



John and Rosina Tully - late 1930s

## CHURCH OF CHRIST – John Tully (1864-1941)

John's father, Thomas in 1864 and mother Maria in 1865 joined the Doncaster Church of Christ. It was only about two years later, that Thomas was elected as a Trustee of the Church.

In 1878, John aged 14 with 12 other young people travelled to Swanston St. Melbourne Church and were baptised by Mr Hindle, afterwards they were taken to a Cafe for a meal, which would have been a memorable occasion for those young people.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL 1881

Through Thomas "Tom" Petty's influence, John was made Superintendent and with the help of Mrs Behrens and Mrs Wilson (Catherine Clay) commenced a Sunday school at the Church, holding that position until 1923 when he retired after many years of continuous service with most being two schools each Sunday. There were also other meetings involving his time during those 40 years, such as Teachers' meetings and meetings with the Minister.

His wife Rosina, also retired but her term of involvement is said to be about 5 years less. A report in the Australian Christian Watchman dated 1st Feb 1882 page 119, would have been his first report on the first six months of the Sunday school.

In about 1890, John Tully was presented with a beautiful writing desk from Parents and Friends of the Sunday School. There are other records of presentations to John, by his Bible Class of a Silver Watch in 1896. Later in 1906 at the celebration of the 43rd Church and 25th Sunday School Anniversary, he was surprised by being presented with a Waltham Gold Watch and Chain inscribed as follows: - "Presented to John Tully Founder and Superintendent for 25 years of the Doncaster Sunday School as a token of esteem".

In 1911, two classrooms were added to the 1864 weatherboard church building. About 1920, the need for extra accommodation for Sunday school was filled by the erection of a Kindergarten room, which remained in use until the mid-1960s. Donations and John's contribution enabled the building to be erected debt-free.

## CHURCH OFFICER

A vacancy occurred in the Church Officers Board in October 1884. John was elected to that position at age 20 years 9 months; he retained that position until he died in 1941. A term of almost 57 years, during which his service to the Church, Officers Board and filling functions such as President, Treasurer, Chairman of Committees, and Building Committee, as well as commitments as Speaker, Reader, Janitor, Lamp Lighter, Doorman, as well as Table preparation, and Trustee. He capably filled in as a substitute for a Speaker or other member at short notice and took on engagements at Churches at East Doncaster and Oakleigh.

## RECITATION

He was also efficient at reciting the "Badge of Blue" without missing a line, as well as speaking on Bible Subjects or Temperance work without notes.

Another recitation was 'I Think I Can, I Know I Can, I Thought I Could, I Knew I Could.' His expression was excellent. John and Rosina were representatives of the Church at annual Conferences and he was honoured by being appointed for one year as President of the Victorian Churches of Christ.

## CHURCH CONFERENCE PRESIDENT 1917/18

a report published in The Christian.

*"John Tully made an excellent President, efficiently conducting the business, and kindly firmly guiding the course of discussion. All present felt that the thanks of the Conference, given at the close of Saturday's Session, had been richly earned by Bro. Tully, who for his worth and works sake possesses the esteem and love of the Brethren, In his Presidential address Bro. Tully referred in a feeling manner to the war crisis, to the splendid Heroism and Sacrifice of our men, and the sorrowing homes in our land, expressing the hope that the long war may cease, and the day of Brotherhood of man comes. The year's work was reviewed and thanks returned to God and the Brethren for the success achieved.*

*The President, who had graciously welcomed all visitors, referred to the help and sympathy of his Colleagues of the Executive Committee, and in particular to the invaluable services of Secretary Bro. Thomas Haggar."*