

**St. Anne's Chapel  
Knees Road, Park Orchards**

The early history of this property was recorded in contemporary newspaper articles and journals, when it was opened during the Second World War as a purpose-built Army Chapel. It was for the use of the Australian Army at Camp Pell (Royal Park). The chapel was funded by the Catholic Welfare Organisation (CWO). The supervising builder was Ted Sheahan,<sup>182</sup> a local Templestowe builder and estate agent, who from 1916 lived at 17-21 Parker Street and in the 1920s built the new Templestowe Memorial Hall.<sup>183</sup>

The 1940s hut was the only purpose-built Army chapel constructed for the Catholic Welfare Organisation. All the other chapels were converted Army huts.<sup>184</sup> The new chapel was opened by Sir Winston Duggan, Victorian Governor, on 9 March 1943, and blessed by Archbishop Mannix. Father Joseph Quinn, a Vincentian (an American Order of Priests) was resident chaplain at Camp Pell from the opening of the chapel.<sup>185</sup>

An account of the opening of the hut appeared in the *Advocate* (the Catholic journal) on 18 March 1943. The new building was described as "a commodious structure equipped with chaplain's quarters and a room where the Blessed Sacrament will be served." There were writing and general recreation facilities in the hut and an annexe with a large size billiard table. Provision was also made for a canteen.

The hut was later used by the American Army personnel when Camp Pell became a transit base for the American Army.<sup>186</sup>

From 1946, when the Army establishment was being disbanded at Camp Pell, the chapel was used as a church by district parishes at Templestowe and Park Orchards. In 1946, Father P. Power, RC Parish Priest at Heidelberg purchased the former Army chapel from the CWO for use as a church at Templestowe. Previously, district Catholics had to travel to Heidelberg for church services.<sup>187</sup> In 1942 they met in the Templestowe Memorial Hall.

The local firm, L. Arthur and Son dismantled the former Army chapel and moved it to Atkinson Street at a cost of 100 pounds. It was then reassembled by the original builder, Ted Sheahan. Its conversion and improvements carried out cost 1207 pounds.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> *Argus*. 10 March 1943.

<sup>183</sup> Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter Nov. 197

<sup>184</sup> Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter.

<sup>185</sup> *Advocate*, 18 March 1943.

<sup>186</sup> Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter. Nov. 197

<sup>187</sup> Irvine Green, *Templestowe*, 1982, p. 23.

<sup>188</sup> *Advocate*, 11 June 1947.

An article in the *Advocate* of 11 June 1947 titled, "Army Structure Makes Beautiful Church," told of the blessing ceremony by Archbishop Mannix. The building was now dedicated to St. Kevin. The last Mass was held at St. Kevin's on 28 July 1968, a new church being built on a site in Herlihys Road<sup>189</sup>

The former Army chapel was then taken to Park Orchards. Catholic services there had previously been held in the Chalet on the Park Orchards County Club Estate. The 1940s chapel was renamed in June 1970 when it became St. Anne's and was opened on its present Knees Road site, after being re-roofed and repainted.<sup>190</sup>

Of *local social and historical significance* for its associations with Camp Pell during the Second World War period as a purpose-built Army chapel, and for its subsequent associations with district parishes at Templestowe and Park Orchards, and with the local builder, Ted Sheahan.

### **Former Hilldene 36 Octantis Street, East Doncaster.**

The history of this property goes back to 1885 when William Cronan( or Cronin), farmer, was rated for land in Section Road.<sup>191</sup> This was later identified as the Hilldene site on the corner of Blackburn and Andersons Creek Roads. An early cottage (incorporated into the later house in the 1930s) was built on this land and completed by 1887-89. It was owned and occupied by John and Thomas Cronan, farmers<sup>192</sup>

The Cronans, who became orchardists, were early district farmers. William Cronan purchased a farm allotment in the Carlton Estate, where his modest home and land were rated in the earliest surviving 1863 district rate records.<sup>193</sup> An 1874 map showed this property near Edger Road and the Koonung Creek.<sup>194</sup> William still owned his Koonung Creek house on 17 acres in the 1880s<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter Nov 197 -

<sup>190</sup> Irvine Green, *Park Orchards*, 1983, p.16.

<sup>191</sup> Shire of Bulleen RB 1885 Doncaster Riding No.150 (NAV 18 pounds).

<sup>192</sup> Shire of Bulleen RB 1887 No.169 (NAV 35 pounds); 1888 No.186 (NAV 151 pounds).

<sup>193</sup> Templestowe District Board RB 1863 No.37 (NAV 12 pounds 10 shillings).

<sup>194</sup> *Plan of Bulleen*, Parish of Bulleen Plan 526B, 1874.

<sup>195</sup> Shire of Bulleen RB 1888 Doncaster Riding No.187.