

## Women's Missionary Union

The Henderson Branch began on March 26, 1929 when Mrs. Harries of the Auckland Presbyterial Association presided. The first President was Mrs. C. Perkins, the wife of the minister, and the Secretary - Treasurer, Mrs. Membery. There were seventeen members. Later the numbers fell to six (1935) and rose again slowly. In 1958 there were twenty-two members on the Roll but the average attendance is from twelve to sixteen. Usually the wife of the Minister has been President, but at times other members have officiated and at the time of this Jubilee Mrs. L. Fordyce occupies the office. Mrs. A. Hepburn was Secretary for eleven years. The Branch has fulfilled a very valuable function in keeping the missionary interest to the fore in a parish which has always been struggling to make ends meet. If it had not been for the members' efforts, very little would have been subscribed for the wider work of the Church. We owe a great deal to those who for thirty two of the fifty years have met monthly, collected funds, distributed Harvest Fields and other missionary literature, attended the Presbyterial Association and the Annual Conference and brought back the information and inspiration of these gatherings. May their efforts be greatly enlarged and blessed in the next fifty years.



### Youth Work

The first mention of Presbyterian Youth Work is in the minutes of the 1912 Annual Meeting when on Sept. 24th a Sunday School Report was read. It seems certain that prior to the Church being built there was a combined Sunday School Meeting in the Wesleyan Church and before that in the School. In 1913 Mr. Younger appears as the Superintendent and in 1916 there were 40 children on the Roll. The following year the Roll was 66 with an average attendance of 36. Seven teachers are recorded in 1919 but a number of children had left the district presumably with their parents. In 1921 the Roll was 80, average attendance 43, 8 teachers and a Credit Balance of £63 - the first sign that it was desired to build a Sunday School Hall.

Things did not go too well after this. In 1922 the Roll was 40 - there had been a large exodus probably because of the after-war depression. In 1923 the Roll was up again to 66, average attendance 30 and in 1924 the Roll 72, attendance 33 with 8 teachers but before the end of the year the Roll was down to 50.

In September 1925 Mr. Younger resigned as Superintendent and Mr. Law took over pro tem. Mr. D. Crawford became the Superintendent in April 1927. He resigned in November 1929 and Mr. Blackwood took his place but unfortunately he died suddenly in October 1930. We have no word of a Superintendent being appointed but Mr. D. McLeod gave in the report in 1932. In 1933 Mr. Fordyce was Superintendent. In 1936 and 1937 Mr. D. McLeod gave in the reports and in 1939 and 1940 Mr. A. Webb.

In 1940 Hobsonville was joined with Henderson and Annual Meetings thereafter received reports from a number of Sunday Schools throughout the District, some of them called undenominational.

Unfortunately throughout this period no figures are given as to the number of children or teachers, only the amount of the balance at the end of the year. An account has been given elsewhere of the building of the Sunday School Hall in Henderson. In recent years the Sunday School has grown under the care of the Superintendent, Mr. A. Webb. Mrs. N. Cameron did great work with the younger children and also with the Busy Bees. She was followed by Mrs. Gilmour, a great worker. Mrs. Lindsay also made a valuable contribution until her resignation in this year.

The finding of a sufficient number of teachers has all along been a constant difficulty. It is still with us. We hope the General Assembly's scheme for Lay Training will come to fruition and that it will in time help to solve this problem.

## Sunday School Class



## Bible Classes

The information about these is meagre. There was an Adult Bible Class in 1916, so Mr. Butterfield reported to the Annual Meeting and Miss Gilberd was in charge of a Junior Class. But because of lack of leaders these activities came to an end at the beginning of 1917. In 1921 Miss French began a Friday night class for girls. She came from the city to do this and carried on for four years. In 1922 the Roll was 8, average attendance 5 and a credit balance of 3/8. By this time there was a Boys Class with a Roll of 12, and attendance 6. The following year Mr. B. Haggio was in charge. Later he was followed by Mr. Law. In 1927 Miss C. Knaggs took over the Juniors but in June of the following year she died and then her mother took her place.

In 1932 there was a Senior Class as well as a Junior and a Bible Class at Swanson. After 1934 the work seems to have languished as no further reports were presented to Annual Meetings until 1939. In 1947 there were three classes, two girls and one boy.

With the coming of Mr. W. Gilmour the Bible Class activities took on a new life. Both he and his wife made their home a place for the young people. Rev. Angus Sutherland also was very eager to put this part of work on a sound footing, Mr. Robinson too has sought to strengthen it. In 1956 the Roll had grown from 14 to 24. The following year there were 18 in the Senior and 11 in the Junior. With the departure of Mr. Gilmour and Mr. R. Findlay our leadership suffered a great loss, which has been somewhat reflected in the membership. Other Youth activities have been the Cradle Roll with its care for the pre-school children, the Busy Bees, which is the children's means of knowing about and helping Missions and the Brigades - both Boys and Girls. There is no space to go into detail about these but they have all occupied the time and talents of a number of helpers, and have helped to fill out the programme whereby the growing generation has been kept in touch with the Church. It should be mentioned that the Brigades are sponsored by the Methodist and Baptist Churches as well as our own.

### Women's Fellowship

A very recent introduction to the Congregation's organisation is the Women's Fellowship. It began in February 1958 with a membership of twenty and has continued since then to serve a very useful purpose in bringing a number of the younger married women into touch with the life of the Church. The first President was Mrs. G. Laurence and the Secretary Mrs. B. Burrell. It seems likely that the Fellowship will take over some of the activities formerly carried on by the Ladies Guild. The present President is Mrs. J. McDonald, wife of our Session Clerk. Responsibilities undertaken by the Fellowship include conducting a creche during morning services and organising the annual parish dinners. This group is organising the Jubilee Dinner. The Fellowship has helped to staff the Primary Department of the Sunday School.

### The Indoor Bowling Club

This commenced in 1956 as a Social Club but soon developed into the narrower role of a Bowling Club, as a number of divided interests proved an obstacle to good attendances. As such it has provided an opportunity of happy fellowship for a limited number of men and women mostly in the older group. The club has paid for all its equipment and has a good working balance. Prominent in its affairs have been Mrs. N. Conquer, secretary-Treasurer for several years, Messrs. E.L. Goodenough, A. Webb, and A. Hepburn. Our minister takes as active an interest in the Club as his other duties allow.

L'Envoi

In this short story of more than fifty years, there are sure to be inaccuracies and omissions. A Session Book for 1911 to 1920 is missing and so is a Managers' Book for 1926 to 1930. Even those books that we have are often lacking in accurate detail and couched in such vague generalities as to be of little value. Nevertheless there is a story here with lessons for the future. May those who make the history of the next fifty years provide the historian of 2011 A.D. with something that is even more worth writing about.