The First Steps

• In 1947 the first step towards the formation of a Templer Community in Australia was the purchase of a farm in Boronia from Mr Sid Sutton and to subdivide it into building blocks (see next slide).

• In 1949 the first families moved in and on 29 December 1951 the Boronia Community was officially formed.

• Collecting funds for the Community Church-Hall started in 1954. Building itself started 11 February 1956.

• On 7 September 1957 the Opening Ceremony of the first Templer-Hall took place, with lots of guests and Australian dignitaries present.

• Bayswater and Bentleigh were still in the planning stages.
The Boronia Development

In November 1948 Rudi Höfer bought - and moved into - the old farmhouse of Mr Sutton, followed soon by Hans Haar, Friedrich Häring, Gottlieb Löbert, Lina Baldenhofer and Wilfried Imberger. The Boronia community was constituted 29 December 1951 at the Erich Bulach’s house. At the inaugural meeting Willi Herrmann was elected community head, with Otto Löbert as secretary and treasurer. Committee members elected were Frieder Bulach and Rudi Höfer. Membership fee was set at one shilling per month.

In November 1952 the two blocks of land on which the hall now stands were purchased from Herman and Rosa Wied (of Bentleigh). To pay for this land the membership contribution was increased from 1s to 10shillings per month.

In 1956 Erich Weller was elected Community Head with Kurt Haar as Secretary and Frieder Bulach Treasurer. (Map Wilhelm Sawatzky)
Clearing the Land

We believe the block at the back belonged at that stage to Gerhard Dreher, who had built a shed from tree logs on it. Imbergers bought it later and it is now Messner’s.

The three men working on Imberger’s property next to the Hall block are: Walter Scheerer, Bruno Venus and Heini Imberger.

The children in the foreground are: (L-R) Jörg, Kurt, Hennig and Rolf Imberger.
View from Heini Imbergers across to Wilfried Imbergers

Sitting in the sandpit are the Imberger twins Heinz and Helmut
Hall footings with the Toilet Block in the background

The hollow cement blocks were all hand made, perfect with a wooden brick-making form
The Walls

Otto Löbert – Erich Weller

Frieder Bulach
Roofing

You can see the still raw cement bricks on the outside walls prior to rendering
Just finished

The next slide shows a photo taken at the time and made into a fund-raising postcard. Note the unfinished footpath, no fence or trees yet
Fundraising Postcard
Inaugural Address by Erich Weller
A Bouquet of Flowers for Erich
At the official opening of the Hall the young people of Boronia enacted the play about the "Bürgers of Schilda", the story of how the township of Schilda built its council chambers. The bürgers forgot to put in windows and were trying to bring light into the building by catching it outside in paper bags. They quickly carried the bags full of sunshine into the dark hall and emptied them there. In the end a passing traveler enlightened the baffled bürgers. The girl with the paper bag looks like Resi. And the councilors in the back (r-l) Kurt Imberger, Uli Hoefer and Rolf Imberger.
On the Back Steps

You can just make out the new line of shrubs planted in the front of the picture.
Boronia Hall Postcard
A Notice in the Local Paper at the time

“Musical Items were presented by violinist Richard Hornung and a choir of members of the community…”

“The Templer Community numbers about 1300 in Australia… of which there are 170 in Boronia”.

“It is a pity no official plaque was fixed to the building to commemorate the day”.

Opening of Boronia community hall

German and Australian accents mingled at a function to mark the official opening of a new hall in Boronia.

This neat, attractive, modern hall in Wadi Street, in a typical Australian setting, was built entirely by the voluntary labour of German settlers — many of them are now naturalised Australians.

This is the Templer Community Hall and represents two years of solid voluntary labour by the members of the Templer Community in Boronia. It is the first Templer Hall to be opened in Australia.

Many leading citizens were among the audience at the official opening. They included the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. C. L. Chandler, Sir George Knox, the Hon. and Mrs. R. R. Rawson, Cr. and Mrs. Allan Chandler, Cr. and Mrs. Guy Turner, and Cr. and Mrs. A. H. Kleinert.

The hall was officially opened by Dr. R. Hoffmann, of Melbourne, the head of the Templar Society in Australia.

Welcoming the guests, he said that members of the Community were grateful to the Government and people of Australia who had made them welcome in their community.

GREAT STRESS

“We realise that an intensive immigration programme put the old inhabitants to great deal of stress and embarrassment, particularly in the field of human relations. It is to the great credit of the people of Australia that they have shown themselves friendly and helpful and sympathetic to migrants in general and to those in particular who, despite their shortcomings, earnestly try to become good citizens and subjects of the Commonwealth,” Dr. Hoffmann said.

The Templer Community numbers about 1300 in Australia the majority living in Victoria. There are 170 in Boronia.

The community originally established a settlement in Palestine in the 1860’s. They migrated to Australia after the war.

Musical items were presented by violinist Richard Hornung and a choir of members of the Community.

After the opening ceremony guests enjoyed afternoon tea and chatted with their hosts.

The hall was much admired. Simply designed, it is painted in light modern colours, has bright curtains at the windows, and was made even brighter by bowls of spring flowers.
Boronia’s Founding Generation

Imberger’s Schwalbennest
The Hall brickwork has been rendered and looks ready for painting.
Erich Bulach’s House
Children of the Wilfried and Heini Imberger families

L to R: Helga, Rolf, Hennig, Dietlind, Heidrun, Kurt, Dieter, Helmut and Heinz
Confirmation 1954

Left to right: Walter Eckstein, Werner Lange, Traude Hoefer, Gretel Frank, Bruni Groezinger, Ursula Kuebler, Gudrun Blaich, Heinz Edelmaier, Irmgard Kuebler, Ruediger Froeschle, Ursula Frank, Gertrude Woerz, Helga Imberger, Lore Edelmaier, Rolf Woerz. – Elder, Wilhelm Eppinger
Confirmation 1956
Left to Right: Wolfgang Blaich, Peter Bruessel, Hennig Imberger, Sigi Messner, Mr. Wilhelm Eppinger, Joerg Imberger, Uli Hoefer, Rolf Imberger, Rolf Edelmaier.
Fritz and Olga Kroh

On 29 April 1961 at the Boronia Hall entrance. The two cute attentive youngsters are Gary and Gisela Schulz.
Kroh’s Wedding
Wedding of Herbert and Imi Lobert

12 March 1960 at the Boronia Hall entrance.

Ernst & Anne Loebert, Herbert & Imi, Helene & Walter Kuebler
Wedding of Alfred and Ursula Klink

Acres and acres of Brussel Sprouts

Here we look across Klink’s place down to Mr. Sutton’s bush-retreat, where he lived after he sold his farm to the Boronia Templers. Mount Dandenong in the background, still without its TV towers.
Klinks in Burke Road

The house was built from a peculiar type of brick, called Breeze-Brick, a mixture of cinder, sand and cement. Larger than the standard Besser bricks and surprisingly light. It needed a mortar render to make it weatherproof. Built by the Edelmaier / Pisch group these houses were usually finished in Hans Pisch’s famous grey speckle coating.
Family Gathering at Gottlob Loeberts

The families Hornung, Loebert, Klink and Sawatzky at the Loeberts Place.
From left to right: Olga, Martha, Manfred, Elise, Maria, Erika H, Peter, Friedrich, Hans H, Edith, Erhard Volker, Hans K, Wilfried, Gottlob, Arnolf, Ernst, Herman, Front (kneeling) Hiltrud and Erika K.
Hornung’s Luzerne
Hornungs Truck can do lots of things

One of the few vehicles in the Templer community at that time was Hornung’s red truck. It was used for everything. Apart from taking weekly produce to market it was used for harvesting hay to taken the family to the Centre Road Bentleigh Saal. Seen here: Friedrich Hornung loading hay, Peter Hornung driving and Maria Klink with the rake. The Klinks lived with Hornungs on their arrival in 1951, until their house in Burke Road was built. Then the old truck was loaded with cases, boxes and beds for the 3km journey to Burke Road. (see next slide)
On the way to Burke Road
The Hornungs Quintet

From left to right: Peter, Irmgard, Richard, Erika and Hans.
Hornung’s “Bonny” Clydesdale

Before the days when the little grey Ferguson tractors revolutionised farming in about 1954, horses used to do all the work: plough, scarify, cultivate, pull the cart and mow the grass. A little story goes with this picture: When the people of Boronia started building their houses, Hazelwood Road was just a dirt track and quickly turned into a mud-hole. Delivery trucks got stuck and eventually refused to make deliveries. Gottlob Loebert was a very resourceful man. One day he borrowed Hornung’s Bonny and a moldboard plough, took a bee-line from Dorset Road (Ringwood Rd) and ploughed the whole length of Hazelwood Road up into lands. This allowed the water to drain off to the Blind Creek at the bottom and dry it out enough to make it useable again.

Richard and Peter with Bonny under the apple tree at Luzerne.
Rudi and Helene Hoefer

When Mr Sutton’s land was subdivided Rudi took the old farmhouse with a few acres of land around it, and lived in it right to the end.
Boronia Hall in 1975
Unusual view of the Hall

Helmut Imberger is a qualified Tree Surgeon. He took this birds-eye view picture of the hall from atop a tall Gum tree at the bottom of Willer's place.
Hans Pisch and Alfred Edelmaier

building a shed for Hans Klink in Burke Road
Ernst and Magda Scheerle
Gottlob and Elise Löbert Familie

L - R: Gerhard, Elise, Olga, Manfred, Arnolf, Gottlob and Herman (Werner is in Germany)
Hans and Gretel Hornung’s Wedding

L - R: Erika, Helene, Friedrich, Erich, Gretel, Hans, Rolf, Richard, Emma, Irmgard and Kurt
Irmgard and Gunter Arndt Wedding
Married on 25 May in Boronia, seen here at the following celebration in Bayswater
Left to right, Else and Erich Hermann, Irmgard and Guenter (Strups) Arndt.
Herman and Helga Loebert
Married 23rd November 1968. On the left Helga’s brother Rolf.
Deckers, Hornungs and Klinks

Family Picture at Joachim Klinks Confirmation, taken at Theo and Ulla Klink’s in Scoresby Road.

from left to right:
Back row: Theodor, Manfred, Erika, a friend of Joachim, Ursula, Alfred, Fritz.
Middle row: Ulla, Joachim, Heide, Monika, Lore.
Front row: Hanna Decker, Maria Klink, Helene and Friedrich Hornung.
On the ground front: Paul, Ulrich, Andreas, Mark, Cornelia, Frieder.
Celebrating in the Boronia Hall

We now jump from the past to the present and look at Boronia as it is today. Camera in hand we walked along the well-known and well-trodden streets and took pictures left and right of the old houses.

Some of them have already disappeared, given way to the developer's bulldozers and turned into unit assemblies.
Let’s walk through today’s Boronia

• Down Wadi Street
  – The Boronia Hall, 23 August 2001
  – Heini Imberger (Helmut lives there now)

• Along Phyllis Avenue
  – Karl & Lotte Trefz
  – Herman & Helga Loebert
  – Manfred & Sharon Nied
  – Fritz & Olga Kroh
  – Walter & Lucie Scheerer
  – Sigi & Heidrun Messner
  – Friedrich & Gisela Sawatzky
  – Walter & Hulda Lange’s old House
  – Hennig Imberger
  – Hella Edelmaier
  – Housing Development on Erich Bulach’s Place
  – Wilhelm & Helga Sawatzky
The Boronia Hall as it is now, in 2001
Standing at the fence is Ursula Klink. The big oak tree is dwarfing even the bell tower of the hall.
Helmut Imberger
You cannot see the Schwalbennest anymore
View of what was Gudrun Luh/Hardegg’s block
Karl and Lotte Trefz
Herman and Helga Loeber
Manfred and Sharon Nied
Walter and Lucie Scheerer
Sigi and Heidrun Messner
Walter and Hulda Lange
Hennig Imberger
The last bit of genuine bush left in Boronia. And then there is the house that Willi Juergensen built!
Hella Edelmaier
Imberger / Bulach Developments
Wilhelm and Helga Sawatzky
Let’s keep on Walking:

• Down Wattletree Road
  – Uli & Inge Hoefer
  – Herbert & Irmgard Loebert
  – Imberger Development
  – View of Boronia Bowling Alley
  – Imberger Flats

• Hazelwood Road
  – Ernst & Anne Loebert
  – Willi & Verna Loebert
  – Rudi & Ilse Imberger
  – Magda Persztik
  – Walter & Elfriede Hahn
  – Boronia’s Vacant Block
  – Gottlob Loebert’s Old House
  – Manfred & Minnie Haering
  – Ernst & Magda Scheerle
Uli and Inge Hoefer
Herbert and Irmgard Loebert
Development on Wilfried Imberger’s Land

Looking up from Wattletree Road over the vacant Block at the back of the Boronia Hall.

Here the developers are really knocking at our door.
Bowling Alley from Wattletree Road

The same view, a bit more to the left, showing the Kegelbahn and the vacant area where a lot of the early-days picnics and festivities took place. You can just see the kids’ swing at the top.
Imberger Flats opposite Wadi Street
Willi and Verna Loebert
Rudi and Ilse Imberger’s Place
Walter and Elfriede Hahn’s Place
Manfred and Minnie Haering’s Place
Ernst and Magda Scheerle’s Place
More Places along Aubrey Road/Grove

- Erich & Nella Weller
- Gotthold Schnerring
- Otto & Annelise Trefze’s first House
- Irene Blaich’s Place
- Franz & Ida Messner
- Walter & Helene Kuebler
- Dieter and Traude Glenk’s first House
- Otto & Annelise Trefz
- Hans-Karl Baldenhofer
- Werner & Mary Hoefer’s Place
- Gottlieb Lobert
- Otto & Leni Lobert
- Selma Weiberle
- Friedrich & Maria Haering
- Jakob & Maria Haar / Guenter & Ruth Haar
Erich and Nella Weller
Gotthold Schnerring
Family Irene Blaich’s House
Franz and Ida Messner’s House
Walter and Helene Kuebler’s House
Dieter and Traude Glenk’s first House
Hans-Karl Baldenhofer
Werner and Mary Hoefer’s Place
Gottlieb and Martha Loebert’s’s House
Otto and Leni Lobert’s House
Selma Weiberle’s Place
Friedrich and Maria Haering’s House
A View of the two Haar Houses
Along Sutton Avenue and Dorset Road

- Sutton Avenue
  - Alfred & Tusnelda Edelmaier
  - Rudi & Helene Hoefer
  - Hoefer House
  - Baldenhofer’s House
  - Baldenhofer’s Garages

- Dorset Road
  - Edgar Knoll
  - Hans & Veronika Richter
  - Willi & Irma Richter
  - Christian & Meta Herrmann
  - Kurt & Trude Haar
  - The Blind Creek crossing
  - Knox Arboretum
  - Boronia Road Crossing
Alfred and Tusse Edelmaier’s House
Rudi and Helene Hoefer’s old Farm

Hoefer's farm became a whole new sub-division.

This is the entrance to it. The old farm house used to be where that green roof can be seen.

Bernhard Hoefer lives in the old brick-shed that used to be on Hoefer’s place.
The Hoefer’s House in 1993
Erich and Werner Baldenhofer
That used to be the Baldenhofer Garages
Edgar and his mother Bertha Knoll lived here together for many years. In the early days of Templer settlement in Boronia, Bertha often used to provide accommodation in this house for newcomers to the community.
Hans and Veronika Richter’s Place
Willi and Irma Richter
Christian and Meta Herrmann
Kurt and Trude Haar
Haar’s old place?

There was supposed to have been one of the last remaining original TRITON Construction houses here. We could not find it any more.

Below are two pictures of the other houses there.
Dorset Road at the Blind Creek

That used to be the Dorset Road Bridge across the Blind Creek. It has become an underpass for a Pedestrian/Cycle Path. And the blind Creek? There it is, what’s left of it, in a concrete pipe underground. An engineered depression above to cater for exceptional, 50 year floods. Standing at the rail is Ursula Klink.
The Knox Arboretum
Boronia Station has gone underground

In 1998 the infamous Boronia Level Crossing was eliminated by putting the railway line underground. Dorset Road and Boronia Road are now a normal intersection.
A Shopping Centre sits on Top
The township Boronia snuggles in at the foot of Mt Dandenong. In winter the mountain is often shrouded in low-hanging clouds.

Friedrich Hornung used to tell the story that when they first arrived here in 1948 the weather was foggy and closed in for two weeks. One clear morning they woke up and marveled at the mountain range outside their window. In our time we have seen the Dandenongs white with snow, red with fires and yellow with sunshine, and watched the four TV towers crown its crest.
Boronia Rd towards Mt Dandenong now

Looking down Boronia Road from Cypress Ave. The new Safeway supermarket is on the left, and access to the station via the new traffic lights at Erica Ave. No more barriers, no more Level Crossing.
Dorset Road Looking North from 7-11

Boronia certainly has changed
The End

If we have missed you
If you would like to correct something
If you would like to add something

Please let us know

alfred.ursula@bigpond.com