

New Church in Huon Valley

In the Wake of Sleeping Beauty

A princess, cursed by a wicked fairy, falls into a hundred-year sleep on her sixteenth birthday. Only the kiss of her one true love can break the spell. This is the story line of the seventeenth-century fairytale: *The Sleeping Beauty*. In the wake of another "Sleeping Beauty" a new church has risen in the Huon Valley, in southeast Tasmania.

This Sleeping Beauty is a constant landmark for travellers and mariners looking north from Huon and the Channel in south Tasmania. Although the peaks that shape her are on the map as Trestle Mountain and Collins Bonnet, she'll always be the Sleeping Beauty.

In the valley beneath Sleeping Beauty mountain, the people of the community have rediscovered the benefits of a small town economy. Families trade with one another, swapping foods they grow and things they make. Their lives are rich and varied. They value what they know and want to pass their passions on.

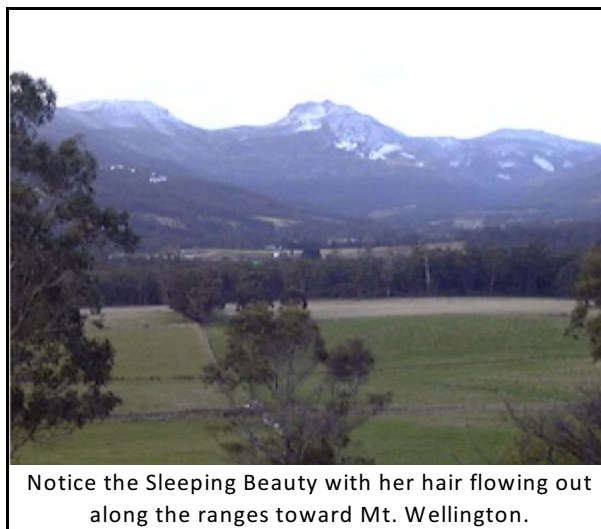
The central town in this picturesque valley is Huonville, a town originally named

Victoria (possibly after the Queen at the time). This town, along with the valley, now gets its name from the Huon River, the second-largest river in southeast Tasmania. It is here that a group of Christian Reformed members have gathered to grow a new congregation. This growth group was started with families from One Way, Kingston, and Summerleas, all churches which have strong ties with the Christian Reformed Churches of Southern

Tasmania. Under the leadership of Mick Elliott this group began meeting on a weekly basis. They began to reach out to friends and acquaintances in Huonville and a growing number of contacts and people started to show interest in a new Huonville church.

Mick Elliott brings strong leadership and experience to this new

church plant. Previously Mick and his wife Jane were involved for 10 years with SIM (Serving In Mission) in Bolivia where they encouraged the planting of churches. When they moved back to Australia, they became members of the One Way Christian Community in Margate, TAS. Mick also served this church as an elder. They are currently in the midst of selling their home in Margate and



Notice the Sleeping Beauty with her hair flowing out along the ranges toward Mt. Wellington.



Mick & Jane Elliott

shifting to Huonville so that they can be part of the community they serve.

This new church is known to the community of Huonville as Redeemer Christian Church. Their overall vision is to bring the love of Christ to the Huon Valley. Their mission is to WIN – BUILD – SEND:

- **WIN** people for Christ explaining the gospel in a simple and straightforward way without manipulation or pressure.
- **BUILD** people up in their faith with good Bible teaching and loving company, so that they know what they believe and live out the implications of this in their whole life.
- **SEND** people out into the world equipped to win others for Christ and to make a positive difference to the life of the community.



The meeting place of Redeemer Christian Church

Redeemer Christian Church currently is using the facilities of the Police Citizens Youth Centre (PCYC) which is located near the downtown at the end of Heron Street, Huonville. This recently built facility is more than just a sports centre. It was built to be a community centre – a hub for the Huon Valley. The centre is complete with conference rooms, projects centre, a multi-purpose indoor sports centre, gymnasium with weights and aerobics room, a common room with eightball tables, table tennis tables, internet and computer games room, a commercial kitchen and a recording studio for

local musicians. These facilities were intended to be a place of fun, healthy living and learning for the people of the entire Huon region. It is in this community hub that Redeemer intends to bring the love of Christ to the Huon Valley.

When the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus he encouraged these Christians to live as children of light (Ephesians 4:17-5:20). He points out that when we live as children of the light, we expose the fruitless deeds of darkness. As light we proclaim to the world around us: *“Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”* (5:14) As Redeemer Christian Church allows their light to shine, they will declare to those who live in the shadows of the Sleeping Beauty: *“Wake up! Rise up! Allow Christ to shine on you.”* Like the sleeping beauty in the fairy tale, people will discover true love – not just the love of another person, but best of all, the true love of God. And like the sun that rises across the Huon Valley, a new day will dawn for hundreds, if not thousands of people who will be brought into relationship with Christ through Redeemer Christian Church.



The gathered community at the PCYC.



