E., at the foot thereof. It was quite a common practice in the early days to attach E. and O.E. (errors and omissions excepted) to financial documents. The balance sheet was as follows:—

RECEIPTS		
To Balance from 31st Dec., 1858	£508	13 7
„ Miscellaneous Receipts . . . . .	31	0 7
„ Subscriptions Collected on the Diggings . . . . .	279	12 0
„ Subscriptions Collected in the Pastoral Districts . . . . .	533	1 2
„ First and Second Instalments of Government Grant for 1859 of £500 each . . . . .	1,080	0 0
„ of £500 each . . . . .	1,000	0 0
(£500—the third instalment paid in on the 6th January, 1860.)		
E. and O.E. CHAS. B. PLAYFORD, 11th January, 1860.		
We have audited the above items and found them correct. I. A. RIACH, Wm. H. HOOKE.		
		£2,352 7 4

EXPENDITURE		
By Provisions . . . . .	£305	1 10
„ Medicines . . . . .	105	1 4
„ Surgical Instruments, etc. . . . .	20	7 6
„ Building . . . . .	460	9 1
„ Furniture and Bedding . . . . .	252	4 1
„ Salaries and Wages . . . . .	453	4 10
„ Advertising and Printing . . . . .	22	14 6
„ Stationery and Postages . . . . .	8	17 2
„ Funeral Expenses . . . . .	29	0 0
„ Wood and Water . . . . .	27	7 0
„ Miscellaneous Expenses . . . . .	79	19 3
		£1,764 6 7
Balance in Hand—		
In the Bank, 31st Dec.	£712	4 9
Deduct Outstanding		
Cheque . . . . .	192	15 6
		519 9 3
Collected but not paid in . . . . .	58	11 6
Cheque not yet cashed . . . . .	10	0 0
		£2,352 7 4

# First Annual Report . . .

The Committee, in pointing out the district which has aided the Hospital, and which they trust it is calculated to benefit, deem it needless to refer to the great utility of an institution of this nature to places so far removed from any large town, it being so generally acknowledged, or to enter into a long report on the subject, but merely remark that since the opening of the Hospital, on the 26th February last, that patients have been received from every part of the district, which includes the Pleasant Creek, Great Western, and Navarre Diggings, the Townships of Horsham, Glenorchy and Navarre, and all the Stations in a north and west direction, until it reaches the Adelaide boundary and the Mallee (excepting small portions which are more conveniently situated to the Maryborough Hospital, and the Portland Benevolent Asylum) there not being anything else of the kind towards the interior of the Colony.

During the past nine months 67 patients have been admitted; of this number, 42 have been cured or relieved, 11 have died, and 14 remained in the Hospital at the end of the year, besides 27 persons who have not required to become indoor patients, but have received advice and medicine.

Your Committee, with a view to placing the Hospital in as complete a state of affairs as possible,

to meet all emergencies, have sent an order to London for a complete equipment of surgical instruments and appliances, which the objects of the institution may require.

Your Committee have to remark that with reference to the money affairs of the Hospital, that the present building is only of a temporary nature, and that it will soon be incumbent on your future Committee to erect a permanent and more extensive building, for which purpose the Executive Government have been applied to for an additional grant of £1,000 for building purposes—the amount of private subscriptions to enable those sums to be received having been already nearly collected during the year 1859.

Your Committee beg further to acquaint you that a grant of five acres of land has been made by the Government in the vicinity of Stawell, but your Committee, pending the long vexed question of the township, thought it made advisable to erect the temporary Hospital on the Doctor's Hill as being then the most central situation, and beg to remark that the plan adopted of building, in the first instance, a temporary Hospital, though incurring considerable additional expense, has given general satisfaction, having enabled much suffering to be relieved during the past year, and it must even now

be some months before a permanent building can be ready for the reception of patients.

(The foregoing were main points in the first annual report.)

### FIRST OFFICERS

The following were the Officers appointed at the first annual meeting:—

*Patron*—His Excellency Sir Henry Barclay.

*President*—Mr. Richard Codd.

*Vice-Presidents*—H. E. Jenkins and J. E. Dobson.

*Trustees*—Richard Codd, Samuel John Davidson, Ronald Campbell, David Scallan, Charles Williamson, Jnr.

*Honorary Treasurer*—The Manager of the Oriental Bank.

*Honorary Surgeons*—Archibald McDonald, E. J. Bennett, Theodus L. Molony, George Bull.

*Committee of Management*—A. B. Clemes, John Childe, P. D'Arcy, J. W. J. Gutierrez, F. W. Nalder, G. C. Chalmers, John Allen, Robert Keiley, A. Louttit, E. H. Sirr, Z. Davies, Jos. Broughton, J. W. Rose, B. S. Dawson, Robert Dane, G. Magnus, W. H. Hooke, William Decmer, George Lamond, T. R. Hodges, James Scoullar, Frederick Ashton.

*Resident Surgeon*—Robert Colquhoun.

*Secretary and Collector*—Charles B. Playford.

The decision to build the temporary Hospital led to a great deal of expense, but it gave the greatest

satisfaction to all concerned. The working miner, who was a large participator in the benefits the Hospital conferred, was expected to be one of the largest contributors towards its upkeep, was the smallest contributor towards the support of the institution, which, it was felt, may be his home and asylum in sickness and suffering. The Committee made a point of commenting on this anomaly. Probably this was due to the fact that the miners belonged to a floating section of the community and their stay in any locality was rather limited. At the period under review the Pleasant Creek Mining District, as such, was practically played out and the only section with any degree of permanency was the Quartz Reefs.

The humanitarian work carried out in the first year's operations of the temporary Hospital was acclaimed, and there was a general feeling of pride and satisfaction at the way in which the medical and domestic duties were carried out. The general work can be appreciated when it is stated that accident cases and practically "every ill the flesh is heir to" were sympathetically and skilfully treated; in fact the nature of the complaints were listed under 32 headings, and of the 67 people treated, 42 were discharged cured or relieved, 11 died, and 14 were "carried forward to the next year".

The pattern of the second year's operations was similar to that of 1859, but almost double the number of patients were treated with marked



**Mr. Richard Codd**  
**First Civilian President**



**Dr. R. Colquhoun**  
**First Resident Doctor**



**Mr. Chas. Playford**  
**First Secretary**

success, and this at a time when the Pleasant Creek Mining District had virtually ceased to exist as a district, and the main portion that was being exploited was the Quartz Reefs along the western slope of Big Hill. Of the 125 patients treated, 105 were cured or relieved, six died, and 14 were transferred for further treatment to the permanent Hospital about to be erected.

In the two years of the emergency Hospital there were 192 in-patients and 96 out-patients and 147 of the in-patients were cured or relieved, and there were only 17 deaths—a tribute to the skill of the doctors and nurses. Fourteen were still patients when the new Hospital came into being.

The work of the Board of Management entailed a large amount of self-sacrifice on the part of the members of the Board of Management, as was evident from the fact that in 1860 there were 41 meetings, viz., 32 general, 4 special and 5 adjourned. Of these, 31 were held at The Reefs (as the eastern side of Stawell was then known), and 11 at Commercial Street (three miles out on the left-hand side of the Grampians Road).

The temporary Hospital was barely sufficient to cater for the needs of those who desired to become in-patients, but many others received treatment as out-patients. It was a great achievement.

Whilst the general affairs of the Hospital were splendidly administered in 1860, the Board of Management had the added responsibility of providing a permanent Hospital in the now more popu-

lous part of the district, i.e., in close proximity to the township of Stawell (on the spot where the Pleasant Creek Special School now stands). It was an ideal spot—quiet, picturesque, and easy of access by residents of the surrounding districts.

The Government generously gazetted 10 acres of land for the purpose, and the Board, after giving the matter careful and mature consideration, accepted the design of Messrs. Turnbull and Somner, of Charat, for the new building. They considered this “combined the fittest and most approved arrangement of the interior with respect to the comfort of the patients, together with external architectural propriety, and which nearly approached the limit of price which the Committee considered themselves justified in offering”.

The contract for the building was taken by the firm of Ross and Strachan at a cost of £1,940.

## FOUNDATION STONE OF PERMANENT HOSPITAL

The foundation stone of the permanent Hospital was laid with great pomp and ceremony in 1860, and with Masonic honours—a custom much in vogue in those days.

The scroll in the foundation stone of the new Hospital, opened in 1861, read:—

“This foundation stone of the Pleasant Creek Hospital, in the Wimmera District, in the Colony



of Victoria, was laid by the Brethren of the Ophir Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons on Monday, the 31st day of December, in the year of Our Lord 1860, and in the 24th year of the reign of Our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria, Sir Henry Barclay, Knight Commander of the Bath, being Governor-in-Chief and Captain-General of the said Colony.

"This institution was established on the 7th day of August, 1858, and opened for the reception of patients by means of a temporary Hospital on the 26th February, 1859, being supported by voluntary contributions.

"The Architects of the building are Thomas Turnbull and George Blackie Lorimer, and the builders thereof James Ross and George Strachan.

"There are deposited herewith the following current coins of the Realm and of this Colony issued in the name of Her Present Majesty —

- A Sovereign, Sydney Mint, N.S.W.
- A Half Sovereign, Sydney Mint, N.S.W.
- A Sovereign, English Mint.
- A Half Sovereign, English Mint.

In Gold.

- A Crown, English Mint.
- Half Crown, English Mint.
- Florin, English Mint.
- Shilling, English Mint.
- Sixpence, English Mint.
- Four-Penny Piece, English Mint.
- Three-penny Piece, English Mint.

In Silver.

- A Penny, English Mint.
- Half-Penny, English Mint.
- Farthing, English Mint.

In Copper.

"Also the first Annual Report of the Committee of Management of the Pleasant Creek Hospital and of the Rules of same for 1860, and a list of subscribers and donations for 1859.

"Also copies of the Melbourne daily 'Argus', 'Herald' and 'Age', and likewise of the 'Mount Ararat Advertiser' and 'Bill's Life of Victoria', all bearing the date the 28th December, 1860."

"He that has pity upon the poor,  
Lendeth unto the Lord."

## TEMPORARY HOSPITAL SUMMARISED

At the close of the second and final year's operations the Committee was able to study in retrospect the results achieved by the temporary Hospital. When it commenced operations it ministered to the bodily needs of 15,000 inhabitants; when it gave way to the permanent building mining had so slumped that the population had dwindled to between 5,000 and 6,000 in the far-flung Pleasant Creek mining district, and the majority of these were on the Quartz Reefs, situated  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles from where the Hospital was built.



Pleasant Creek Hospital, erected 1861

Let the Committee tell in its own language what it thought of the past two year's operations:—

“Your Committee feel satisfied that the tangible results of their management will be sufficient proof that they have laboured diligently to deserve the confidence which you have reposed in them. In the execution of the most important business of the year, viz., the choice of design for, and the erection of, the new Hospital, the Committee have thus far been perfectly successful, and they leave to those who succeed them, the task of watching its rise and completion. Your Committee cannot impress too forcibly upon your minds the importance of this charity, which, in many cases, under our present social system, has to supply the place of home and friends to those who, in their sufferings, stand most in need of both; and they sincerely hope that the success which has hitherto attended it may be an earnest of that which shall attend it as long as it may last. Those gentlemen who may form the Board for the present year will find entrusted to their care a Hospital whose Officers are skilful and efficient in the performance of their duties, whose surgical apparatus is of the newest and most improved description, and whose accommodation for patients, in the course of a few months, will be in every way complete. With these advantages and a healthy exchequer, they may soon expect to see the Pleasant Creek Hospital rise out in bright relief an ornament to the neighbourhood and a blessing to the District.”

The anticipations of the Committee were fully realised.

## NEW HOSPITAL EMERGES

The year 1861 had not far advanced when the new Hospital to serve the needs of the Pleasant Creek district was complete and ready for occupation by patients. By comparison, it marked a tremendous advance in every way on the preliminary Hospital on Doctor's Hill. Originally it was intended to confine building to wards for male and female, attendants' rooms, surgeons' rooms, bath-rooms, operating room, bedrooms, dispensary and a committee room in one compact whole, but the exigency of the position demanded an enlargement of the scheme.

The building in itself was considered admirable for the pressing needs of the population, but not altogether complete in all requirements. The Committee, therefore, added, at a further outlay of £570, a compact building immediately at the back, but separated from the main building, containing a kitchen fitted with every requisite, wash-house, laundry, store rooms for the effects of patients, men's lavatory, etc., in the composition of which the material of the old temporary Hospital entered largely. The Committee also had cause to be excavated an excellent water tank to a depth of 21 ft. with its dome shaped top and hand pump capable of holding over 16,000 gallons of water, and thereby



Dr. and Mrs. W. H.  
Syme, Donors of the  
Syme Wards



a tremendous saving was made in the expenditure on water for the institutions. The town at this time—or rather the settlement—was without a permanent water supply, and the dome-shaped tanks were features on the landscape.

The new—or permanent—Hospital was opened amidst scenes of great joy, and the population looked upon it with confidence and admiration. As was the case with the temporary Hospital, it was felt

that the mining section of the Community was not pulling its weight in providing the revenue to carry on, and the Committee made this pointed remark:—

“The Committee feel bound to make an especial appeal to the inhabitants of the district goldfields, whose subscriptions in this, as in former years, suffer by comparison with those of the pastoral country; while at the same time, the class of patients—chiefly serious accidents—furnished by them are the

most expensive cases in their treatment. It is to be hoped that the miners in this district will show by increased liberality their recognition of benefits already conferred, and their recognition of the fact that any moment of their week-day lives may see them glad to avail themselves of its aid."

The Committee had a "carry over" of 14 patients from the old Hospital, and it was soon apparent that the demands on the new Hospital were going to be much greater than previously, both as regards in-patients and out-patients, and at times the medical, nursing and domestic staffs were severely taxed, but they faced up to their tasks with energy and the utmost ability. In this year no less than 147 in-patients and 152 out-patients were treated, and of these 21 were rheumatic cases; in the first three years rheumatism was the leading ailment amongst the patients.

The good work continued year in and year out, and as time went on the grounds were splendidly laid out with an oval shaped lawn, with a fountain and a fish pond at the foot thereof, and this was surrounded by a gravelled driveway skirted with shrubberies, etc., and between the main entrance gates and the creek was a well-kept vegetable garden which went a long way towards providing the Hospital with its vegetable needs. It was a pleasing aspect and won the admiration of patients and their friends.

The temporary Hospital was opened free of debt, as also was the "new" Pleasant Creek Hospital, and

the Government had bestowed its favours by means of grants in a liberal manner.

As showing how greatly were the services of the Committee called upon, it might be stated that in the years 1860-61 no fewer than 71 meetings were held.

The Hospital for the next 22 years progressed steadily with ever-increasing facilities for the treatment of the sick and injured, and relatives had every faith and confidence in the efficiency of the staff and the up-to-dateness of the appliances.

In 1883 there was a new development, and there came into being a benevolent ward in the section at the rear of the Hospital and adjoining the domestic block. Between the two buildings there was a courtyard. Many beds were provided for the elderly people, and the accommodation and meals were similar to those of the Hospital. People who were friendless and in need of care were carefully tended and the benevolent asylum was a haven of refuge for them. The inmates were largely people who had been pioneers of the early gold mining era, and many of them showed their appreciation of the kindness received by helping in the tilling of the vegetable garden. One of the pioneers who spent the winter of his life there was William McLachlan, the lonely shepherd who found the first gold in the district in the bed of Pleasant Creek. His identity was apparently not realised, for he died "unwept, unhonoured and unsung", and was buried in a pauper's grave in the Pleasant Creek Cemetery.



(Above) First working bee on site of present Hospital 1933.

(Below) Preparing the site for the present Hospital 1933.



However, two gentlemen associated with Stawell's early history (Messrs. W. and G. Crerar) paid for the erection of a suitable memorial over his last resting place. The benevolent aslyum continued for many years, but eventually its upkeep became too great and it was closed. The name of the institution then changed from the Stawell Hospital and Benevolent Asylum to the Stawell Hospital. It was another milestone in the life of the Hospital movement in the Pleasant Creek district.

The next move of importance was the provision of the Syme Infectious Diseases Ward, which was provided as a means of perpetuating the memory of the late Dr. W. H. Syme, a noted physician in his day and generation.

The Hospital functioned systematically in the succeeding years, and it was well supported by a generous town and country population. About 1930 there was a growing need for a larger and more modern Hospital, and there was much discussion and much disputation about the form the Hospital should take and its location. Eventually the way was made easy by the Government taking over the old Hospital and converting it into a Special School for retarded children. The old St. George tailings

site was granted for the new Hospital, and it was by no means a popular choice. It was called Mt. Misery and Mt. Mistake, and the Bible was quoted to show what would happen to a house built on shifting sand. The site was levelled and a modern Hospital was erected and none of the gloomy prognostications came true. The foundation stone was laid in 1933 and the Hospital opened on 20/1/34. The Hospital is in the centre of the town, and is keeping up the great traditions set by the founders. The way has not always been easy, and there were times when the Committee was nudged to reduce its overdraft, and there were also times when tradesmen's cheques were held over until more revenue was received. The Board certainly had its "headaches", but it emerged triumphant.

The large army of Matrons, Nurses, Doctors, Officers and Board Members, and also Donors and Contributors, are entitled to the best thanks of the public.

It is interesting to know that since the Hospital first opened its doors in 1858 a total of about 100,000 in-door and out-door patients have been treated.

With 100 years behind us we can look to the future with confidence.

# Office Bearers 1958

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# Past Presidents

Year of Office		Year of Office		Year of Office	
Warden of District	1858-9	C. G. Holmes	1887	L. C. Phillips	1919-20
Richard Codd, JP.	1860	C. G. Holmes	1888	Canon C. M. Lowe	1920-21
H. Jenkins, J.P.	1861	Albert Halls	1889	H. F. Johnson	1921-23
Ronald Campbell	1862	Alfred I. Payne	1890	G. T. Haase	1923-24
Alfred B. Clemes	1863	R. W. C. Grieve	1891	R. McCracken	1924-25
John Holt, J.P.	1864	Rev. R. J. E. Hayman	1892	I. H. Short	1925-26
David Scallan, J.P.	1865	Rev. Father Guilfoyle	1893	M. J. Cowman	1926-27
Theodore Mantel	1866	Joseph J. Pawsey	1894	J. O'Connor	1927-31
George Jennings, J.P.	1867	John Earnes	1895	J. Bennett	1931-32
Duncan McKellar	1868	R. Z. Davies	1896	L. C. Phillips	1932-33
William Frayne	1868	H. L. Mitchell	1897	J. O'Connor	1933-34
John Childe, J.P.	1863	Henry Edhouse	1898	J. Bennett	1934-35
John Punchard	1870	John Dalziel	1899	A. P. Spring	1925-37
Wilkinson Wayman	1871	Rev. Father Howell	1900	G. P. Frencham	1937-38
John H. Franklin	1872	W. J. McMullin, J.P.	1901	S. T. Webster, July-December, 1939	
Alexander Brown	1873	Rev. G. B. Murphy	1902	J. G. Macdonald, Jan, 1940 - July 1941	
Maynard Ord	1874	Dr. G. J. Napthine	1903-04	H. J. Ferrier	To July, 1942
Rev. Samuel Kelso	1875	A. V. Wettenhall	1904-05	E. J. O'Driscoll	To April, 1942
David F. Aherne	1876	Dr. J. Raymond Fox	1905-07	M. O. Penna	1942-43
James A. Mathers	1877	Dr. W. L. Aitken	1907-08	H. J. Ferrier	1943-44
Thomas Kinsella	1878	Alfred B. Clemes	1908-09	F. West	1944-45
Gustav Magnus	1879	Gustave Mehnke	1909-10	G. P. Frencham	1945-46
Joseph Cawley	1880	Geo. Barnes	1910-11	Rev. C. S. Petrie	1946-47
Valentine Archer	1881	George Mitchell, J. P.	1911-12	W. M. Thomson	1947-48
Peter Galbraith	1882	Dr. W. J. Forshaw	1912-13	C. C. Waring	1948-50
Thomas Y. Smith	1883	G. A. Smith	1913-14	M. J. Cowman	1950-51
Martin Thornfeldt	1884	L. C. Phillips	1914-16	Cr. C. C. Cashin	1951-52
Richard D. Ollard	1885	John Dalziel	1916-17	J. M. Bennett	1952-54
Stephen Williamson	1886	A. W. Glencross	1917-18	M. M. Rolson	1954-56
C. Aeschmann	1887	Rev. Father Walsh	1918-19	Cr. C. J. Hutchings	1956-58



**COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 1958**

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Rev. C. S. Petrie; Mr. E. J. O'Driscoll; Mrs. F.  
Plaisted; Mr. W. J. Tangey; Mr M. M. Robson;  
Mr. A. E. Murdoch; Mr. F. H. Thomson.

**FRONT ROW:** Mr. W. M. Thomson (Treasurer);  
Mr. R. V. Stone (Manager/Secretary); Cr. C. J.  
Hutchings; Mr. G. P. Frencham (President); Mr.  
J. K. McCracken; Cr. C. Cashin; Mr. J. M. Bennett  
(Mr. W. R. Willcock not present)