

CEBS INVOLVEMENT

The Ven. C B Patterson

My original involvement with CEBS was as Branch Governor more or less ex-officio while Assistant Curate in the Parish of Port Pirie 1961-2. There was no active involvement with CEBS (SA) at this time, and because of distance from the city, the Branch operated more or less independently.

In 1975 I became the Rector of O'Halloran Hill. There was very little in the way of work with young people and two of the first programmes I set in place were to establish a Branch of both the CEBS and the Girls' Friendly Society. The parish was very fortunate to have a number of able and willing people to act as leaders in these branches and the Branch Governor of CEBS was Dr Ken Pidgeon, a long-time and experienced CEBS leader from his time in parishes in Melbourne.

The branch operated quite successfully and remains one of only two surviving branches in South Australia. Because O'Halloran Hill (later Morphett Vale parish when O'Halloran Hill was divided into two separate parishes) was in the Diocese of The Murray and I suppose because of the proximity of Morphett Vale to the city, I was invited to accept the formal role of Vice-President representing the Diocese of the Murray. This was a non-executive and honorary position.

In 1978 I was elected State Chairman and remained in that position until 1983. Somewhere during this time, Bob Brandenburg invited me to lunch at the Maid and Magpie Hotel. I recall being somewhat puzzled by this invitation. I was sure there was some sort of agenda but at the time I could not discern what it was.

On moving to the Parish of Campbelltown in 1984, it was my intention to retire from active involvement in CEBS, as there was no longer a branch in that parish. However, Archbishop Rayner specifically asked that I retain an association and I remained on the State Council for some years, first as Vice-Chairman 1984 – 1986 and State Treasurer 1987 – 1989.

In all the time that I was a member of the State Council I am not aware of any accusation of impropriety being raised. There was some concern about the branch at Plympton, not because there was any suggestion of anything untoward but because the branch was not usually actively involved with other State activities. It operated in an independent fashion, rather aloof from other activities. I recall that Bob Brandenburg, as Chief Commissioner, was asked to check the branch out. His verbal advice was that "that was just the way they were" and there was nothing we ought to be doing about it.

I was not involved with nor did I attend any of the National Camps held outside South Australia. The (1979) National Camp was held at Reynella in the Parish of Morphett Vale where I was the incumbent at the time. (Sub-camps were held at several other locations during the period of the National Camp.) Bob Brandenburg was not in charge of this event although he was a participant. During the period of the Camp and subsequently no accusation of impropriety of any kind was raised against any person to those responsible for the running of the event.

During my entire association with CEBS (SA) no accusation formal or informal was raised to my knowledge regarding improper sexual advances or actions of any person associated with the organization.

Following Bob Brandenburg's being charged and his subsequent suicide, the next State Annual Meeting provided an opportunity to raise the matter with the then current members, the majority of whom were members of quite long standing, up to 20 years or more in some cases. The question was specifically put, "Was any of the present members ever aware of any of the accusations which were then being made about Mr Brandenburg?" Without exception, all indicated that the events of the last few weeks were the first that any had heard about these matters.

Wednesday, 10 September 2003

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Bob Brandenburg", written in a cursive style. The signature is located below the date and is followed by a horizontal line.