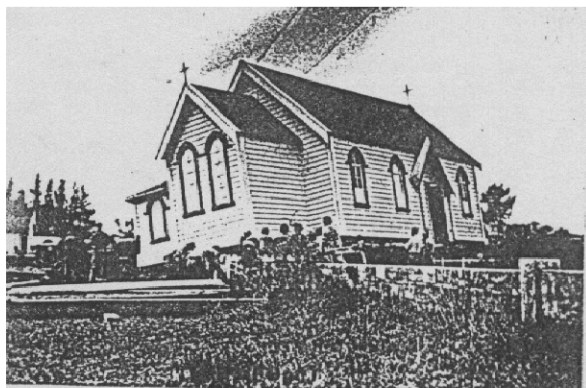


The Church 'On The Move'

*Wairau Valley Anglican
Parish*

**A booklet prepared for the
Centenary of the Church of
the Annunciation in Renwick**



Thank-You!

The Vicar and Vestry of this Parish wish to warmly acknowledge the wonderful and dedicated work of David and Noeline Gribble in gathering and compiling the text of this booklet.

And thank you to Mrs. Viv Grigg for her typing it up.

WAIRAU VALLEY ANGLICAN PARISH

The Church of the Annunciation, Renwick

The Golden Jubilee of the Church of the Annunciation was celebrated on Sunday, March 24th, 1946. Our local newspaper, The Marlborough Express, wrote an article about those first fifty years of the Church's life.

The Parish Vestry asked me to search through the Church Archives in the Anglican Centre in Nelson, to see what has been recorded about the next fifty years, particularly about the Renwick end of the parish. I have also tried to jog the memories of some of the past clergy and parishioners. Mrs Joyce Brooks has written her memories as well. Between us, we acknowledge any errors and/or omissions.

We ask, as you scan the material below, that you write down in the nearby "YOUR MEMORIES" exercise book, any dates or details that we have forgotten. Thanks for your help.

David Gribble.

FROM THE MARLBOROUGH EXPRESS

March 1946

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY - THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

(by A.M. Hale)

The consecration of the Anglican Church of the Annunciation at Renwick, built on the site presented by Dr Thomas Renwick, took place on March 26th 1896.

Its history is of interest in view of tomorrow's celebration of the centenary of the township.

The Rev. C. Livesey presented the petition signed by the Ven. Archdeacon T.S. Grace, the Revs. E. Ensor and C. Livesey and the vestrymen praying for the Bishop of Nelson to consecrate the Church; and in the absence of the Chancellor, the Bishop requested the Rev. E. Ensor to read the service of consecration. This was signed by the Bishop, who stated it would be duly registered and retained in the Diocesan Register at Nelson.

The order of evening service followed, and the Bishop preached from St. Matthew's Gospel, chapter iv, 16—20. The Church choir rendered as the opening hymn "The Church's One Foundation" followed by the singing of the 24th psalm.

After the service tea was provided in the Oddfellow's Hall. The first two Church Wardens were Messrs Alfred Mills and George Coward. The furniture of the Church was built by Mr George Coward.

The timber for the Church came from Charles White's mill in the Onamalutu and was carted by Messrs John Neame and Walter Mead, his two wagon drivers.

The builders were Messrs William Hounsell and Alfred George Mills.

FIRST VICARAGE

The first vicarage in Renwick was situated on the corner of Clive and High Streets.

This property was bought by the late Archdeacon T.S. Grace in 1900 from Mr A.J. Brosnan for the sum of 160 pounds. Mr Brosnan was on the staff of the Blenheim Post Office and had received a transfer to Auckland.

The first minister to occupy this vicarage was the Rev. T.J. Smith, who had been licensed as a curate of Blenheim in 1900, and assisted Archdeacon Grace in the Church work of his district.

Upon the departure of the Rev. Mr Smith to Seddon, he was followed by Mr A.J. Carr (later Canon Carr) who was a lay missionary from India. Following the departure of Mr Carr to take Orders in Nelson, the vicarage was sold on the recommendation of Archdeacon Grace for 260 pounds in 1908. This residence was destroyed by fire some years later. When the Wairau Valley parochial district was formed in 1916, the vicar, the Rev. Harold White, continued to occupy the old Weld Street Vicarage in Blenheim, because there was no vicarage within the newly—formed district.

This was not considered a satisfactory arrangement, and during 1913 a move was made to purchase a residence for the vicar in Renwick. At a meeting of the central vestry at Wairau Valley on April 6, 1918, it was decided to purchase the present vicarage for the sum of 650 pounds from Mr William Chappell.

THE FIRST VICAR

The Rev. Harold White was the first vicar appointed to the Wairau Valley parochial district. The Rev. Mr White was born in Blenheim on July 29, 1887. He was a grandson of James White, Marlborough's first school teacher (August 1859). He was educated at the Blenheim Borough School, Marlborough College and Selwyn College, Dunedin.

He was ordained in 1912. For two years he served as a curate to Archdeacon Grace in Blenheim before going as a chaplain at Trentham Camp in 1914. While he was vicar of Wairau Valley, he broadened the work in the area of Leefield, Omaka Downs and Waihopai.

The Rev. Harold White, by his untiring effort, rendered a splendid service during the First World War period. Through failing health, he resigned his position and, after a lingering illness, he died in 1927, aged 40.

Fran 1918 to 1919 the Rev. A.T. Milgrew acted as locum tenens.

In 1919 the Rev. George Arthur Crossman, Th.L., came to continue the work. During his incumbency, he bought a motor-cycle, and up and down the Wairau Valley he became known as the “flying parson”. The Rev. Mr Crossman entered into the life of the people. He was a crack rifle shot, and during his stay in Renwick he built up the membership of the Rifle Club to such an extent that the Club won many trophies and competitions. He was a keen tennis player, and had court tactics down to a fine art. As a grower of champion rose blooms, he was without a peer in Marlborough, and won a host of prizes at our horticultural shows. Above all, he was good—natured and most generous.

The Rev. Leonard Ives came to the district in 1927 after training in the Edinburgh Theological College. He remained for seven years, and then transferred to Collingwood, and then to the Diocese of Waikato.

NEXT MINISTER

The next ordained minister was Thomas Eric Champion. He was appointed Vicar of Wairau Valley in 1937. He collected Wairau Valley history as he moved among his flock, and made a record of what he collected and, when he finally left New Zealand to work in the ministry in Sydney, he presented the booklets to the writer.

Mr Champion was followed by the Rev. R.H. Dalby. His period of service was from 1940 to 1947.

There was a vacancy before the coming of the Rev. Kenneth Gregory. It was filled by Mr Victor Powell, who had retired from his profession as a dentist in Blenheim.

Mr Gregory was a major in the Indian Army before entering the ministry. He came to Renwick in 1948 and stayed two years before moving on to Brightwater, Nelson.

The Rev. A.R. Miller, Th.L., was trained at the well known Moore Theological College in Australia. Before coming to Renwick in 1950, he had had some experience among the aborigines of the Northern Territory. The Rev. Mr Miller stayed for two years and he returned to Australia.

PRESENT VICAR

The present vicar, the Rev. Neil Stenson Clarke, arrived at the vicarage in January 1952. Previously he had been Vicar of the Grey Valley and curate of All Saints Church, Nelson, during the Rev Oliver Kimberley's ministry.

The Rev. Mr Clarke had four years overseas with the N.Z.E.F. (last war). He returned and spent nearly five years as Vicar of Collingwood before coming to Renwick.

Since his arrival, many additions and alterations have taken place with church buildings at Renwick. Through a gift of land by Mr "Mick" Haines, and a substantial money gift by Miss Lambert (Renwick) the church was removed from the corner of Clive and Havelock Streets to the additional vicarage ground in High Street.

The building was completely renovated inside and out at a cost of 868 pounds, while a new spacious Parish Hall has been erected at the cost of approximately 1,200 pounds.

(End of First Narrative)

NOW.....

THE POST-WAR YEARS

1946 - At the Golden Jubilee of the Church, a Brass Bookrest for the Lord's Table was dedicated in memory of three Communicants who lost their lives in the War. They were John Burns, Peter Adams, and John Vesey Hamilton Robinson.

1947 - Mr Victor Powell, a retired Dentist from Blenheim, cared for the Parish for fourteen months, after Rev. Ross Dalby's departure.

1948 - Church Notice - "The Rev. K. Gregory, Renwicktown, will be pleased to hear of an Organ in good order which the Vestry is prepared to buy for the Church of the Annunciation."

(Three months later, another Church Notice) - "A most handsome Organ was dedicated in a service in November. It is the gift of the Misses Philpotts of Picton and their sister, Mrs Harris."

1949 - The Vicar, the Rev. K. Gregory, proposed the moving of the Church, but the idea was not entertained.

The gift of four fluorescent lamps and a new Pulpit lamp have been given to the Church of the Annunciation. Mr A.M.W. Adams resigned as Synodsmen after many years of service. Mr H.V.F. Robinson was replaced by Mr Murray Adams, a son of our former Synodsmen.

Some forty food parcels were sent by Anglican and Presbyterian parishioners to Britain.

1950 - Some clothing parcels were sent by the Renwick Ladies' Guild to areas of Germany where civilians had suffered most, around Dusseldorf and Bremen. The Vicar wrote in the Diocesan "Witness": "We are glad to know of the safe arrival of some clothing parcels sent to Herr Klaes at Wuppertal-Burmen by the Ladies' Guild. Herr Klaes' letter breathed the very Spirit of Christ, and made us all realise that "oneness in Christ" which transcends barriers of race and language".

Postscript — The Christian caring of many of these ladies was still evident in Parish records over many years. For example in 1983 the combined Anglican AAW and Presbyterian ladies of Wairau Valley sent thirty-one cartons of clothing to the City Mission in Christchurch. Well done, you good and faithful ladies!

1950 - At the Harvest Thanksgiving services this year the Rev. Gregory introduced a new Form of Service, in which seven couples, each representing a different facet of life, took active part. Bishop Stephenson approved and authorised its use throughout the Diocese.

1951 - The Vicar, the Rev. A.R. Miller, proposed that quotes for the shifting of the Church to the Vicarage section be obtained. Unfortunately the minutes of the ensuing Vestry meetings are silent regarding quotes. But all was not lost! God has his way of solving our problems, praise His Name. You can read under 1953 just what happened.

THE BUILDING YEARS

1953 - In October 1953, the Wellington Education Board wrote to the Vestry to enquire whether the section on which the Church of the Annunciation stood, could be obtained for educational purposes.

That section occupied the corner section of Havelock and Brook Streets. It bordered the school playground on Brook Street and the schoolmaster's residence on Havelock Street. Negotiations continued until 1955 when the Education Board agreed to pay the removal and relocation expenses of some 655 pounds.

In 1953 Mrs R. Forbes resigned as President of the Renwick Ladies' Guild, after an outstanding thirty years of willing service. In December the following motion was carried at Vestry: that Mr T.H. Barnes be appointed to build the Church Sunday School Hall building at the Vicarage, measuring 20 by 40 feet, providing that his quote did not exceed 1,250 pounds. Later, Mr Barnes was asked to add a 10' x 6' supper room on to his plans, providing that his extra quote did not exceed 150 pounds.

1954 - The new Parish Hall and Sunday School was dedicated and opened in June, mainly due to the generous bequest of 1000 pounds by Miss R.M. Lambert. The Vicar, the Rev. N.S. Clarke, held the Annual Meeting in it, and reported that the Balance sheet showed the past year to be the best on record. Subscriptions and donations were double that of any previous year, and he especially thanked the two Ladies' Guilds who had raised about 1/5th of the total income. In the Church the old Shell Font was replaced with a six-sided wooden font with stainless steel inset, through the generosity of the Renwicktown School Jubilee Committee.

Mr R.L. (Mick) Haines gifted a piece of his property at the rear of the Vicarage section so that all Church buildings could be located on the one section.

1955 - During the month of May the Church of the Annunciation was moved by T.H. Barnes & Co. on to the Vicarage section. The Church was completely renovated inside and out, at a cost of 868 pounds. Donations were received from various parishioners for the purpose of replacing clear glass with seven diamond-lead stained-glass windows. A Brass Alms Dish was donated anonymously. The Ladies' Guild made a White Linen Cloth for the Lord's Table. Miss Rosemary Goddard of Waihopai presented the church with a set of Blue Curtains, matching Cushion Covers, and a set of Frontals for the Lectern. A Mother's Union branch was started with 24 members, and also a Junior Bible Class with 16 members.

On November 2nd, Bishop Hulme-Moir confirmed fourteen candidates at Renwick. All the candidates were drawn from the RNZAF Station, Woodbourne, where the Vicar for the past two years had been conducting "Padre's Hour" each week at the Base's Boy Entrant School. Plans to rebuild the Church of the Good Shepherd at Wairau Valley were begun, with Mr J Morton Samson of Lansdowne Station acting as Clerk of Works. The church would be double the original size.

1956 - A new Brass Cross was dedicated in the Church in memory of the early pioneers of Renwick township. The Cross was purchased from the collection taken up at the Renwick Centennial Thanksgiving Service.

Two diamond-lead windows of Flemish glass with ruby cross inset were placed in the Chancel end of the church. They were a gift from Mrs D. Gibson and her brothers. The Mother's Union planned to obtain a stained-glass "Madonna and Child" window and to locate it between the two Flemish glass ones.

In September the Goddard Memorial Window of "The Good Shepherd" was installed in the Sanctuary end of the Church. The manufacturers of the window, Messrs Jas. Powell & Sons, Whitefriars, London, had taken special care to portray the sheep in the window as typical sheep seen in New Zealand, and had also placed a lamb in the arms of the Good Shepherd for a particular reason. The window had been donated by Mr & Mrs Claude Goddard of Black Rock, in memory of their handicapped son, Raynor.

Several fundraising efforts and the annual Canvas at the end of the year raised more than half of the total income.

A great deal of work was carried out on the grounds and the Church of the Annunciation during the year. The Church was given a fresh coat of cream paint with windows pointed out in green. The rear of the section was levelled and sown in grass, and paths and the driveway coated with fine metal. The County Council asphalted the street path bordering the concrete fence, and the local newspaper commented upon the new and fresh appearance of the Church property, and complimented the band of voluntary helpers with their energetic Vicar...

1957 — The stained-glass “Window of the Good Shepherd” was floodlit by a 1,000 watt lamp. At evening services the Chancel lights were tuned off during the sermon. The Vicar, Rev. Neil Clarke, said that the lights were turned off so that the beauty of the window could be appreciated! I am sure some of the parishioners would have a different answer!

John and Ayleen White started a Youth Club with 23 members. The Sunday School roll rose to 63, and the Ladies Guild raised money to buy a piano for Sunday School use.

In the middle of the year, a Parish Mission was held in the Parish (and throughout the Diocese) by the Church Army. Some 45 people responded to Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. In several cases complete families responded together to Our Lord’s invitation.

1958 - Sunday School numbers at Renwick reached nearly 100. Eleven teachers were involved in sharing their faith with these children. They were - Mr & Mrs Roger Grigg; Mrs N. Clarke, Mr & Mrs John White, Mrs Gay Thompson, Mr R. Penman, Misses P. Chandler, F. Bishell and P. Lee. At the Renwick Mothers’ Union Third Anniversary Service, Bishop Hulme—Moir dedicated the Mothers’ Union “Madonna and Child” window. On October 4th the Bishop dedicated the new Church of the Good Shepherd at Wairau Valley, and warmly applauded the toil and talents which had been willingly given by so many parishioners.

1959 - A new carpet was laid in the Church of the Annunciation, through the generosity of Mr & Mrs Claude Goddard of Black Rock. The Billy Graham Crusade, which was held throughout New Zealand by a landline relay, strengthened the faith of a number of parishioners and an adult Bible Study Group was formed in Renwick.

1960 - The Ladies' Guild presented some Communion Linen to the Renwick Church. It had been made by Mrs D. Gee, and the edges crocheted by Mrs M. Baker.

In November the Vicar made an important announcement in the Diocesan Witness - "The Vicarage telephone number has now changed and after at least 34 years of sharing a Party Line of eight, which included the two hotels (and during the war years a store as well), at is a joy to have only one other subscriber on the line, particularly in view of the private nature of many of the calls!!"

Postscript - The joy of the Vicar, the Rev. Neil Clarke, was short-lived. He shifted the following month to the Stoke Parish.

1961 - A new electric Organ was given anonymously to the Church, and two 1 000 watt infra-red heaters were also installed. Bishop Hulme-Moir consecrated the new Church of the Good Shepherd at Wairau Valley during the Centennial celebrations of the parish in October. The parish arranged, through the Mission to Lepers, to support two lepers at Chandang Hospital in India.

1962 - Three hundred parishioners attended a Stewardship Campaign Dinner, which resulted in a Stewardship Campaign being held throughout the parish from February to June. The local Chairman was Mr R.C. Grigg, and the programme was organised by the Rev. Denis Barrett, Vicar of Brightwater.

The Vestry thanked Mr Watson for piping and filling in the ditch in front of the Vicarage and Church section.

On Anniversary Weekend, a Parish Family Camp was held at Benhopai Station, by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Truslove. This was one of the first parish "family style" camps to be held in New Zealand, and catered for all ages. The Vicar, Rev. Malcolm Oatway, described it as follows: "Some forty parishioners spent a most beneficial weekend together, getting to know each other, but above all appreciating and learning from the Bible studies, and talks from and with, Mr Noel Gibson of the Open Air Campaigners in Wellington".

An adult Bible Study Group was subsequently begun, each alternate Thursday evening, and the following year it was started at Wairau Valley.

1963 - On July 7th at the Church of the Annunciation the 1st Renwick Company of the Girls' Life Brigade was affiliated (i.e. begun). Mrs Aileen White was the Captain of the Company, assisted by Mrs Taylor.

Postscript — there is no record of how many girls there were in the Company. Suffice it to say that the Hall was bulging!!

1964 - Throughout this year, lengthy discussions took place at Vestry on ways and means of providing additional accommodation for the Sunday School, and increasing the size of the Church. Eventually two resolutions were carried: 1) The Church - that the back wall of the Church be moved back so as to allow an approx. 12 foot extension to the Nave. 2) The Parish Hall - that a new hall measuring 60 by 30 feet be built in stages, with steel spans and concrete block ends.

The Vicar and Vicars Warden were requested to discuss with the local M.P., Mr Tom Shand, the possibility of obtaining a Government grant for the hall, as it was going to be available for public use. Mr R.C. Grigg was appointed Supervisor of the Hall Building Programme. He soon had a willing band of volunteers and/or donors. Warrant Officer James Sewell of RNZAF Base Woodbourne, and an active Vestryman, also soon had a willing hand of volunteers and/or conscripts from his Instruments Section donating their technical talents to the Hall project.

1965 - In November the Vicar advised the Vestry that an interest free loan of 2,000 pounds to the Parish Hall Account had now been made a gift. Mr Grigg then wrote to the Department of Internal Affairs, to advise them that the two thirds of the Hall costs required by their Department had now been raised by the parish.

1966 - On June 1st, Bishop Sutton dedicated and opened the new Parish Hall. It had been built through the shared labour and use of technical skills by Church members, members of the Renwick and Woodbourne communities, and aided by a Government Grant.

Postscript - after nearly six years of planning and praying for a new Parish Hall, the Vicar, the Rev. Malcolm Oatway, had a similar experience to his predecessor and the new telephone! The Oatway family left for the Cheviot parish a month after the opening of the Parish Hall!

AN IMPORTANT POSTSCRIPT - I need your help from now on!! The Archives in the Anglican Centre at Nelson do not possess any Minute Books of Vestry meetings for our parish after 1965. The missing books contain the bulk of the history of the parish. Because of this, we only have people's memories to draw upon. For that reason we are keen for you to write down in the "YOUR MEMORIES" exercise book, anything that you can remember about the history of the Parish. Thanks again for your help.

AND NOW

THE CONSOLIDATING YEARS

The Parish could not have thought of a better person to help it to consolidate its faith and Christian witness in the community, than the new Vicar who arrived in 1966 - the Rev. Denis Barrett. During the Second World War, Denis had served with the famous Long Range Desert Group as their Captain Quarter Master. He returned home to become a Company Director and Manager, and active layman in the parishes where he lived. In 1960 he was ordained and directed his boundless energies in the service of Christ in the parish of Brightwater. In 1962 he was the guiding light behind the Stewardship Campaign held in our parish. His talents were used in many parishes in different ways. For instance in 1969 when he was Vicar here in Wairau Valley, Bishop Sutton asked him to go to Greymouth Parish for three months. I was the Curate at Greymouth at that time. Canon Barrett spent nearly three months in the parish, during which time he revitalised and prepared it for the arrival of its new Vicar. I saw him at work and was tremendously impressed by his ability, talents and limitless energy.

A number of ex-parishioners have described their memories of the time when Denis was Vicar, as follows - "a time of great encouragement and efficiency ... a time when men were brought into the church... a time when financial and business affairs were put in order ... he was very good with children". I leave the final word to John Gleeson, who has repaired the Church of the Annunciation for some thirty years. One day in 1986 John and I were lying under the Church porch as we replaced some flooring and the doorstep. He said to me with a smile "The only other Vicar that I've had lying beside me under a church was Denis Barrett!"

When Canon Barrett left for Westport parish in November 1970, his successor was Canon R.C. (Bob) Nicholson. Bob continued the work of consolidation within the parish. He kindly wrote the following contents below, which contain his memories of the period 1970-1977:-

“Sunday morning services were held at Renwick and Wairau Valley: in the latter centre an evening service, with visiting speaker, was held quarterly, preceded by a shared meal. Monthly afternoon services were held in Waihopai Valley homes, and at Onamalutu in the local Hall, which was formerly the School. This service was discontinued when several families moved out of the district. A service in the Hall at Pine Valley was re-commenced in the early 1970’s. Mid—week Bible Study/Prayer Groups met regularly in homes at Renwick and Wairau Valley. In the Northbank/Pine Valley area mid-week meetings were held in the winter months of some years. The women’s groups were A.A.W., Young Wives’ Group, and a Ladies’ Guild at both Renwick and Wairau Valley. There were Boys’ and Girls’ Brigade meetings at both Renwick and Wairau Valley. Sunday Schools and Bible Classes were also held in both centres. A children’s holiday programme called “Happen In” was held for some years in Renwick. The Vicar and lay people taught Bible in Schools at Renwick and Wairau Valley each week, and then the Vicar took a fortnightly class at the Pine Valley School.

1971 saw the introduction of the Thanksgiving and Pastoral Care programme throughout the diocese. This parish adopted the programme enthusiastically, and built on the existing system of parish visiting. Men and women became Visitors, which resulted in all families on the Parish roll receiving a quarterly visit. Each visit was preceded by a Parish meeting for Visitors, where a diocesan “Focus” leaflet, which the visitors would be taking to the parishioners, was discussed. In the mid 1970’s the Wardens inspected all the Parish buildings, and the advisability of making a decision about the future of the Vicarage was raised. Parish meetings were held, where the differing points of view were openly debated. After several years the decision was made to demolish the old Vicarage and to build a new one.”

Some further facts I have gathered relating to this period were -In the 1971 Synod Year Book, Bishop Sutton recorded that “the resignation of Mr D.M.W. Adams of Langley Dale as Synod representative for Wairau Valley Parish severs a link of more than a century of Synod representation by his family.”

In 1973, Mrs Joan Fowler of Wairau Valley became the first woman in the history of the Diocese of Nelson to be elected to the Standing Committee of this Diocese.

In 1976 the Rev. R.F.N. Thompson conducted a Mission in the parish. I happened to be chatting to him last week, and he reminded me about the very alert Boys' Brigade lad that was present at one of the Mission meetings at Wairau Valley. The Rev. Roger was preaching that night upon "Peace", and had just made the statement - "one cannot buy peace of heart". The alert lad interjected with the advice — "yes you can! You can buy a piece of heart at the butcher's...

Later that same year a new Organ was given to the Parish Hall by the Gee family, whose sons David and Murray were Boys' Brigade officers.

THE TESTING YEARS

From the mid—1970's the Church began to feel the pinch of N.Z.'s increasing financial crises. In November 1977 the financial crises in the Diocese of Nelson and each of its parishes peaked. Each parish was informed that it could no longer be kept solvent by grants from the Diocese. This situation created some consternation to our local Vicarage Building Committee, with their plans for a new Vicarage. They were trying to budget for a cost of between \$43,000 and \$43,000, and were very aware that the General Parish Account had been overdrawn at the Bank for the past several months. At the Annual General Meeting in April 1977, the following motion was passed: - "That this AGM of parishioners authorises the Vestry to build the new Vicarage, when the necessary finance has been arranged, and the Trust Board's approval obtained". The meeting also accepted the Architect's plan which had been submitted by Mr E. Kindt-Larsen. The Vestry obtained a Bank Loan for \$16,000 (which was repaid by 1987). The Vicarage was built by Mr John Robinson on a "time and materials" basis, with the assistance of voluntary labour from parishioners. Mr A.H. Grigg was chairman of the Building Committee, and Mr P.R. Bowron supplied most of the machinery needed.

The old wooden Vicarage was demolished, except for one back bedroom which was moved to a site behind the Parish Hall, and the new concrete block building was erected upon the same site in 1978. The Church of the Annunciation received new blue velvet curtains and cushions from the Renwick Ladies' Guild in 1977.

Mrs Joan Fowler, the superintendent of the Renwick Sunday Club, reported to the Annual Meeting in 1979 that children's work was in

a healthy state. "The Sunday Club continues to function well with a roll of 80, and a regular attendance of 50, with a staff of five enthusiastic teachers - Mr Laurie Cross, Mrs Joan Kerr, Mrs Cynthia Brooks, Miss Ann Ford, and myself, with Mrs Viv Grigg as a regular reliever".

During the early 1980's the township of Renwick began to expand at the rate of one new home per week being built. Many of these new residents were Air Force personnel, and contact with them increased from 1984, when the Vicar was appointed as Anglican Officiating Chaplain to Woodbourne on a part-time basis.

In 1987 a further crisis hit the parish, as the result of research done by the Diocesan Boundaries Commission during the past eleven years. The Commission had been looking at the possibility of amalgamating small parishes. The Diocese now advised our Vestry and that of Spring Creek that we would amalgamate into one parish for a trial period. - God however stepped into the situation — on this occasion wearing an Air Force uniform! Air Force authorities offered the Vicar a half-time Chaplaincy at Base Woodbourne for a minimum of three years. This position continued until the Vicar left the parish in 1991. At the 1989 Annual Meeting, the Vicar reported that 28% of his time during the previous year had been spent on Chaplaincy duties, and that the income from this work had produced 46% of the total income for the parish that year.

Throughout the 1980's the Vestry agonised over what to do with the deteriorating condition of the Church of the Annunciation. In the winter of 1982 the Church was so damp that I was putting the heaters on at 11 p.m. on a Saturday night to get the Church warm enough for the 8 a.m. service the following morning. We were offered St Barnabas Church at Springlands by the Blenheim Anglican Parish, but finally we were forced to decline their offer because we could not find the \$12-15,000. needed to remove the Church on to the site.

A long-term programme of repair and renovation began, which included the installing of soak-pits, exterior woodwork repairs, the door-sill replacement. A hand rail made by Mr J.H.B. Sheild was fitted into new concrete steps, and a concrete path and forecourt area were laid.

Mr H.H.G. Harvey resurfaced the top of the Lord's Table inside the Church, and because four guests had become stuck to the pews during a wedding in the summer of 1990, the Vicar spent Lent that year scraping and revarnishing all the pews in the Church! The roof and exterior of the Church was painted, and an overhead screen installed above the pulpit. The previous year, the Church received an

electric organ from Mr A.J. (Jim) Cresswell of Blenheim, in memory or his late wife Barbara, who had been organist at Wairau Valley.

In Advent of that same year, the new Anglican Prayer Book was introduced into every parish in New Zealand.

As Vicar for nine and a half years during these testing years, I wish to pay tribute to the Christians in the parish. Your faith in Christ, and faithfulness to His Church shone like a light upon a hill top during these testing years in our Nation's history.

Christian Greetings to God's Family
David and Noeline Gribble.

Vicars of the Parish

1916-18	H.B.W. White
1918-27	G.A. Crossman
1827-34	L. Ives
1937-35	T. E. Champion
1940-47	R.H. Dalby
1948-50	K. Gregory
1950-52	A.R. Miller
1952-60	N.S. Clarke
1960-66	H.M. Oatway
1966-70	D.S. Barrett
1970-77	R.C. Nicholson
1977-81	P.J. Edridge
1982-91	D.J. Gribble
1991-94	B. Price
1994	P.R.B.L Witty

The 1990's And Beyond!
March 1996 By Rev Peter Witty - Vicar

The 1990's and the decade of Evangelism has been a time for the Church of the Western world to look at itself and see where it should be going. As I've read our Parish history it's been interesting to see the changes over the years. There have been ups and downs as there have been in the Christian Church from its beginnings.

It was decided to call this little booklet 'The Church on the move' for two reasons. The first is quite obvious - the building has literally been moved onto the present site. This happened in the 1950's and the photo on the front cover shows it coming through the entrance over the fence. And it's possible, should the Parish decide to start fundraising for a new building, that we will move it again alongside the new complex so that it can be used as a chapel and area for prayer. That is yet to be decided, but brings me to the second point.

The Christian church is constantly on the move. Things change and whether we like it or not the Church must change too. Some things, like the truth of scripture never alter, but our way of doing things and the expectations of people are always changing. Once no-one minded being crammed into a Church building, yet we realized as a parish that today for those not in the Church that's not acceptable. This decade of Evangelism reminds us we should be striving in every way possible to make the non-Churched people welcome and that's why our main Sunday worship service in Renwick now takes place in the hall. Soon as a Parish we must decide what to do for the future regarding a new building. If we expect and are working to bring new people to know the Lord as Saviour then there are things we have to do to welcome them and show that they are important.

Our move into the hall was sad because we left the little building but the positive things of more space and a less cramped feel to our worship was a step in faith. We have yet to grow to huge numbers but there is steady improvement in our regular numbers at worship for which we thank the Lord and give the Glory to Him. As a Parish the realization that bringing new people to the Lord is the job of every Christian is starting to show fruit. It's exciting to be in a Parish where so many of the existing members are growing spiritually as well as having new people coming to join us in worship.

Last year at a planning meeting for the Parish future we set our Parish vision as follows -

Parish Vision
To move forward together in the Faith
Of Jesus Christ
through Worship, Praise, Prayer,
Teaching and Service
so Christ and His love will be seen
in our community.

In our Parish vision as in the name for this booklet we talk about 'MOVING'. With the Lord's help and with our eyes set firmly on Him that's exactly what we intend to do. It's not always smooth running and sometimes in our past it may have seemed as if we were moving backwards. Those days we pray, are in the past as we move towards the 21st Century proclaiming the name of the Lord and building His kingdom in this place.

In doing this we are building on the heritage of the past and our celebrations of the centenary of the Church of the Annunciation is a tribute to all those saints who have gone before. As many gather for this weekend we rejoice with past Vicars and Parishioners who have returned to celebrate with us.

As a Parish let's be encouraged and let's keep stepping out in faith and pray that in the years to come that this last decade of the twentieth century won't be a decade that just sees the Church in Africa and Asia growing but that it will also be taking leaps and bounds and moving forward in this Parish as well.

Our Parish Vision sums up many aspects of the faith that we need to be showing the community. To move forward in the faith of Jesus Christ we need to be regular in our worship and praise of Him. We need to be praying daily to him. We need to be teaching the truth of scripture and serving our community in true Christian ways. If we do then Christ and his love truly will be evident in our community.

May the Lord bless you and all who gather in this place.

Peter Witty - Your servant in Christ