

Chapter 6

Religious Institutions and

Groups

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Table of Contents

[Summary](#).....2
[The Basin Presbyterian Church](#).....3
[St. Mary’s Church of England](#).....4
[The Basin Methodist Church](#).....5
[Hindu Temple](#).....6
[The Salvation Army](#).....11
 [Land and Buildings](#).....11
 [No 1 Home](#).....11
 [No 2 Home](#).....12
 [No 3 Home](#).....13
 [Special School](#).....14
 [Other Sites Used](#).....14
 [Bayswater Day](#).....14
 [The Basin YWCA Friendly Circle](#).....14
[Sources of Information](#).....14
[Media Items](#).....15
[Alphabetical Index](#).....16

Summary

Summary

The Basin Presbyterian Church was founded in 1931. In 1935, a church building was opened on the corner of Church Street and Forest Road. In 1964, the church base was moved to Boronia and the land and building sold to the Scouting Association.

St. Mary's Church of England in The Basin was founded in 1933 and services initially held in the Glideaway. In 1939, a church building was opened on the corner of Wicks Road and Mountain Highway. In 1948, the building was moved to a new site in Mountain Highway. In the late 1980's the church suffered a decline in numbers and in 1991 the land and building was sold to Melbourne Vinayagar Hindu Sangam.

The Basin Methodist Church was built in 1903 in Liverpool Road on land now part of The Basin Primary School. Before then, services were held for over 15 years in the first The Basin Primary School in Doongalla Road. In 1958, the building was shifted to Boronia Road, Boronia where it became the Sunday School Hall of the Boronia Methodist Church.

The building of a Hindu Temple in The Basin was one of the most controversial issues that has confronted the local community. Numerous Council permit applications and re-applications, a petition, Town Planning Appeals, Tribunal Appeals and many long articles in the local press stalled the building until 1994 when the building was finally officially opened on land that once sited the St. Mary's Church of England building.

The Salvation Army Basin Centre is the longest established institution in The Basin. Established in 1897, in 2017 it is still in operation. Although the role of the Centre has changed over the years, it has provided support for the implementation of the philosophies of the Salvation Army.

The Basin YWCA Friendly Circle was formed in 1980 and utilised The Basin Progress Hall as its base. Unfortunately, the group closed in 1999.

The Basin Presbyterian Church

An early resident, Mrs. Pickett, felt the need for some form of divine worship and arranged for services to be held in The Basin Progress Hall in late 1930. On the 7th June 1931 The Basin Presbyterian Church was founded. Among early members were the Gretton family, Mrs. Stephens, Mrs. Henderson, Mrs. Gaunt, Mrs. Caughey and Rev. and Mrs. Roxburgh. Miss Cornwall began the Sunday School. In the early years the church was in the Boronia and Lysterfield charge. For some time services were held in The Basin Progress Hall, the preacher being Mr. McNaughton.

In 1933, a block of land on the corner of Church Street and Forest Road was purchased for 90 pounds and working bees were arranged to clear the land for building. Money was extremely scarce and even floors were scrubbed by Ladies Guild members to swell the funds. In 1934 a loan

was granted by the Loan Fund Council and plans were drawn by the son of the interim moderator Rev. J. K. Robertson. Building commenced soon after loan approval. On 9th March 1935, the church was opened with a ceremony conducted by the Rev. R. W. Macaulay. It came as a surprise when the Mission Committee presented the church with an organ. In 1941 the lining and outside oiling was completed under Rev. Archer Harris.

The first missionary in the church was Mr. H. M. Bell who spent several years in the New Hebrides. Other members well remembered from the 40's were Mr. Heath, Mrs. Newstead, Mr. Houston and Mrs. Walker. In 1947 Mrs. Pickett gave the block next to the church for future use. In 1953, Messrs. E. Hill and D. Allen were appointed as elders and this meant the church was directly represented on the Session.

Over the years, organists included Miss Roxburgh, Miss Gray, Miss McKenzie, Mr.



*The Basin Presbyterian Church on the corner of Church Street and Forest Road c1954.
Helen Johnson, Glenys Greenwell, Dick Heyliguis, Alan Henley, Linton Hersfield.
In 1964, this building was sold to the scouts and in 1972 it was destroyed by fire.
Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society*

The Basin Presbyterian Church

Heath, Mr. Cavill, Mr. Henley and Mrs. Spottiswood. In the 50's the church was under the Blackburn Session with the Rev. F. P. Strickland as the interim moderator. Activities included a Ladies Guild, a Sunday School, a P.G.A., a girls choir, prayer meetings and Bible study, and a weekly Social evening.

In 1964, it was felt that population trends warranted the moving of the church to St. David's in Boronia. Prior to this the Rev. W. Bligh conducted services at The Basin. In the same year, the land and building was sold to the Scout Association to be used as the base for the 5th Knox Scout group.

After the church moved, several residents of The Basin began to meet in The Basin Progress Hall as Baptists, forming a Fellowship. Over a few years, they built a following including a Sunday School and Youth Club with lay teachers coming from other churches. However, the interest declined over the next few years and the Fellowship was closed.

St. Mary's Church of England.

On 6th July 1933 members from St. Paul's Boronia canvassed Basin to ascertain if there were sufficient Church of England ladies to form a Guild. Consequently the first meeting of The Basin Guild was held on 18th July 1933. During August of the same year a petition, signed by over thirty people, was submitted to the Diocese of Melbourne requesting that Church of England services be conducted in The Basin.

The first service was in Mr. Cain's Hall (The Glideaway), The Basin on 9th November 1933 there being about thirty people present. Services were held fortnightly, on Thursday evenings, as the Vicar was not available on Sundays. He preached at St. Bartholomews, FTG and UFTG, and St. Pauls, Boronia which made up the parish at the time.

In May 1934, Miss Wicks donated a block of land at the corner of Old Forest Road (now Wicks



*Original St Marys Church of England in Wicks Road at the opening service in 1939.
Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society*

Road) and Mountain Highway, on which to build a church. After years of work by the Guild, the Church of St. Mary's was built on this site by a builder from Glen Waverley at a cost of 195 pounds. On Sunday, 2nd December, 1939 the Church was dedicated by Archbishop Head and Rev. C. P. Brown of Ferntree Gully was the first vicar. It is reported that the congregation overflowed the Church on this memorable occasion.

In 1947, land in Mountain Highway was purchased and on 16th February, 1948 the building was moved in sections to that site, by a horse and wagon. In 1955 two blocks of land adjacent to the Church on the west side were purchased to allow space for the erection of a proposed Church Hall.

During 1959 the old site of the Church, at the corner of Wicks Road and Mountain Highway was sold.

On 22nd August 1963 the Vestry approved the erection of a brick veneer hall by the letting of sub-contracts. On Sunday, 26th April 1964, the Archdeacon of Kew, The Venerable J. Harvey-Brown, M. A., dedicated the hall which was filled to capacity. A tireless worker for the erection of the new hall was Mr. S. Bedford.

A boost to the Church's finances occurred in 1971 when it received \$8,000 from a former parishioner, Mrs Metcalfe. The money, left by Mrs Metcalfe in her will, was to be used solely for improvements at the Church.

During the 1970's the Church experienced a growth in numbers and to accommodate this the Church was extended in October, 1975 and included a meeting hall. A loan was taken out to part finance the extension and the loan was paid out in October 1978.

The years between 1970 and the middle 1980's were the "Golden years of St. Mary's". There was a strong community spirit with a caring church family led by Vicar Geoffrey Turner who was with St. Mary's for 12 years.

Community Support

A young Airman and his wife who lived in The Basin had a young baby with a heart defect. The only places that could perform the operation to repair the defect were in England or New Zealand. The community rallied and through the efforts of the local Federal member John Jess, arrangements were made for the RAAF to fly the mother and baby to Sydney. The American Air Force then flew them to New Zealand for the operation. The reverse procedure was used to transport them back to The Basin.

Strong pastoral care was a feature led by vestry and Congregational members. Care groups operated who supported sick church members or members who were disabled in other ways. Social gatherings were a feature of church life including family barbecues, presentation days, picnics and films. The Sunday School and bible classes thrived with numbers reaching 90. At one stage there were seven Sunday School teachers. All maintenance of the church and grounds was carried out by willing church members.

In 1975, the Church was extended and clad with imitation bricks.

During the late 1980's there was a fall in numbers. As a consequence of this, and in an effort to rationalise and centralise resources, the Parish decided to close St. Mary's Church in 1989. The Diocese had the property on the market for a couple of years when in 1991 it was sold to Melbourne Vinayagar Hindu Sangam.

The Basin Methodist Church

The first Methodist Church services held in The Basin were in the first building of The Basin Primary School near Doongalla Road. In 1899 and 1900, when the school was temporarily closed due to lack of numbers, the Church had use of the building. Rev. Harrison conducted these services.

The Basin Methodist Church was built in 1903 in Liverpool Road, The Basin. It was located on land now part of The Basin Primary School near the library.

After the establishment of the Methodist Church and The Salvation Army Homes various church functions were organised. Inter-church dinners were very popular and magic lantern slides shown at the dinners.

Thursday, May 7th: There is a meeting up at the school tonight about getting a church.

Thursday, May 28th: Mr. Green, Mr. Yeardon and Mr. Chandler called this afternoon. They were collecting money for a Church. There is a meeting at the school tonight to settle on a building site.

Monday, August 31st: The contractors started building the church last Wednesday.

Tuesday, September 15th: There was a Ladies meeting up at the school this afternoon to ar-

The Basin Methodist Church

range about a tea meeting for the opening of the new Church.

Tuesday, October 6th: Practice of the Hymns up at the school in the evening for the opening of the new Church next Sunday.

Sunday, October 11th: The new Church was opened this morning. Mr. Judkins preached both morning and evening. He was very good. Every seat in the Church was as full as it would hold and some stood in the Porch. It was the same in the evening.

Tuesday, October 13th: The tea meeting held at the new Church was a great success, there were about three hundred people there. They made 15 pounds with the tea and collection. The Sunday collections made it up to 20 pounds.

Above are extracts from Janet Dobsons Diary

The Church continued in The Basin until 1958 when the building was shifted to Boronia Road, Boronia where it became the Sunday School Hall of the Boronia Methodist Church.

Lt. Col. Jas. Bray

The "Bray Memorial Home for Pensioners" in A'Beckett St central Melbourne., Melbourne is named after the first superintendent of the Salvation Army Boys Home in The Basin, Lt. Col. Jas. Bray. An authority in his time on crime and juvenile delinquency, he served with distinction for seven years at The Basin.

The Education Department purchased the land left vacant by the removal of the Church and amalgamated it with the existing school land.

In 1967, the Sunday School Hall was re-located to Pine Crescent Boronia, now owned by the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Hindu Temple

The building of a Hindu Temple in The Basin was one of the most controversial issues that has confronted the local community. The Temple was the subject of numerous Council permit applications



Methodist Church built in 1903 on The Basin Primary School grounds in Liverpool Road. Circa 1940. Behind Church on left can be seen tennis courts (demolished in 1960). Behind Church on right is the School built in 1925 (not in view). The Church was moved to Boronia in 1958.

Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society

and re-applications, a petition, Town Planning Appeals, Tribunal Appeals and many long articles in the local press. The end result of all these processes was a Hindu Temple and conditions of use that are considered a reasonable compromise for the Hindu and local communities.

The Melbourne Vinayagar Hindu Sangam was formed in September 1989 by a group of Tamil Hindus of Vinayagar denomination. The main aim of the Sangam was to locate a suitable site in Eastern Melbourne, erect a temple to provide a place of worship and create a centre of attraction for cultural and religious activities. The Temple would be dedicated to Lord Ganesha, also called Vinayagar, the elephant-headed god worshipped by all Hindus around the world. Incorporated in the ceiling of the Temple would be a dome (Sikhama/Vimanam) that represents the shape of a mountain. Hindus generally believe that the seat of divinity is in the mountains and thus the whole Temple structure is likened to a mountain.

In Early 1990, the Sangam purchased the land and buildings in Mountain Highway that was

the site of St. Mary's Church of England that had closed.

In July 1990, the Sangam applied to Knox Council for development of the site. The development proposal envisaged demolition of the existing buildings (a church and meeting hall), construction of an elaborate and ornate temple, two-storey building and outside toilets, and provision of car spaces. It was proposed that the Temple be used for two hour sessions each morning and evening with at most 15 persons present. On four occasions each year there would be special worship days where up to 120 persons could attend. There would be no funerals, marriages or baptisms at the Temple. Extensive advertising of the proposal attracted 6 objections.

Knox Council officers prepared a report recommending that the application be refused on the grounds of over-development of the site, detriment to the local environment and adverse effects to the site and surrounding residents. The Sangam became aware that their proposal was not favoured by Council and requested that their ap-



Boys clearing the Salvation Army Home No 2 on Mountain Highway after a fire in 1913.

Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society

Hindu Temple

plication be deferred to allow a “scaled down” proposal to be formulated. Council deferred consideration of the application at the September meeting to allow the Sangam to address the report and objections.

This resulted in a revised application by the Sangam that envisaged removing the two-storey building and enlarging the temple but reducing its ornateness. Advertising of this revised plan attracted objections from two of the original objectors, 17 new objections and a petition signed by over 500 people. As a result of these latest objections, the Sangam again modified the Temple design to address some of the objections.

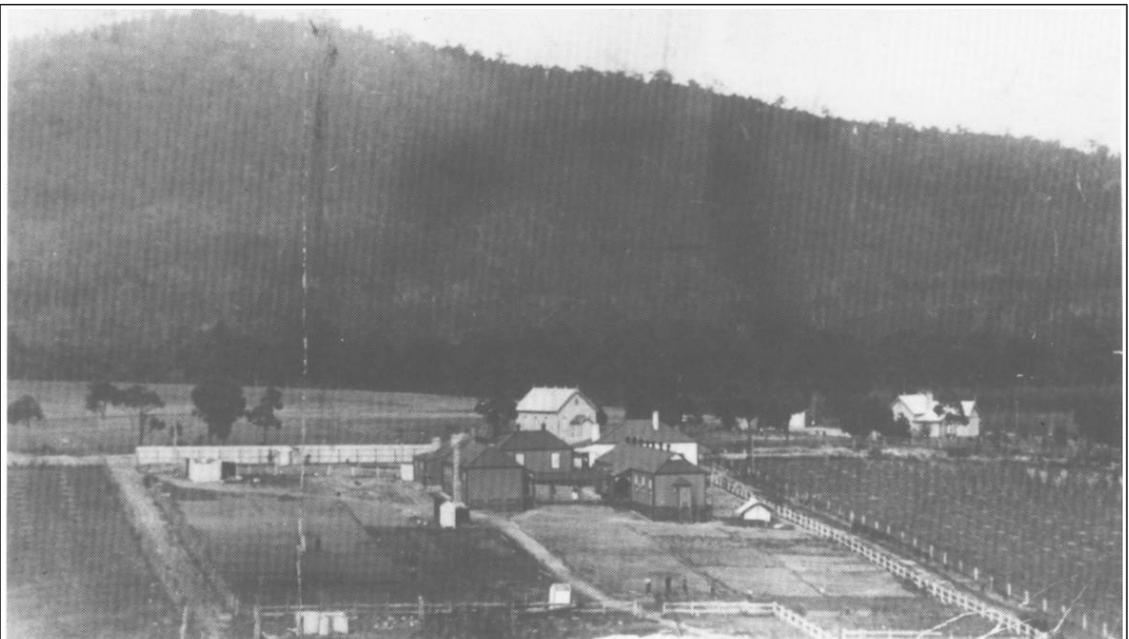
Knox Council officers recommended that this latest design be approved subject to six special conditions.

On 3rd October, 1990, this application was considered by Council. Cr. Dare proposed that the recommendation be adopted. Amendments to the permit conditions were put forward by Cr. Lupton, but these were lost. The recommendation was finally carried 9/1.

A number of local residents lodged two ap-

peals with the Town Planning Appeals Tribunal against the decision to grant a permit. The grounds of one appeal were based on over-development of the site, insufficient car parking, proposal is out of character with the area and effect on adjoining residential land. The second appeal grounds were based on hours of use.

Both appeals were held on 27th February, 1991. In its lengthy determination issued on 22nd April, the Tribunal did not consider that the proposed development would be an over-development of the site. On the issue of car parking, the Sangam tendered evidence that they had made arrangements with both St. Bernadettes and The The Basin Primary Schools for additional car spaces to be made available on the four annual days of special religious observance. With this arrangement, the Tribunal considered that there were sufficient car spaces allowed. The Tribunal did not consider that the proposal was out of character with the area, or that there would be adverse effect on adjoining residences, but suggested some changes to the permit conditions to soften the impact of the proposal on these issues. On the



*Salvation Army Home No 2 on Liverpool Road c1914. Photo taken from Sugarloaf Hill. Along Liverpool Road is the high fence in front of the buildings, the Methodist Church is on the other side of the road in the middle (on Primary School grounds) and the “second” The Basin Primary School is on the right.
Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society.*

hours of use, the Tribunal agreed that the original permit wording be modified. The Tribunal therefore upheld the decision by Council to grant a permit subject to a number of changes to the permit conditions:

In accordance with the Tribunal's decision, Council issued a new planning permit on 30 May 1991 with the relevant conditions listed below. Conditions 17, 18 and 19 were either modified or added from the original Council conditions at the direction of the Town Planning Appeals Tribunal.

14. No external sound amplification equipment shall be used for the purposes of announcements, broadcasts or similar.

16. Parking of church members' cars shall be restricted to the parking areas to be provided and no vehicle under the control of such persons shall be parked in nearby streets.

17. The building must not be used as a place of worship between 9.00 pm and 7.00 am on any day.

18. Except for the four annual days of special religious observance, the daily hours of Congregational services must be between 7.00 am and 9.00 am and 6.00 am and 8.00 pm on any day unless with the prior written approval of the Responsible Authority.

19. A 2 metre acoustic fence to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority shall be constructed at the applicant's expense along the west boundary of the site.

The Sangam held a special ground breaking ceremony on 14th September 1991 and construction of the Temple officially began. A team of 6 specialists were imported from India on six month visas to build the Temple.

The original church was demolished to clear the land for the building of the Temple but the meeting hall was not demolished (the original permit conditions were that the meeting hall was to be demolished to allow for the proposed car spaces).

In February 1992, inspections by Council revealed that the meeting hall was being used for residential purposes for the Temple builders but this ceased in March.

Whilst the Temple was being constructed, the land and residence at 2 Conyers Street at the rear of the Temple site was purchased by members of the Hindu Community. The intention was to use

the house at 2 Conyers Street as a residence for the priest in charge of the Temple.

Between the Temple site and No 2 Conyers St., is an unmade right-of-way that runs behind other residential properties and has entrances from Forest Road and Conyers Street. Council resolved in December 1991 to close the right-of-way behind the residential properties and sell the land to adjoining land owners. Thus the land at 2 Conyers Street and the Temple site would be connected and for all practical purposes under control of the one body.

In September 1992, the Sangam applied to Council with a proposal to retain the meeting hall, relocate the car park and use the residence at 2 Conyers Street for a Manse (residence for a priest). It was proposed that the meeting hall be used for activities such as committee meetings, small gatherings and religious education. A car park would be provided at the rear of 2 Conyers Street, and ingress/egress to the car park would be on either side of the meeting hall from Mountain Highway. If the right-of-way from the rear of 2 Conyers Street into Forest Road was properly constructed, the Sangam proposed that this be used as the car park egress instead of Mountain Highway.

Whilst Council was considering the Sangam's latest proposal, the Temple was completed and on the weekend of 10 & 11 October a consecration ceremony for the Temple took place attracting large numbers of devotees from Victoria and interstate. Among the dignitaries who attended the opening were Knox Mayor, Cr. Colin Tidball and the Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, Mr. Crean, who represented Prime Minister Keating. Many members of the local community also attended.

Advertising of Sangam's latest proposal attracted 8 objections. Knox Council officers prepared a report recommending that the application be approved subject to 26 conditions. In particular, that Forest Road be the egress from the car park.

Council considered this recommendation in December 1992. Cr. Dempster recommended that the application be refused on the following grounds:

1. The proposed uses are not appropriate to the location and incompatible with surrounding

Hindu Temple

development.

2. The proposed uses would result in an undesirable intrusion into an established residential area.

3. The proposed uses are not in keeping with the character of the area and adversely affect the amenity of the area.

Cr. Dempster argued that allowing the old meeting hall to stay would breach the original agreement with the Hindu community for the building to be demolished for on-site car parking. He also took note of numerous residents' complaints about car parking since the Temple had opened. The Hindu community had not abided with its agreement to not park on road reserves and nearby streets. Cr. Dempster's recommendation that the application be refused was carried 8/3.

The Sangam lodged an appeal with Town Planning Appeals Tribunal against the Council refusal to grant a permit. This appeal was heard on 16th and 29th March 1993. A number of local residents appeared supporting the Council's decision and provided video and written evidence of the

Sangam's inability to abide by the original Council permit conditions on hours of use and car parking.

The Tribunal handed down its decision on May 21 1993 determining that the appeal by the Sangam be disallowed and no permit for its latest proposal be issued. The Tribunal found problems in considering the application when the proposed development was spread over three separately owned parcels of land. Car parking was inadequate and poorly located and the proposed development was an over-development of the site.

By early 1994, the Sangam had completed all the requirements of the original permit conditions. The old meeting hall had been demolished, car spaces provided and the site landscaped. In this year the Temple was officially opened.

In March 1999, the temple and an adjoining house were set fire under suspicious circumstances. Nobody was injured and damage was not extensive.



Original Salvation Army Home No 2 on Mountain Highway circa 1910. It was near the existing water tanks on Mountain Highway. The home was destroyed by fire in 1910 and again in 1913.

The home is in the distance with Mountain Highway crossing in front.

Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society.

The Salvation Army

The longest established institution in The Basin community is the Salvation Army (SA) who purchased 219 acres of land here in 1897. The land was part purchased from one of the original settlers, David Dobson.

The leader of the SA at the time, General Booth, was dedicated to social reform. He had a vision that the therapeutic value of farming could help rehabilitate young offenders and avoid sending them to jail.

After a request by the Government of the day for religious denominations to open homes to replace reformatories, the SA opened institutions in NSW, Heidelberg and Pakenham and later in The Basin which later proved to be the largest ongoing successful institution in Australia modelled around farming.

All the institutions provided help and guidance to many youths who committed offences which brought them into the hands of the police, and for younger boys who, because of neglect, were in danger of falling into criminal tendencies.

Land and Buildings

The SA collectively referred to their establishments in The Basin as “Eden” or “Bayswater the Beautiful”. Over the time they had a presence in The Basin, they purchased, sold and leased up to seven entities that were used as homes or farming. At one stage they had 700 acres on lease. In 2017, only one property remains that is utilised for social reform.

The boys who lived at Eden were chiefly wards of the State. In the early days, they were classified into one of three categories according to age and past records and then drafted into one of the three homes as described later. In later years, the classification system changed. Although the various homes were on different sites, they were managed centrally.

The homes were given various names as detailed later, but were best known as the No 1, 2 and 3 homes.

No 1 Home

This home was variously called the No 1, Senior, Big Boys home and “farm”. It was built on the first land of 160 acres acquired in 1897 from David Dobson at a cost of £6,400. It consisted of homes and a large farm located on what is now The Basin-Olinda Road. On the front gate was the sign “The Garden of Eden”.

The farm was initially designed and built with the help of teams of SA officers from other parts of Melbourne. The “War Cry” and “Victory” SA magazines devoted extensive coverage to the massive exercise of designing and building the farm.

The farm had large water storages and was extensively irrigated. The perennial creeks passing either side of the property ensured adequate water all year round. They grew oats, maize, peas, potatoes, fruits and berries. There were cows, pigs and poultry. A bakery and drapery made the homes nearly self-sufficient. They also supplied milk to The Basin residents. For more than 30 years around the 1920's, the wagon that delivered milk was driven by a man known as “Old Sarge”, a familiar sight in The Basin.

This home was for boys over 14 and those considered the hardest to manage and consequently requiring the greatest amount of supervision. The boys were taught the practical aspects of farming.

The original home was a wooden structure and was rebuilt in brick in 1928 with major extensions completed in 1946.

With the major extension, all other facilities were upgraded, including a modern dairy with milking machines and mechanisation of farm management but the orchards were phased out. Boys had their own rooms and facilities including recreation and visitors rooms, canteen and later on, a TV room.

In 1960, the home was renamed the Youth Training Centre and was accredited by the Social Welfare Department.

A swimming pool was opened in 1965. A retaining wall beside the pool was built by trainees at the centre.

In 1969, Government classifications changed

No 1 Home

and the home was administered by Corrective Services. Soon after this, the Government phased out all children's institutions in favour of foster care and the home became known as a Youth Training Centre.

A new two-story building was added in 1975 which formed an additional wing to the existing main building.

The farm and associated workshops provided valuable work experiences for thousands of boys who passed through its gates and in earlier times a large staff of Salvation Army Officers had the invaluable opportunity of working alongside these boys and getting to know them through this close work contact (many retired officers had regular contact with "boys" from their time at "Bayswater"). The demand for "Bayswater Boys" by Victorian farmers after they left the home was very high indicating the success of the SA farm program.

On 30 June 1987, the "Bayswater" Youth Training Centre was closed by a shift in Government policies regarding institutional care.

Towards the end of 1988, the idea of utilising the workshops and the farm for further training developed and was encouraged by community minded persons.

By January 1989, "SkillShare" became a reality. Commencing with Computer/Office Skills, Metalwork and Woodwork, participants were given every encouragement to gain entry to the work force including grooming, personal development and job search training.

From February 1989 through to December 1990, the Croydon Baptist Church leased a large room in which to operate an independent Christian School. Approximately 22 students attended daily.

January 1990 brought some changes and the consolidation of the "SkillShare" program when Farm Skills became an approved course and the "office skills" became more intensive. Woodwork was discontinued as it did not suit the local labour market needs of the time.

In February 1990, The Basin Playgroup became part of the "farm" using another large room and playground for their activities.

A further initiative – JOBTRAIN Forklift – brought additional funding enabling training not only in Forklift but Computer/Stores and a Red

Cross Certificated First Aid course.

Early 1991 brought some variations on Theme with the addition of a JOBCLUB and further JOBTRAIN courses.

A fire at the Boronia Church of Christ (early 1991) left the church's Companion Club for primary school girls without a home and the club met for 12 months at the farm.

Around 1992, the Centre introduced voluntary programs to physically and spiritually rehabilitate alcohol and drug users. The existing dairy, piggery and stud farms were used in combination with other therapeutic programs. The Holstein Friesian dairy stud developed into a quality program and was called the "New Hope" stud.

The turn of the century brought a new name to the farm "The Basin Rehabilitation Centre" and a change in focus. The alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs still operated but the farming and other practical therapies were scaled back. Cattle and horses on the farm were agisted and programs such as woodworking no longer used.

The alcohol and drug rehabilitation program later became known as "The Bridge" program.

No 2 Home

This home was variously called the No 2, Junior and Intermediate Boys home.

It was built around 1900 on what is now Liverpool Road and included a small farm for basic needs.

This home initially was for boys who had not lapsed so far in crime as those in No 1. The boys were taught the theoretical aspects of farming in preparation for the possible move to the No 1 home.

It is thought that a new No 2 home was built on Mountain Highway when the SA acquired the new property in 1906. Fire destroyed much of the original wooden building in 1910 and another fire in 1913 destroyed newer buildings that had been rebuilt in brick. A new building was then built on Liverpool Road and the Mountain Highway property only used for farming purposes

In 1958, the home on Liverpool Road was rebuilt, the architect being the late Baxter Cox of "Wychwood", The Basin.

Three cottage homes were built to cater for

small groups of youths. The last one completed in 1972 was called “Nayla” cottage, meaning “Circle of the Hills”.

In 1969, Government classifications changed and the home came under Family Welfare.

Soon after this, the Government phased out all children’s institutions in favour of foster care. The home was closed in 1981 and became a Convention Centre, renamed The Salvation Army Mountain Valley Convention Centre. The cottage homes closed in 1983. Ironically, when the last cottage home closed, the remaining child was a small girl, the only girl resident in the entire history of all the homes.

The home closed as a boys home but began hosting activities such as music groups, religious assemblies, adventure courses and recreational events. The centre hosted the Police Ropes course, a program to rehabilitate young offenders.

These activities struck a blow when in 1992, the centre was closed.

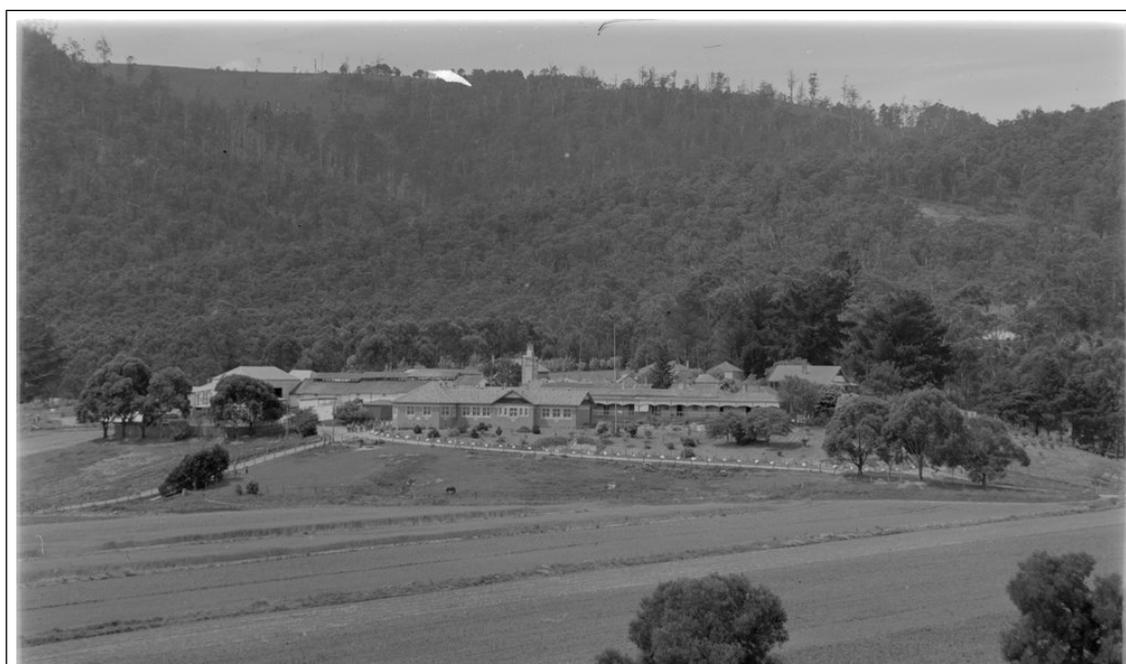
No 3 Home

This home was variously called the “Neglected Boys Home”, “Preventative Home for Boys”, “Little Boys Home”, and “Small Boys Home”.

The home was for boys under 14 years. Half of the boys’ working day was given to normal school education and the remainder to technical pursuits.

The home started in Millers Homestead when the SA leased the homestead and surrounding land from 1899 to 1906. When the lease expired, the boys were transferred to the No 2 home on what is now Liverpool Road site into separate accommodation.

From 1931 to 1946 the boys were accommodated in a home at the base of Sugarloaf Hill (behind the No. 2 home). This home was a Government building transferred from Coode Island. The home can be seen on some early photographs.



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THE SALVATION ARMY BOYS' HOME, THE BASIN, VIC.

*Salvation Army Home No 1 on Basin-Olinda Road circa 1920. David Dobsons original home is on the right.
Photo courtesy Knox Historical Society.*

Special School

This home was known as The Basin Boys Home Special School and built very early to cater for the special needs of boys from the junior Home. The home was located on land beside The Basin Primary School across the road from the No 2 Home.

A fire in early 1972 destroyed almost half of the buildings and they eventually became vacant. The Basin Primary School started using the buildings and in the early 1980's the buildings and land was amalgamated with The Basin Primary School.

Other Sites Used

A financial report in 1910 stated that the SA had 213 acres of freehold land, 130 under cultivation, and about 700 acres leased for grazing.

In 1901, the SA leased what they called "Colliers' Estate which consisted of 100 acres of land and a house near the No 2 home. It was proposed to make this into a No 3 home but it appears it never eventuated.

In 1906, when the lease for the No 3 home on Millers Homestead expired and all the boys were transferred to the No 2 home, the SA purchased property near what later became the Water Tanks on Mountain Highway. This land was purchased from John L Yeardon. The "War Cry" reported in 1906 that "*the manager now resides on this newly acquired property between the farm [on the Basin-Olinda Road] and the No 2 home [on Liverpool Road]*". Some early photographs show a large building on this site which may have been used as a No 2 home. It may have been this building that was destroyed by fire in 1910 and later in 1913.

Bayswater Day

The annual "Bayswater Day" commenced in the 1950's and was an open day where the community could tour the facilities and view the work of the centre.

The SA also exhibited the centres work in various exhibitions. An example was the Aus-

tralian Industries Fair in 1958 at the Melbourne Exhibition Buildings where the SA exhibited furniture made at the No 1 Home suitable for kindergarten and primary school use.

The Basin YWCA Friendly Circle

The Basin YWCA Friendly Circle was formed on the 11 March 1980 and used The Basin Progress Hall as their meeting place.

The foundation members were Brenda Jackson, Nance Fraser, Lorraine Burrows, Brenda Nudd, Iris Smith, Enid Franks, Ivy Lynch, Val Tokell and Joyce Yeamon. The object of the group as stated by the constitution is "To unite women and girls through faith in Jesus Christ in worldwide fellowship". It is also to give ladies over 35 years a chance to meet and make new friends and to help the needy in the area.

From a small beginning, meeting twice a month, by 1994 they had over fifty members attending meetings. By the success of the club, friendly circles were formed in Mooroolbark and Wantirna.

Sadly, the group closed in 1999.

Sources of Information

- "The Basin Centenary booklet" - Ron Ikin.
- "Fire on the Hill, Flowers on the Valley" - Rick Coxhill.
- "War Cry". Various copies.
- "The Victory". Various copies.
- "The History of the Salvation Army at The Basin" - Kate Stephens.

Media Items on the Internet

Residents object to plan for Hindu temple

RESIDENTS from The Basin are joining forces to oppose a Hindu temple proposal for Mountain Highway.

One of them, Mr Paul Carroll, said they were strongly opposed to the proposed temple building.

The Hindu Trustees (Melbourne Vinayagar Hindu Sangam) plan to purchase the property at 1292-1294 Mountain Highway to develop it for worship and ancillary purposes.

The main temple building would be single storey of steel and masonry construction (with

By **LERISSE SMITH**

a floor area of 395 square metres) and include a central shrine room and prayer hall. The second building would be a two-storey brick veneer construction, with the upper storey used as a caretaker's flat for the priest and his family.

Mr Carroll, whose property abuts the proposed temple, said he was not against the applicant's religious beliefs, just the building.

"The nine-metre dome would stick out like a sore thumb, and I'm

against this type of thing being established in The Basin," he said.

"The design of this temple is ornate and out of character with the surrounding area."

Mr Carroll said loss of privacy affecting adjacent residential properties and the temple operating on a daily basis were also a concern.

The temple proposal to Knox Council includes it being open for daily worship from 7 am to 9 am, and 5 pm to 7 pm, and the main weekly service

on Friday evenings between 6 pm and 8 pm.

There would be special Hindu worship days on four occasions during the year when the temple would be used.

A council report by Knox town planner Adrian Atkins, tabled in September, said most of the trees along the back boundary of the property would have to be removed.

Knox Council will consider the application at its next meeting on Tuesday, October 30.

BAYSWATER REFORMATORY.

BLOCK OF BUILDINGS BURN'T.

FERNTREE GULLY, Wednesday.—Shortly before midnight on Tuesday an alarm of fire was given at the reformatory branch of the Salvation Army's farm establishment at Bayswater, and, as practically no fire-fighting appliances were kept on the premises, nothing could be done to stay the progress of the fire. The result was the complete destruction of the buildings, which were of wood, extending for a length of nearly 200ft.

The No. 2 home was in charge of "Captain" King and six officers, and there were 25 boys in the home at the time of the fire. All fortunately escaped injury, but they had to tramp nearly a mile in their nightclothes to the "Eden." The night was cold, with a heavy mist.

The damage is estimated at £1,000, as not only the dormitory, but the dining-room and playroom adjoining, were demolished. The cause of the fire is unknown.

Though the Salvation Army has the right to take a large volume of water from the Dandenong Creek for irrigation purposes, and there is a heavy and continuous flow of water on the "Eden" property, which could easily be carried to No. 2 home, no provision for water supply to the latter place has been made.

HIS THIRD ESCAPE.

GORDON, Monday.—William Eyers, a boy of about 13 years of age, who escaped from the Bayswater Reformatory in February last, was arrested by Mounted-constable Anderson, of Gordon, at Bolwarrah yesterday, and lodged in the local lock-up pending instructions. This is the third time Eyers has escaped from a reformatory, always making for home.

BAYSWATER BOYS' HOME

Additional donations received by the Salvation Army toward the Bayswater Reformatory Appeal include: Anon, £52 10; Carlton and United Breweries Ltd, £50; City of Hawthorn, £25; James Thwaites, Herbert Adams Pty, £20 each; R. S. Demaine, £10 10; E. Harvey, £10; Birkowitz and Son, Greer and Ashburner, £10 each; Squadron-Leader A. C. Gray, Mrs Dunn, J. Marks and Son Pty Ltd, Mrs W. B. Huntsman, £5/5 each, Pirrie Bros, S. F. Hammond, Phoenix Mfg Co. ZYX, £5 each; small amounts, £19 16 2. Total, £12,384 3 9.

Alphabetical Index

Alphabetical Index

- A**
- Allen, D.
elder in The Basin Presbyterian Church.....3
- B**
- Bedford, Mr. S.
tireless worker for St. Mary's Church of
England.....5
- Bell, Mr. H. M.
missioner in The Basin Presbyterian Church..3
- Bligh, Rev. W.
conducted services in The Basin Presbyterian
Church.....4
- Boronia Methodist Church
Sunday School Hall relocated.....6
- Boronia Road
the Basin Methodist Church moved to 1958. .6
- Bray, Jas
first superintendent of the Salvation Army
Boys Home.....6
- Burrows, Lorraine
foundation member of The Basin YWCA
Friendly Circle.....14
- C**
- Cain, S.
first Church of England Services in hall.....4
- Caughey, Mrs.
early member of The Basin Presbyterian
Church.....3
- Cavill, Mr.
organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church...3
- Chandler, Mr.
member of The Basin Methodist Church.....5
- Church Street
first site of The Basin Presbyterian Church...3
- Churches
St. Mary's Church of England.....4
The Basin Methodist Church.....5
The Basin Presbyterian Church.....3
- Colin Tidball, Cr.
Hindu Temple opening.....9
- Colliers Estate
land leased by salvation army.....14
- Conyers Street
and Hindu Temple.....9
- Cornwall, Miss
began Sunday School for The Basin
Presbyterian Church.....3
- Crean, Mr.
Hindu Temple opening.....9
- D**
- Dare, Cr.
involved with Hindu Temple application.....8
- Dempster, Cr.
and Hindu Temple application.....10
- F**
- Forest Road
and Hindu Temple.....9
first site of The Basin Presbyterian Church...3
- Franks Enid
foundation member of The Basin YWCA
Friendly Circle.....14
- Fraser, Nance
foundation member of The Basin YWCA
Friendly Circle.....14
- G**
- Gaunt, Mrs.
early member of The Basin Presbyterian
Church.....3
- Glideaway
first Church of England Services in.....4
- Gray, Miss
organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church...3
- Green, Mr.
member of The Basin Methodist Church.....5
- Greenwell, Glenys
photo outside The Basin Presbyterian Church3
- Gretton family
early member of The Basin Presbyterian
Church.....3
- H**
- Harris, Rev. Archer
re-oiled The Basin Presbyterian Church.....3
- Harrison, Rev.
conducted services in The Basin Methodist
Church.....5
- Harvey-Brown, Venerable. J.
opened St. Mary's Church of England hall....5
- Heath, Mr.
missioner in The Basin Presbyterian Church..3
organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church...3
- Henderson, Mrs.
early member of The Basin Presbyterian

Church.....	3	Friendly Circle.....	14
Henley, Alan		M	
photo outside The Basin Presbyterian Church	3	Macaulay, Rev. R. W.	
Henley, Mr.		opened The Basin Presbyterian Church.....	3
organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church....	3	McKenzie, Miss	
Hersfield, Linton		organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church....	3
photo outside The Basin Presbyterian Church	3	McNaughton, Mr.	
Heyliguis, Dick		first preacher for The Basin Presbyterian	
photo outside The Basin Presbyterian Church	3	Church.....	3
Hill, E.		Metcalfe, Mrs	
elder in The Basin Presbyterian Church.....	3	left money in will for St. Mary's Church of	
Hindu Temple		England.....	5
appeals to Town Planning Appeals Tribunal.	10	Millers Homestead	
car parking.....	8	use by salvation army.....	14
consecration ceremony.....	9	Mountain Highway	
dedication to Lord Ganesha.....	7	and Hindu Temple.....	9
first application refusal.....	7	and St. Mary's Church of England.....	5
first building proposal.....	7	Hindu Temple site.....	7
first Planning Permit.....	8	new land purchased for St. Mary's Church of	
formation.....	7	England.....	5
ground breaking ceremony.....	9	site of first St. Mary's Church of England.....	5
loses appeal to Town Planning Appeals		N	
Tribunal.....	10	Newstead, Mrs.	
manse (residence for priest).....	9	missioner in The Basin Presbyterian Church..	3
misuse of old meeting hall.....	9	Nudd, Brenda	
purchased Church of England site.....	7	foundation member of The Basin YWCA	
residents appeal to Town Planning Tribunal..	8	Friendly Circle.....	14
residents video evidence.....	10	O	
revised first building application.....	8	Old Forest Road	
Town Planning Appeals Tribunal modifies		site of first St. Mary's Church of England.....	4
permit conditions.....	8	Old Sarge	
Houston, Mr. & Mrs.		drove a wagon delivering milk.....	11
missioner in The Basin Presbyterian Church..	3	P	
J		Pickett, Mrs.	
Jackson, Brenda		arranged first services for The Basin	
foundation member of The Basin YWCA		Presbyterian Church.....	3
Friendly Circle.....	14	donated land for The Basin Presbyterian	
Johnson, Helen		Church.....	3
photo outside The Basin Presbyterian Church	3	R	
Judkins, Mr.		Robertson, Rev. J. K.	
member of The Basin Methodist Church.....	6	drew plans for The Basin Presbyterian Church	
L		3
Liverpool Road		Roxburgh, Miss	
site of The Basin Methodist Church.....	5	organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church....	3
Lupton, Cr.		Roxburgh, Rev. and Mrs.	
involved with Hindu Temple application.....	8		
Lynch, Ivy			
foundation member of The Basin YWCA			

Alphabetical Index

- early member of The Basin Presbyterian Church.....3
- S
- Smith, Iris
 foundation member of The Basin YWCA Friendly Circle.....14
- Spottiswood, Mrs
 organist in The Basin Presbyterian Church...3
- St Marys Church of England
 photo.....4
- St. Bernadettes
 offered Hindu Temple car parking.....8
- St. Mary's Church of England
 bible classes.....5
 care groups.....5
 church demolished.....9
 closes 1989.....5
 first building moved.....5
 first building opened 1939.....5
 first vicar.....5
 land purchased for Church Hall.....5
 Miss Wicks donated land.....4
 money from will of Mrs Metcalfe.....5
 new land purchased.....5
 old site sold.....5
 second building.....5
 site of Hindu Temple.....7
 Sunday School.....5
- Stephens, Mrs.
 early member of The Basin Presbyterian Church.....3
- Strickland, Rev. F. P.
 moderator in The Basin Presbyterian Church.4
- Sugarloaf Hill
 salvation army no 3 home at base of.....13
- T
- The Basin Guild (Church of England)
 first meeting.....4
- The Basin Methodist Church
 building moved to Boronia.....6
 built in 1903.....5
 first minister.....5
 first services.....5
 Janet Dobson Diary entries.....5
 photo.....6
- The Basin Presbyterian Church
 bible study.....4
 building sold to Scout Association.....4
- early members.....3
 first building.....3
 first missionary.....3
 first preacher.....3
 foundation.....3
 girls choir.....4
 ladies Guild.....3
 moved congregation to St Davids in Boronia.4
 P.G.A. activities.....4
 prayer meetings.....4
 Sunday School.....3
- The Basin Primary School
 held The Basin Methodist Church first services.....5
 offered Hindu Temple car parking.....8
- The Basin Progress Hall
 first services held for The Basin Presbyterian Church.....3
 YWCA Friendly Circle used it.....14
- The Basin Salvation Army
 bayswater day.....14
 description.....11
 No 1 Home.....
 became the basin rehabilitation centre...12
 description.....11
 photo.....13
 rebuilt in brick.....11
 swimming pool built.....11
- No 2 Home.....
 cottage homes.....12
 description.....12
 photo clearing after fire in 1913.....7
 photo on Liverpool Road.....8
 photo on Mountain Highway.....10
 rebuilt in 1958.....12
- No 3 Home.....
 description.....13
 other sites used.....14
 Special School.....
 description.....13
 fire in 1972.....13
- The Basin Scout Group
 first building.....4
- Tokell, Val
 foundation member of The Basin YWCA Friendly Circle.....14
- Turner, Vicar Geoffrey
 vicar at St. Mary's Church of England.....5
- W

Walker, Mrs.
missioner in The Basin Presbyterian Church...3

Wicks Road
site of first St. Mary's Church of England.....4

Wicks, Miss
donated land for St. Mary's Church of
England.....4

Y

Yeamon, Joyce
foundation member of The Basin YWCA
Friendly Circle.....14

Yeardon, John
land purchased from by Salavation Army....14
member of The Basin Methodist Church.....5

YWCA Friendly Circle
formation.....14