

Mr. George Henwood.

Now what about all these thousands of youths that are out of work now, do you think, there is work for them - "I don't think there is work for all of them but there is something that all of them could do, that is putting the cart before the horse, perhaps, but you know your streets are never cleaned, the gutters are never weeded, your parks are dirty with rubbish, all these things are something these youths could do if they only done an hour a week for a few bob to do it."

Yes I think you've got problems with your Council.

"Yes, its not something that could not be ironed out, I don't think myself, personally. I've lived up here at Keys Street now for 44 years, after living just off Perry Street, but there has never been anything done for that road in the whole period, only a light surface coating. Eight years ago the Gas and Fuel company came through and put a new gas main in and broke my drive and the kerbing and its still broken. Now this is something that a few buckets of concrete and a few hours of unemployed labour could rectify quite easily."

Well I don't think its as easy as that.

"No, well that's too hard to do that, no there's a lot of things."

But what else with the youth is so different now?

"I don't think there is much different, we probably did the same things they do today but you yourself as a girl will probably see your family doing, if you've got a family, doing exactly the same things you would probably condemn them, but you did them yourself, I know I'm associated down here at the Alphington Uniting Church, but today you can't get young people to go to church. Now even my own family, they were brought up with Sunday School, they are all married, they've got their own families, but not one of the kiddies go to Sunday School. So its just a change in general living that's brought this thing about. I dont think there is any other thing to say its not another attraction."

I think too that in your days the entertainment all evolved around the Church didn't it?

"I speak for myself and I'll speak for quite a few others and it came up down at the Fairfield A.N.A. only 2 weeks ago, the Fairfield A.N.A. with 500 odd members and the A.N.A. in general with ~~20~~ 20,000 members could only get 25 that will go to a dinner dance." <sup>sc.</sup>

Just recently? "Yes just recently". Really.

"Combined A.N.A. could only get 25 to go to a dinner dance."

Why do you think that would be?

"The point that occurs to all people along the line, you get up in years you don't go out at night simply because you can't go out at night and you give up dancing simply because other things stop you from going dancing, the health, arthritis and all those other complaints prevent you from going. We can't iron it out, nobody can iron it out."

Well is it an older group, not so many young ones in your A.N.A.?

"No, well today at Fairfield here we've got 2 young members, one's 30 one's 28 and otherwise they are all 65 and over 75, still carrying on an A.N.A. branch."

Is it a social group, is it a social organisation or what is its purpose?

"Its virtually a medical association, we have our social nights they have these dance nights, they have social nights in the Masonic Temple in town, Australia Day, still with all the numbers of members we never overfill the Masonic Temple. We get about 400 there and the capacity is 560 and that's for a dinner and we get about 400. No, life comes to an end well its a long road that has no bend, but I'm serving a term now I'm just about at the end of my term as President of the Fairfield A.N.A. branch, I've been a member for just on 60 years and I've served in every office, in that branch, I've come to the point now I'm saying that I'm not going to go another term in office in the branch. Fiftyfour years executive office in the branch, I think I've done my part and I think its time for somebody else. Unfortunately we can't find that somebody else in the younger generation interested to take these things on."

Its the same old story.

"Its the same old story. We've got one young chap he joined the branch 3 years ago, he's just in the early 30's he came out from the Head Office and joined the branch and he's now Secretary of the Flemington branch. He also President of the Friendly Societies, he President of the Bowls competition, but he's one in a few that's prepared to do it. He's out every night in the week. I recall when I was out every night of the week at different functions. Now I'm glad to sit home."

A basic member.

"A basic member, yes he receives full entitlements, such as sick fund, funeral fund allowance,

Medical?

"Well its not a great amount of social life, there are bowls competitions inter branches, inter societies, where we meet with the P.A.F.S. Manchester Unity, M.U.I.F.E. which we had one here just -

What do all those initials mean?

"Grand United Order of the Forests, Manchester United <sup>and</sup> ~~or~~ the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society"

Would these all be like the Lodge, just the same as being a Lodge member when you joined the medical thing in the old days and you were covered by the Lodge, is that the same sort of thing, I suppose?

"That's just carried on, it has been implemented with other things but a lot of the original things have gone by the board, but I recall, about 1928 where the A.N.A. Lodge and the A.N.A. the A.W.A.

What's the A.W.A.?

"That's the Australian Womens Association and A.N.A. is Australian Natives Association. They combined to hold socials A.N.A. would hold it one fortnight and A.W.A. would hold it the next fortnight. The A.W.A. used to meet in the old hall there opposite the RailwayStation known as Uren's Hall in those days".

Yes, I've heard of that.

"Those days a dance social night, Trial by Jury, and all these type of Sulamagunder nights, I could never get --

A what?

"A Sulamagunder night, I could never ever get what it was"

Well what used you do?

"It was a party night"

Sulamagunder?

"Yes a Sulamagunder night. You'd fill ~~Uren~~'s Hall and the Soldiers' Hall in those days. Every fortnight were the social evenings. Today you'd have problems."

Now tell me, How many people in Fairfield or in the Northcote City Council area would be members of the A.N.A Friendly society?

"Well probably, the ex Mayor is dead and gone, Jack Howes he was a member of our branch, Fairfield branch, he never ever took any office in it but he was a member of it and he became first man of the city, whether Jack in his early days of A.N.A.ism learnt anything of controlling a meeting, that's to be proved, but this is where you can pick up a few hints along the line - you can go in green and come out cabbage looking the other way too. Some can never get anywhere with it. No but its a spring-board for many things"

No but are there many members in our district belonging to it?

"We at Fairfield we've got a membership of 550 and I suppose out of 550 we would only have a hundred living outside of the district"

550 present day members all living in the Fairfield district Northcote area?

"You get a few transfer"

What did you call them - basic members?

"Basic members"

Basic members?

"Majority, there might have been 20 that are just hospital members but they are mainly, join at 18, join at 16 as a basic member you go right through the entitlement."

You say they are all up in their 50's and 60's now?

"No I'm not saying all of them are"

Most of them?

"Actually the executive of the A.N.A. at the present time are all over the 55 mark with the exception of a couple that attend regularly, now we've got members up to 96 years of age carrying on with it"

You've got a pretty big membership, 550.

"Yes".

"We still meet every alternate Mondays in the dispensary hall."

How many turn up to the meetings?

"We only get 14 or 16"

Out of 500 odd?

"Yes".

What's the purpose of being in the

"Mainly for the medical side of it and the hospital side of it"

Why don't they, like myself, just join up and be covered by hospital, why do they bother being a basic member if they don't go to any of those things?

"Well its purely up to them. You can't force them to go to a meeting the quarterly night meeting is virtually a summons when a member should attend their branch and pay his dues on the quarterly night, but you find over the last 7 or 8 years they don't even attend they go around to the Secretary's home and pay their dues."

But do they go to any of the social do's or meet people?

"We have a very limited number, when we put on a President's night which is virtually a Past President's night during November and then we'll have some of our older members invited, they don't come along, they are invited along. We usually put on a night where we entertain about 70 between 70 and 80 people every year"

You invite them?

"Yes they are invited along. There are so many taken up by the Board of Directors, that's the head office Board members, alternate half the Board members one year and the balance next year and alternate again to give everybody a turn. You can't invite everybody. No, its been a long road that's had many changes as far as Friendly societies are concerned. See they wont join this and they wont join that, you find members of a Friendly society they dont even attend the meetings. Dances were held at St. Anthony's the Masonic Hall the Parish Hall, Station Street, the Soldier's Hall and Uren's Hall, the Rifle Club, there were plenty of places for dancing that local and you have the <sup>mess</sup> Palais over the bridge, dancing there practically every night, so what between dancing and theatres there was plenty of entertainment you could make up yourself a party and go"

Now tell me what you'd do, would you go and walk and pick your girl up, or what would do meet her there, or what?

"No normally you'd take a partner".

Did you go round to her home and

"Pick up, yes"

How would you get to the dance?

"Well there tram and bus and in my case, I courted my wife, who lived in Thornbury, I used to ride my bike"

This was before you were married?

"Yes"

You'd ride your bike?

"I'd ride my bike over to Thornbury the other side of St. Georges Road, get on a tram and come down to Arthurton Road and get the bus down to Fairfield to a dance at the Lodge or a dance at one of the other halls, or the other way get on a tram and go the ~~Mary~~ HERRI Palais at North Fitzroy"

And take her home always?

"Take her home even though her parents were there, her sisters and brothers and her parents before she'd go back home"

They would be at the dance too?

"Yes, families. Another very popular place was the R.S.L. in High Street, Northcote. Wednesday and Saturday night dancing there. There were other things too. You had the canoe flat down here, you had the Rowing Club at Fairfield and the Canoe flat at Fairfield, you had the swimming pool at Alphington, you had the other one a little bit higher up at Rudder Grange, Stokes's hole, you know that one. Its that long since I was down at Stokes's hole I wouldn't know what it looked now. There was plenty of entertainment, you could make entertainment, which was not costly entertainment. Youth clubs, there plenty of youth clubs around still."

There are a lot still, are there?

"Plenty of youth clubs around. I'll be a bit personal when I say this I, myself I rode with the Fairfield Amateur Cycling Club, about 1928 onwards. When my family came along, two boys wanted to join the Cycle club and I followed them with a car pilot."

Which Club was that?

"Heidelberg. In 1954 there was a Youth movement formed as the Pedal Clubs of Victoria and I joined that just through my kiddies wanting to be in it. I used to take them along to the meetings and the Secretary said to me one night, You come along to every meeting, why don't you get on to the Committee?. I got on the Committee and I finished up 25 years with them."

Who were some of the great Cyclists that you can remember in those days?

"Russell Mockridge, Tassie Johnson, Gordon Johnson."

Were any of them in your Club?

"No, they were associate clubs."

Did you have any that made a name for themselves in your Club?

"Not in top Class, amateur class, yes, but not professional class."

Whereabouts did you ride to?

"Well in the early days of Fairfield Cycling Club, Bundoora Lane it was known, now its Grimshaw Street, Greensborough, that was known as

Bundoora Lane and that was nothing for a Saturday ride through that Lane, out Plenty Road up to Grimshaw Street and up around Whittlesea and later on when my boys got to the cycling stage I used to drive the car up around Hurstbridge and that then with the Junior cycling absolute junior Pedal Clubs well I travelled as far as Woodend down to Geelong West, to Hastings, Mornington."

You'd go part of the way in the car?

"Go all the way in the car."

Who rode the bikes then?

"We transported the kiddies down in the car"

Yes and then they rode when they got there?

"Yes, when they got there"

How far did they ride?

"Well they rode, its very hard to say, they rode about 6 events in the morning

These were races were they?

"Yes races, 6 events in the morning for themselves and club events in the afternoon which took from half past one till roughly half past three."

You spoke about going to Bundoora Lane, was that a competitive thing or

"Yes, yes, that was a cycling route, a cycling track, a road race, those too those clubs are having trouble now, even cycling clubs are not getting the membership "

Well its all motor bikes now?

"Yes, its all topsy turvy, with the junior cycling we lost a lot of junior cycling when the little motor bikes came out and consequently then it came to fun riding which they call it today, BMX, One of the clubs, Altona, they were pretty strong in amateur cycling, but they formed a BMX club down there, now they've got the amateur cycling in with the BMX, joining the two. Well I hope you can get something out of it, you can put the tape on and if you don't want to use it, you're not compelled to use it, just volunteer to. Around about 1936 I joined the Northcote and District Caged Bird and Budgerigar Society and in 1930 I joined the Victorian Caged Bird and Budgerigar Society, that was showing birds."

Where were their club rooms?

"The Victorian was held in the Temperance Hall in the City which no longer exists there now, United Northcote was held in the Fairfield, not Fairfield, Northcote Thornbury dispensary Hall. On the personal side I showed birds until a period around about 1958. I adjudicated from 1958 to 1968 I had 20 odd years there showing and judging birds, that's on the personal side. Budgerigars, Caged Birds and Finches. The present Society which was Northcote is now known as United Heidelberg Combination Society. You meet these people in the societies and you become lifelong friends with them."

Yes, that's right.

"It was a matter of sticking there."