

## Helping Region's Youth

*Jan Hunter*

Gymnasium classes, physical training, netball and boxing were offered at the North Albury Youth Club, which began in All Saint's Anglican Church, in Bellevue Street, around 1944.

When membership expanded the club purchased the Red Shield Hall at Bonegilla and a great community effort saw it transported to Buckingham Street east, where young and old laid paths, painted, and brought the floor up to dancing standard. There was also a kitchen, a canteen, meeting and card rooms.

Shortly after opening, membership was at 180 with four cricket teams, two netball teams, two football teams and a gymnasium class of 33 young men led by Tommy Barns, assisted by Norm Brumm.



North Albury Youth Club hall,  
Buckingham Street, North Albury, c1947

Erwin Nelson, formerly of Wirth's Circus, introduced high wire work and many will remember Gwen Keillor swinging out over the audience during a performance at the Plaza Theatre

The hall quickly became the hub of North Albury social activities. Weekly dances took place with Reggie Koehler's band and Alan Chick as MC. The hall was hired for weddings, baby shows, and twenty first birthday parties. The Presbyterian Church held services there from 1947-1950.

The founder and financial guarantor of the club was Arthur Knoble, of North Street, who felt that 99 per cent of boys and girls were good and would automatically become useful citizens if they got a guiding hand once in a while. Arthur was the inaugural president

and Ralph Marks was an early honorary secretary. Another helper, Ron James, was also at the forefront from the beginning.

In 1959 the North Albury Football Club held its annual banquet at the hall but there were plans for new club rooms at Bunton Park.

At the end of 1960 the hall was purchased by Lavington scouts and re-erected at Muddy Creek Reserve in Mutsch Street.

FA Stow acquired the land and he built flats there in 1963.

The club was unique in that it was non-denominational and it inspired similar clubs in South, East and West Albury, as well as Lavington.