

NEWS FROM COUNTRY CENTRES

BARCALDINE

In a street corner discussion last week-end on the cost of living, one of the speakers said it was nothing compared with the cost of dying in Barcaldine. He cited the cost of one funeral recently under the Barcaldine Shire Council's new scheme for burials. He stated the items totalled £46/13/-, and asked how many people could afford to pay that amount. Dissatisfaction with present arrangements is growing in Barcaldine.

Rev. Father M. Pyke, who has been parish priest in Barcaldine for the past eight years, departed on transfer for Mackay recently. Father Pyke was very popular here and although many residents and parishioners wanted to give him a public farewell he refused to have it. However, before his departure many parties were arranged by the respective guilds and sodalities. Rev. Father K. Bagley, who was curate, was also transferred and he also left for Rockhampton. During his three and a half years in Barcaldine Father Bagley also endeared himself to all residents. He, too, would not approve of a public farewell.

There were three deaths recently probably hastened by the extremely hot weather. The first was Mrs Margaret McHugh at the age of 85 years. Mrs McHugh was a very old resident of Barcaldine. She was born at Ballycoy, County Clare, Ireland. She was predeceased by her husband many years back. Another death was that of Mr L. E. M. Wehl 73, owner of Auteil selection in the Aramac district. Born at Mount Gambier, he lived in the Surat district for many years before coming to the Central West 15 years ago. The third death was that of Mr David Thompson, 76. Mr Thompson followed all classes of bush work, and is survived by his wife, eight sons and five daughters.

Owing to the hot weather there is a big demand for ice, the price of which has been advanced from 7d per 7 lb block to 8d.

Owing to the shortage of labour and materials much of the damage done in the recent cyclone has been held over, but a start has been made repairing the Royal Hotel, which received considerable damage.

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A large number of friends gathered at the residence of Mr and Mrs G. H. Meacham, the occasion being the 21st birthday of their son Clive. The usual happy time was spent, and the young man received many useful presents, besides the good wishes of all.

Mr J. P. Kavanagh presided at the February meeting of the Barcaldine branch of the ALP. The Barcaldine Shire Council invited representation at a meeting to consider making a presentation to Dr S. M. Stephenson prior to his departure from the district. After members had spoken on the outstanding service the doctor had given to residents and his generous treatment of old people, it was decided to support the suggestion wholeheartedly and the delegate was given power to use his own discretion at the meeting. The delegate's credential form for the State Labour-in-Politics Convention to be held in Townsville on February 24 was received and this is to be completed. It was decided to ask the Minister for Health and Home Affairs to attend a special meeting of the branch on February 15, when the matter of a dental clinic will be one of the many subjects discussed. In reply to a communication in regard to bread deliveries in Barcaldine, Mr E. W. Davis, MLA, forwarded a letter from the Acting Under Secretary of the Department of Labour and Employment stating that the extension of the provisions of the Bread Delivery Act of 1946 to Barcaldine was being inquired into and the branch would be informed further in due course. In the outward correspondence was a letter to Mr W. J. Riordan, MHR, drawing attention to the necessity of public telephones in at least three places at a distance from the Post Office. No reply had been received.

Another outward letter was to Mr E. W. Davis, MLA, bringing under his notice the condition of the platform at the Barcaldine railway station. That portion of the platform under the awning has a reasonably firm surface, but the remainder has a loose surface, the result being that when a train is entering or leaving the station clouds of dust are raised. Mr Davis was asked to bring the matter under the notice of the Minister for Transport with a view to having the necessary steps taken to have the cause of the complaint re-

the cause of the complaint removed. The chairman congratulated the winner of the bursary, Master K. Saby, and in doing so stated that three members' children had passed the examination. Owing to the resignation of Mr H. O'Brien as a member of the Hospitals Board a member is to be selected for recommendation to the Department. As the price of ice has increased by about 33 1/3 per cent, the matter is to be referred to the Prices Commissioner through the member for the district.