



Useful Knowledge

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
MECHANICS' INSTITUTES OF VICTORIA INC.

NO. 40 – AUTUMN 2016

PO Box 1080, Windsor VIC 3181 Australia ISSN 1835-5242

Reg No. A0038156G ABN 60 337 355 989 Price: Six Dollars \$6

MECHANICS'... AND PROUD OF IT!

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CONNECT with
HEALTHY
ACTIVITIES of
NEIGHBOURS,
INTERESTING
COMMUNITIES,
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INVOLVEMENT of
NEIGHBOURLY
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TEAMS.
IT'S
TOALLY
UP
TO
EVERYONE.

YOUR MECHANICS INSTITUTE

We are greatly indebted to **Jock Macneish OAM** for this very reflective front page cartoon.

Jock is a professional trainer, who clearly motivates people and he has given us a very valuable blueprint 'on a plate' as it were. The **Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria Inc. (MIV)** is but the facilitator.

Since 1999 we have published *Useful Knowledge (UK)* which is issued three times a year and **this is very much dependent on your feeding us information of forthcoming and past events, news of your people, and the drama of your Hall. Please PASS UK around your Committee and members and don't just file it with inwards correspondence.**

In *UK* you will **Meet, Enjoy and Connect with Healthy Activities of Neighbours, Interesting Communities, [and] Social Groups.**

We have recently established a website **vicnet.net.au/~mivic** to which all Member Institutes have the opportunity to contribute to their page by way of pictures and information. **No Institute needs to be without a web presence**, but if you have one we can list the link or website on your MIV page. Click on the pages of **Little River** and **Stanley** for examples of how your pages can look. There is no charge save your supplying information and a range of pictures. As for the **Involvement [in/or] of Neighbourly Support Teams. It's Totally Up To Everyone.**

Now everyone read Jock's **Mechanics' Institute** message aloud. Thankyou Jock for the inspiration from your perspiration!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS
ENCLOSED IN THIS ISSUE.

Coming Events - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JULY

- 1 Stanley Athenaeum - Opening of 'Botanical Treasures' exhibition, continues until January 2017
- 14-24 Rare Book Week
- 19 Melbourne Athenaeum - Richard Overell - 'Collecting Travel Books' (more info in Around the Institutes)
- 20 **Melbourne Athenaeum - Anne Kucera** - 'A Rare Art Form: Pop Up Books' (more info in Around the Institutes)
- 21 Prahran Mechanics' Institute - Lecture by Wallace Kirsop 'People from Prahran and District Important to the Melbourne Book Scene', 6.30pm

AUGUST

- 29 Applications Close for Veterans Grants. More information at www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/veterans/veterans-grants

SEPTEMBER

- 3 Ballarat Mechanics' Institute Open Day. 10am-5pm, 117 Sturt St, Ballarat. ballaratmi.org.au
- 24 MIV's Annual General Meeting, Prahran Mechanics' Institute
- 24 MIV's Second Annual Wesson Lecture, Prahran Mechanics' Institute

NOVEMBER

- TBC Ruffartz Biennial Art Show
- 3-6 **Independent Libraries and Mechanics' Institutes Worldwide 2016** - San Francisco Mechanics' Institute. Contact: dhunt@milibrary.org

MIV'S EVENTS CALENDAR IS NOW ONLINE!
vicnet.net.au/~mivic/events

Subscribe for weekly email updates on events throughout the week. The calendar will include events held at or by MIV Institute Members, and important dates and events that may be of interest to Institutes and other members of MIV.

Member Institutes: email through details of your events, or public events being held at your Institute, both big and small to bronlowden@hotmail.com for inclusion in the online calendar. Let us help you promote your events!

- 7 American Membership Libraries - Annual Meeting - San Francisco Mechanics' Institute, USA

NEWSLETTER ROUND

Tick after reading and pass it on

- President
- Vice-President.....
- Treasurer.....
- Secretary.....
- Committee (*Insert your name*)
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THANK YOU TO OUR PRINTER

TDC3 Print Centre, 548 Bridge Rd, Richmond. tdc3.com.au



The MIV would like to acknowledge the support of our 'home' - the Prahran Mechanics' Institute

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Letter From The President



For some time now State Government policy has been for local councils to take responsibility for the thousands of Crown Land Reserves dotted around the State. For their part councils have resisted, holding out for additional funding to support the extra costs involved.

This stalemate has produced a situation where the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) disingenuously refers to the responsibility for each reserve being determined “on its merits”.

In practice this means councils are only interested if the reserve in question represents an economic benefit rather than a cost. In other words where the reserve comes with its own income, can be profitably redeveloped or can be sold off.

While there may be many cases in which the public interest is well served by this policy in the case of Mechanics' Institutes it represents an existential threat. Why so?

Between 1839 and the early 1900's there were approximately 1200 Mechanics' Institutes built in Victoria. Of the 500 or so still with us today around two thirds are built on Crown Land gazetted as reserved for “site for Mechanics' Institute”.

Dating as they do from the earliest days of most Victorian towns and cities they now find themselves located on prime real estate coveted by councils and property developers alike.

Not that this is anything new. In the 1890's the South Melbourne Council are said to have offered the **Emerald Hill Mechanics' Institute** a wing in the magnificent South Melbourne Town Hall in return for their Institute in Cecil Street. The former Institute building still exists but there is no sign of the **Emerald Hill Mechanics' Institute** either as a tenant of the South Melbourne Town Hall or functioning organisation.

The lesson that we need to draw from this is that once an Institute loses tenure over its site or control of its buildings its life expectancy as an independent local social enterprise dedicated to “*the dissemination of scientific and literary information, useful knowledge and rational recreation*” is very short indeed.

DELWP's recent decisions to transfer management of the **Trentham** and **Ballan** Mechanics' Institute Reserves to their respective local councils are just two cases that have come to our attention since the last edition of *Useful Knowledge*.

Elsewhere in this issue we have highlighted some of the actions you can take to **SAVE YOUR INSTITUTE** from a similar fate. Paramount amongst which is to ensure that your Institute is a dynamic, open and imaginative institution deeply engaged with your local community.

Meanwhile MIV will be engaging all levels of Government in an attempt to ensure that Victoria's Mechanics' Institutes don't keep falling victim to what experience shows to be an overly simplistic one size fits all policy.

Robert Kingston
President.

Editorial

The theme for this issue is '**Mechanics'... and Proud of it!**' which just happens to be the title of one of our much travelled **Travelling Exhibitions**. As you peruse the pages of this issue from page one you will see just what a good news story the Mechanics' Institutes have been as they move into their second life and Century 21.

We've got much to celebrate and **Jock Macneish's** cover cartoon brings that home, and inside we have **Alex Tyrrell's** review of **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James' *These Walls Speak Volumes***.

You will also read how budding architect **Steve Kellermeier** achieved his Diploma of Architecture, the very hard and old way. However in the computer era hopefully this will not put anyone off from attempting a similar survey.

Our **Case Study** at **Otley**, Yorkshire (UK) highlights a need for independent agencies to step in and prevent what happened at **Swindon Mechanics'** (UK) or in Australia where buildings such as the **Wickham School of Arts** (NSW) are just left to moulder in a state of what has been referred to as 'demolition by neglect'.

Often we see stories of Halls as not worth saving. The reply to that was rammed home at the recent plaque unveiling at **Ruffy Mechanics' Hall** (For a full report next issue). There one of the speakers stated '*This Hall is not just a few nails and some boards, its presence is a place of enduring memory, a concept that may be hard for others to understand.*'

How well put as we see the battle for the **Trentham Mechanics' Institute** being waged around its fate. My father well remembers the launch of the legendary late **Dr Gweneth Wisewould's** book *Outpost: A Doctor on the Divide* in the Trentham Mechanics' one bitterly cold rainy night in 1971. A night you would not send a dog out on, but yet all of Trentham turned out to fill the Hall to bursting point for their beloved 'Dr Gwen'. I am told Dr Wisewould was resplendent in her ball gown, but it was so cold, she had her usual trousers on underneath to keep her warm.

The site of the launch was fitting, for in that same Hall Dr Wisewould and her partner Annabelle had staged regular concerts over the years engaging and entertaining the community. **Indeed the Trentham Mechanics' Institute's walls speak volumes.**

The argument that nothing of the original Trentham Institute remains is a nonsense. The core is original and the add-ons show the building's evolution, which is typical of many Mechanics' Institute Halls.

In Victoria we have seen Mechanics' buildings happily recycled into other uses like, libraries, museums, theatres, even homes. I note **Tamworth School of Arts** is to be turned into a seven day a week 6am-10pm diner and a children's gymnasium, so those walls will continue to speak.

With the unparalleled blitzing of the media with the wording **Mechanics' Institutes**, now is the time to take advantage of the proud name, which I have just heard Birregurra has done. (More about that in the next *UK*.)

Let us know your news of upcoming events to show others what is being done in and about our Halls. Keep the passion burning with your examples and enthusiasm.

Finally how about signing up a friend, Hall, Library or Government Department to join MIV, as they say the more the merrier. Membership forms available for download from our website.

Bron Lowden

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Castlemaine Pioneers & Old Residents Association Inc.

Somerville, Tyabb and District Heritage Society

THESE WALLS SPEAK VOLUMES - AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM MIV

Simply download the order form from the website (vicnet.net.au/~mivic/twsv), print, complete and mail it with a cheque. Books are \$85 + \$15 postage per copy.

ERRATA - UK 39

MURCHISON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1873)

In the article on the '**Murchison Mechanics' Institute**' in 'Where they Stood' in *UK 39* it was mentioned that the swimming pool was on the site of the former building. This was incorrect, a park and picnic area now occupies the site of the former Murchison Mechanics' Institute building. The new swimming pool was built on the river bank about half a kilometre away. There is also a query if the proceeds from the sale of the buildings, fittings, etc. were used wholly or in part to build the new swimming pool.

CONFERENCE UPDATE: MECHANICS' WORLDWIDE 2016 REINVENTION: THRIVING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Are Mechanics' Institutes still relevant? Will they survive and thrive in the 21st century? We believe they will!

Join colleagues from around the world to exchange ideas, explore histories, and discuss our present situation and our aims for the future. We have an exciting program lined up, including three keynote presentations:

Brewster Kahle, (below left) Founder & Digital Librarian, Internet Archive (archive.org)

Nina Simon, (below centre) Executive Director, Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History (santacruzmah.org) - "The Art of Relevance"

Lee Rainie, (below right) Director, Internet, Science and Technology Research, Pew Research Center & Author of the book *Networked: The New Social Operating System* (www.pewresearch.org) - "The Reinvention Recipe: One Part Desperation. One Part Aggravation. One Part Decimation. One Part Liberation"

Our colleagues presenting on topics of interest in the areas of:

- disaster planning
- development/fund raising
- membership growth and retention
- building maintenance/restoration
- digitization/preservation
- strategies for viability and sustainability (e.g. partnerships, outreach)



- volunteer management and development
- staffing

The conference will take place, 3-6 November 2016, at the Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco, a leading cultural center that includes a vibrant library, a world-renowned chess program, and a full calendar of engaging cultural events. Founded in 1854 to serve the educational and social needs of mechanics —

artisans, craftsmen, and inventors — and their families, the Institute today is a favorite of avid readers, writers, downtown employees, chess players, and the 21st century nomadic worker. We are located in our 9-story landmark building in the Financial District at 57 Post Street.

Conference registration is now open: <http://www.milibrary.org/reinvention/registration>.

Early bird rate is in effect until 1 July 2016.

The Orchard Hotel is the official conference hotel for *Reinvention: Thriving in the 21st Century*, located within easy walking distance of the Mechanics' Institute. We have reserved a block of rooms at a specially discounted rate, but you must reserve by 3 August 2016.

We look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful City by the Bay.

If you have any questions, please contact Deb Hunt, Library Director at dhunt@milibrary.org

<http://www.milibrary.org/reinvention/>



ARTHURS CREEK REMEMBERS THEM

The sun shone brightly upon yet another memorable very well attended event at Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute on 17 April. The occasion was the Dedication of the **Commemorative Garden** and unveiling of the **Memorial Cairn and Arthurs Creek World War I 1914-1918 Honour Roll**, a project which was partially funded by way of a grant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.



We were cheerily welcomed at the registration desk, given numbered name tags and a copy of the full-colour program and we took our seats. Looking around we noticed that some office-bearers wore a 'different'

type of poppy and were later told that these had been knitted by **Zachary Salbon**, a student at nearby Arthurs Creek Primary School.

The afternoon's proceedings were ably compered by Hall Committee stalwart **Peter Nankervis** who welcomed all including: **Cindy McLeish** MLA who was representing the Government of Victoria; **Councillor Anika Van Hulsen**, Nillumbik Shire; **Noel Morse**, Hurstbridge RSL; **Ned Panuzzo**, Whittlesea RSL; **Robyn Watson** and students from **Arthurs Creek Primary School**; **Diane Phillips** and **Maree Galvin** and students from the **Strathewen Primary School**; members of the **Barr** family; and more.

The Hurstbridge/Warrandyte-based **Chocolate Lilies Choir**, conducted by **Nerida Kirov**, then led the singing of **Advance Australia Fair**. The choir members were standing amidst



the rosemary bushes of the Commemorative Garden which was aptly described as a space for reflection, a space for dreaming... and a fitting place to recognise those who served and those who gave their lives... and to celebrate their memory.

Banjo Paterson summed it up well in his 1915 poem **We're All Australians Now** '*So now we'll toast the Third Brigade/ That led Australia's van,/ For never shall their glory fade/ In minds Australian.*'

Institute President **Colette Apted**, then came to the podium and outlined the background of the Commemorative Garden project, built on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people. **The World War I Commemorative Project** team was headed by Peter Nankervis and included Institute historian **Bruce Draper** along with **Julie Nankervis** and **Ian Macmillan**. They started with the Arthurs Creek Methodist Church



Honour Roll, which just listed the surnames and the initials of twenty-eight soldiers. It was known that some names were missing and so the hunt was on to find those and 'bring all their names to life'.

The initial list grew to forty-five names, with biographical and service details to be researched from records including the once venerable Arthurs Creek Rifle Club. Photographic material was also hunted down and this resulted in the book *Saluting Their Service: Bringing Their Names to Life: Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute Commemorative Garden WWI Honour Roll*. (See: Book Review page 34).

Next came the decision as to what form the memorial would take. Ideally it would be in local stone and a chunky 1.75 metre long specimen was to be sourced from the neighbouring paddock of **Brian Allan**. It was thought best to site it near the front fence so people could see the stone from the road. Finally, as a place a memory, it was fitting that the surrounds should be landscaped with a predominance of rosemary bushes, interspersed with evergreens and flowers.

The matter of youth involvement and their future ownership and management was then considered. After consultation it was felt that the garden represented two elements **Peace**

ARTHURS CREEK CONT...



and **Remembrance** and so the white dove and red poppy were chosen to match those themes. Arthurs Creek students created the ceramic white doves and Strathewen students made the ceramic red poppies and what a stunning display they made 'planted' around the garden.

The genesis of the flagpole, which carried the new Australian flag, donated by the Government was then explained. The flagpole's original owner was the late **Jim Barr**, whose father **Warrant Officer James Walker Barr** served as stretcher bearer in the Second Field Ambulance during World War I. Jim came into the ownership of the flagpole when his family was quite young and they remember the pole moving with them from house to house, occasionally being transported partly in or on a vehicle, and subsequently generally being stored under the current residence. Jim's family thought that Arthurs Creek needed a flagpole for ceremonial occasions such as this and donated it to the Institute. Arthurs Creek Institute's Mr Fixit **Laurie Parker** then got to work, sanded, painted and fitted it up with pulley and tie down. I am sure Jim Barr would have been justly proud of the result.



Cindy McLeish then spoke of the personal experience of her family which started with service at the Boer War and following Wars and then dedicated the Commemorative Garden and unveiled the Memorial Cairn.

Next colourful wreaths were laid by the various VIPs, including: **Zac** and **Taylah** on behalf of Arthurs Creek Primary School and **Johanna** and **Jenna** on behalf of the Strathewen Primary School at the base of the Memorial Cairn.

MC Peter followed with the reading of Laurence Binyon's **Ode of Remembrance For the Fallen**, followed by the **Last Post**, **One Minute's Silence** and **The Reveille** with thoughtful and interesting incites into their various origins.

Peter continued on with the calling of the Roll of Honour, and bringing some of its names 'to life', noting only one 'B Allen' that had eluded them to date.

The Chocolate Lilies closed the ceremony with **The Parting Glass** and **This is My Country**, in a fitting manner.

A sumptuous afternoon tea followed in the best tradition of Arthurs Creek home cooking, with cream cakes, slices, sandwiches, party pies, sausage rolls, quiches, etc. The tables were still groaning when we left. The Arthurs Creek ladies (and some men) led by Secretary **Ruth White**, certainly know how to (over) cater.

A feature of the day was the quality of the sound system provided by **Andrew Stanley** of lightandsound.com.au and we congratulate his expertise on its setup and presentation.

It left us to comment that the Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute folk had conducted yet another splendid event and their meticulous planning had paid off with a most fitting, sincere and thoughtful tribute to World War I's servicemen. Well done to all of the hardworking team at Arthurs Creek, and take a bow!

Postscript: the number on the name tag was to identify people in photographs taken by roaming master photographer **Ian Toohill** and you can see some of Ian's pictures taken on the day on Facebook/Arthurs Creek Mechanics Institute Hall.

Clockwise from left: Ceramic poppies and doves in front of the new memorial; Chocolate Lilies Choir; Peter Nankervis and Colette Apted; one of the knitted poppies created by Zachary Salbon; and the Arthurs Creek Hall Committee.

(Photos by Roslyn Lowden)

A THESIS TALE

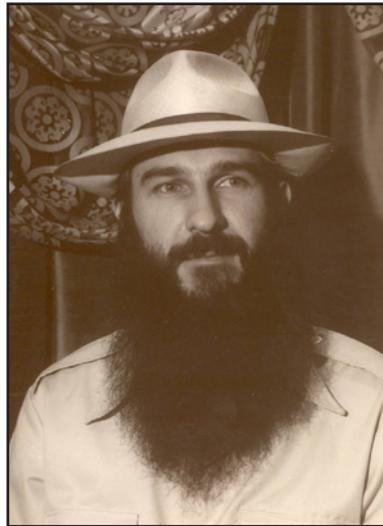
In reviewing material that was available for searching Halls, Mechanics' Institutes and their ilk Australia-wide we were looking at Queensland. For that State, there was the cited study by S H Kellermeier 'Schools of Arts -Queensland' dated 1980, which seemed to be the only comprehensive study, but what did it contain?

A search on the internet threw up an architect '**Steve Kellermeier**' in a Brisbane suburb and a subsequent letter was sent asking if he was that person responsible and if so requesting a copy of his thesis, for which payment could be made.

The response came back '*Unfortunately the thesis was written before computers and only about three months ago I came across and threw out the original typed manuscript.*' Steve noted he murmured at the time '*What will I ever want with that [again]?*' He did however note he had given a copy to his late mother and wondered where that had finished up.

A few weeks later a package turned up containing an original bound copy of the thesis which Steve hoped would find a good and useful home in the **Mechanics' Institutes Resource Collection (MIRC)**. Indeed it will!

Interestingly, pinned in at the back of the thesis is a copy of a letter from **Associate Professor Philip Candy** of the Academic Staff Development Unit, Queensland University of Technology, dated 13 February 1991. *Dear Stephen,/ I am presently compiling a bibliography on the subject of Mechanics' Institutes throughout Australia and I am writing to say what an unexpected pleasure it was to encounter your research project on the Queensland School of Arts here in the QUT Library./ As you know, the field was considerably neglected, and in Queensland still is. I know of no other comprehensive study of the movement in Queensland since yours./ I don't suppose after this*



long that you would have a spare copy of the project, as I would love to have one (complete with the excellent plates) for my collection. I would also value a copy of Douglas's Paper about the Cairns School if you still have it somewhere./ Whether or not you can help with these requests, I would like to congratulate you on a piece of research of which many postgraduate students would be proud. (This was written pre Pioneering Culture.)

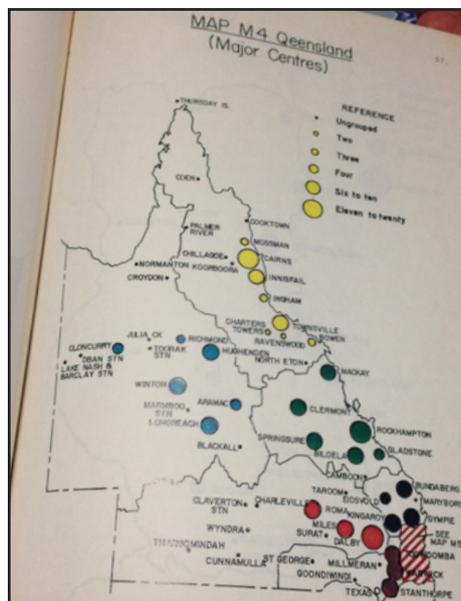
But let us take things back to the very start. Steve's early years were spent on a farming property at Goovigen, about 50km from Biloela in Central Queensland. Steve, as a babe and up to his teen years, attended community events at the **Goovigen School of Arts** with his family. (See **Wonderful of World of Mechanics' Institutes**).

On reaching secondary school age, his family moved closer to Biloela. There he went to the High School during the day and attended evening activities such as dances, school plays and speech nights in the nearby **Biloela School of Arts**. Sadly demolished in 2011.

Graduating from High School, Steve received a cadetship with the Queensland Housing Commission. So at aged seventeen, farewelled by his parents, Steve boarded 'the garret' at Biloela bound for Rockhampton, where he changed trains to Brisbane and arrived in 'the big smoke' on Saturday morning. He caught a cab to his lodgings and started work on the Monday morning, in the huge metropolis.

Two weeks later he enrolled as a part-time student at the Brisbane-based Queensland Institute of Technology in the Department of Architecture and Industrial Design, School of the Built Environment to achieve his Diploma of Architecture.

When it came time for his essay subject, Steve remembered the local Goovigen and Biloela Schools of Arts. He thought documenting the 'few' other Schools of Arts



A THESIS TALE CONT...



Biloela School of Arts Hall during demolition in 2011. Photo: www.centraltelegraph.com.au

established in Queensland, an area not recorded, would be a 'push over'. However when he went to look for written material about them, in the days when the idea of the internet and Trove were aberrations, there was virtually nothing of use.

Visits to the State Library in Brisbane, over several months turned up little and at this stage his thesis dismally looked like it would fill about five pages. Similarly a letter to every country newspaper in Queensland threw up little useful information. The only goldmine was finding the last Secretary of the Queensland School of Arts which he interviewed and he had useful files. Another contact established, confused his interest in the Institute and its records with that of their custodian. After several amorous letters, with one hinting at marriage, Steve suddenly lost interest in that Institute and its records, but often wonders what became of their custodian.

Now desperate for information, Steve hit the road on the weekends with the family dog looking for and photographing Schools of Arts, camping beside creeks and sleeping under bridges. In hindsight it was a lot of fun.

In each place he tried, generally unsuccessfully, to locate the local Hall manager. Still the pickings were thin. Then on another visit to the State Library, he hit the jackpot and came across a librarian 'who had been there for 40 odd years' and she took Steve out the back and showed him her 'room full of history'. Shortly after he was introduced to **Janet Hogan** of the National Trust and so the paucity of information turned into an avalanche.

The once sparsely filled card box was soon crammed with several hundred cards each representing an Institute, and annotated with

much individual information. Then it became the hard decision of what not to use.

Thesis preparation was not easy then, with a hand typed draft being run by his four advisers: **Jim Hutchinson, Gavin Litfin, George O'Kane** and **Margaret West**. They too all had a steep learning curve introduction to the Schools of Arts in Queensland, which by this stage, with elusive Station and Mill Institutes, was edging towards a staggering 400 in number.

The thesis then needed retyping for yet another review, and after further corrections then followed the Final copy, with six individual copies. Colour photocopying was not available then and 210x300mm coloured prints were expensive, particularly on a cadet's wage. At the time he was sharing a house and it had two bathrooms. So Steve took over one, blocked over the windows, put a red globe into the light socket, and the bath served as his developing tray. (Steve points out that this was not the only 'extraordinary' use of the bath, as folks back in Goovigen used theirs to scald pig carcasses prior to their being dehaired, and later being processed for the family table.)

The colour coded regional maps were meticulously done individually with 'Letracolour' dots of various sizes. Looking closely, each dot had a small hole in the middle and its explanation was that the dots were *individually* cut from sheets of colour, laboriously using a two pointed compass. By rotating the compass 'softly softly' it cut out the required dot size, which was then lifted off the backing paper and placed on to the map.

Finally came the collation and binding which cost 'an arm and a leg' for each copy. With all this effort Steve made the lodgement of his landmark thesis one day before the due date in November 1980, and with all that diligence and persistence it is little wonder he passed. Congratulations Steve and many thanks for the memories and a copy of 'The Opus'.



HISTORY OF THE HALL IN AUSTRALIA

Since publication of **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James** *These Walls Speak Volumes: A History of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria* there has been an added impetus to extend this full coverage to all other States. Consequently we have assembled a selection of resources to advance the HOTHIA project.

National

Cathy Milward-Bason's pioneering *Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia: An Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Sources* (1995), still remains as the only national reading list.

The only available comprehensive national listing is **Bronwyn Lowden's** *Mechanics' Institutes, Schools of Arts, Athenaeums, etc.: An Australian Checklist*, updated to a 3rd edition (2010), which also contains useful regional shire maps, is a good starting point for a Google search.

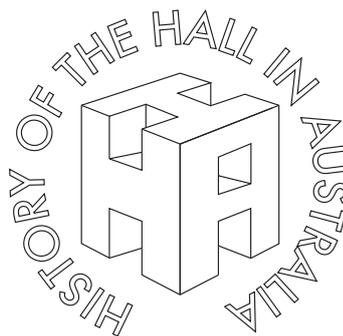
The **Philip Candy** and **John Laurent** compiled *Pioneering Culture: Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia* (1994) is presently the best detailed overview of Australia's Institutes, with extended articles on some Institutes.

The **National Library of Australia**, as the National Legal Deposit centre, has the best single collection of Institute or Hall monographs, and individual listings can be found in their catalogue. The **Noel Butlin Archive** at the **Australian National University** holds the records of **Australian Estates** which owned a number of properties nationally which had Station Institutes in them but these records are not indexed to that extent.

The **Association of Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies** (ADFAS) has embarked on a national research and listing project with resulting individual Institute pages with Institutes, mostly in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia being posted on their website: adfas.org.au.

The **Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria** have also given coverage to some individual State Institutes in their Newsletter/Magazine since 1999. These are indexed on the **Prahran Mechanics' Institute** website: library.pmi.net.au and some back issues can be searched and accessed on the MIV website: home.vicnet.net.au/~mivic/.

A significant number of State **Memorial, Soldiers' and RSL Halls** are individually listed on: monumentaaustralia.org.au.



New South Wales

The late **Elisabeth Richardson** was in the process of compiling a NSW State List for the **Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts**, and the work in progress is held by SMSA.

Several NSW regional coverages are available. The **Barrie Brennan** and **Warren Newman** SMSA sponsored, *Schools of Arts, Mechanics' Institutes, Etc. in New England and Northern New South Wales* (2005), is available on CD and can be accessed at SMSA.

Helen Trustum's *Old Time Country Halls* (1999) is a valuable guide for the Lismore region; and **Barbara Heaton, Greg Preston** and **Mary Rabbitt's** *Science, Success and Soirees: The Mechanics' Institute Movement in Newcastle and Lower Hunter* (2002) covers some seventy Halls in those areas.

There have also been several valuable compilations by **Roger Morris** of Tour Notes for individual Sydney suburban and hinterland Institutes.

The **Association of Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts (NSW)** or AMISA has recently conducted a survey of NSW War Memorial MI/SA's and the result is some individual Hall studies on their website: amisa.org.au.

Queensland

The best listing, with some detailed studies, is **Steve Kellermeier's** landmark architecture thesis 'Schools of Arts - Queensland (1980)', copies are which are available for viewing at the Queensland University of Technology Library and the MIV Mechanics' Institutes Resources Collection via Prahran Mechanics' Institute.

Joan Beddoe has made her research of a number of Institutes available online at: schoolsofarts.com

Nicki Laws and **Ann Alcock's** *Frocks, Country Halls and Deb Balls* (2015) is a good study of the Halls of the North-East Darling Downs.

The **Noel Butlin Archive** at the **Australian National University** also holds the records of Colonial Sugar Refinery which sponsored Mill Institutes.

HISTORY OF THE HALL IN AUSTRALIA

South Australia

The best available source to date is **Michael Talbot's** *A Chance to Read: A History of the Institutes Movement in South Australia* (1992).

Joan Beddoe has also made her research available for South Australia at: schoolsofarts.com.

Tasmania

Tasmania Website: heritage.tas.gov.au.

Victoria

In addition to **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James' These Walls Speak Volumes**, there have been several compilations of Tour Notes which give expanded histories of MIV Institutes accessed from Melbourne during several day tours.

Paul Jones' "Education, Enlightenment and Entertainment: A History of the Mechanics' Institute Movement in Victoria" (MA Thesis in Public History, Monash University, 1994) gives a valuable compilation and listing of Victoria's Institutes.

There have also been around a hundred monographs written on individual Victorian

Halls and a partial listing is given in *These Walls Speak Volumes*.

The **Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria Inc.** website: home.vicnet.net.au/~mivic/ has a members' webpage section and some of these contain some history and its magazine *Useful Knowledge* are two valuable reference sources.

Western Australia

Heritage in Western Australia in regards to signage and documentation of Halls as meeting places and film sites has been well documented. This appears to be in no small part due to resources available from **LotteryWest**. The website is easily searchable: inherit.stateheritage.wa.gov.au.

IMPORTANT NOTE

If you can add to or correct any of the above please email Jim Lowden: theruralstore@bigpond.com.

We intend to publish a listing of Hall monographs for each Australian State, if you have a listing of items it would be most appreciated beforehand.

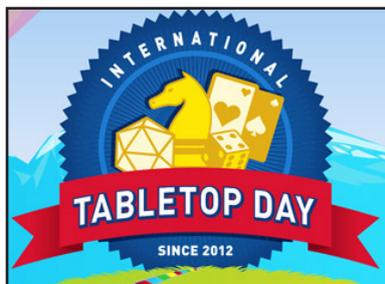
LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

Having a board game night has long been part of family traditions - gathering around a **Monopoly** board, testing our knowledge on **Trivial Pursuit** or simply skipping or stacking draw twos on the next player at **Uno**.

But in the last few years we have seen a resurgence in tabletop gaming beyond that played after family dinners. More and more people are coming together for games nights; battling monsters in **Munchkin**, testing their chronological history in **Timeline** and travelling America in **Ticket to Ride**. Gaming has come full circle - away from screens and technology and back to good old-fashioned board games.

On April 30, 406 locations about the world registered to participate in the **4th Annual International Tabletop Day**. The **Melbourne Athenaeum Library** was one of seven Australian locations registered for a game-filled day.

The Ath's **Sue Westwood** reported: "there were up to twenty people playing at different



times, and a lot of the regular Saturday members joined in. [It] could be a good thing for local communities to establish as well. Table games are a good way to bring older and younger people together." More information about Tabletop Day at: geekandsundry.com/table-top-day/

This August also marks the **XXXI Olympiad, Rio 2016 Summer Olympics**, being held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Olympics is one sporting event that brings people from all over the world together, cheering on competitors from different nations side by side. In the spirit of the Games, how about holding a mini-Olympics at your Institute for kids, both big and little, to try their athletic or artistic talents, while raising money for your Institute or Hall.



HEALESVILLE - A PHOENIX RISING

MIV historian and former owner of the Healesville Mechanics' Institute **Pam Baragwanath** just happened to drive by the Church Street site recently to see much needed restoration works in full swing on the 1892 building.

Pam purchased the Hall in 1984 and after two years of very hard work finally opened it on 22 August 1986 as **The Old Mechanics' Gallery and Tea Rooms** with an exhibition 'The Elton Fox Gallery Revisited'. The **Fox** family had occupied the building from 1946-83, after returning from California where Elton worked as a photographer and advertising artist.

After the building of the new Memorial Hall in 1924 the Institute Hall was sold to auctioneer **Sydney Bradshaw** who used it as auction rooms. It also housed bootmaker **Alex Robb** for a time and later **Henry Cassidy** did wireless repairs in a front room. The main hall was used by the Volunteer Defence

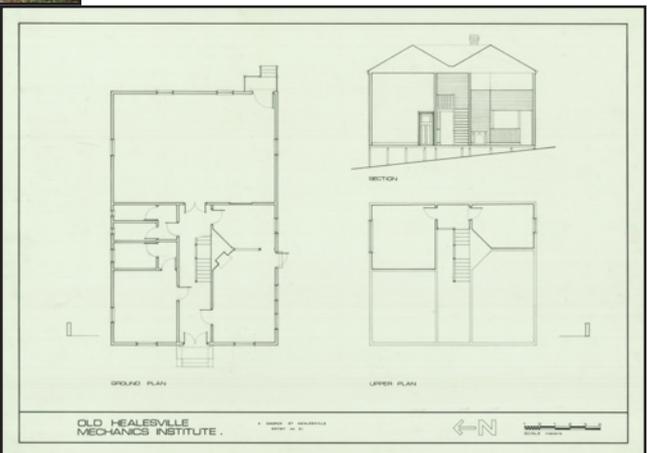


Corps during World War II and it also had use as a gymnasium.

Pam sold the building in 1992 and up until very recently little had been spent on its maintenance.

The building was sold at auction on 2 August 2014 by **Mark Gunther** at a stated \$360,000 and we believe it is now being restored as Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Indeed those walls speak volumes, some of which was recorded in Pam's history *Healesville Mechanics' Institute and Free Library 1892-1992*.

Clockwise from below, left and right: Old Healesville Mechanics' Institute, technical drawings (1988) by Michael Williams and David Mulhall from State Library of Victoria Collection; side photo of the building with facade mid-repaint (Photo: Rob Dunlop); scaffolding allowing workers easy access to the front of the building to begin restoration works (Photo: Rob Dunlop).



SLUOC SEMINAR - KEEPING THE ORIGINALS - 16 JULY 2016

This Seminar, held during **Rare Books Week**, will take the form of a Panel discussion with audience participation, and will consider the role of the Library's **History of the Book**, **Manuscripts** and **Pictures** teams in collecting, preserving and making available the physical objects that underpin Victorian and Australian history.

The Seminar will be of particular interest to community organisations concerned about the long term preservation of their archives and their digitisation.

The Panel, moderated by **Professor Wallace Kirsop**, will comprise: **Des Cowley**, Manager, History of the Book; **Kevin Molloy**, Manager, Manuscripts Collection; **Madeleine Say**, Manager, Pictures Collection; and **Dr Richard Travers**, past President of the Book Collectors Society of Australia (Victorian Branch).

The retention of original documents, newspapers, periodicals, books, etc. even after they have been digitised has been a vexed question for library administrators, but for the actual historian the preservation of originals is vital, as they can reveal much more.

For example paper watermarks, which do not show up in normal digital images are proving vital for dating of manuscripts, letters, etc. In some cases the paper watermark actually included the date of manufacture.



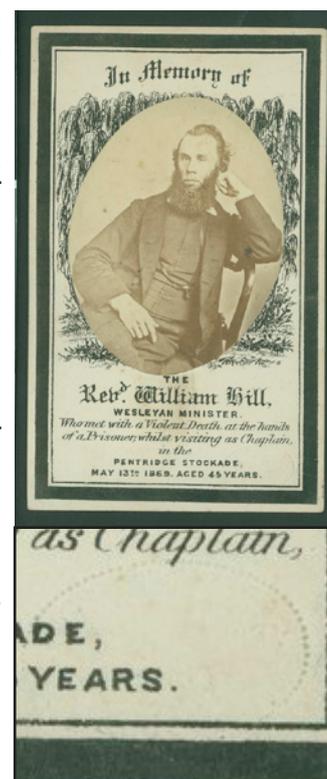
An example of paper watermarking which may be lost with digitisation. (Image: www.whimsie.com)

In the case of newspapers, take for example Melbourne's late and much loved *Herald*, the current digitising project provides for one edition from each day. In fact there were three editions of *The Herald* each day **City**, **Home** and **Final** and each edition generally carried a different front page. Even when it merged to become *The Herald-Sun* it published two daily editions until 2001. The *Herald City* Extra edition of 17 December

1972, the first printed in colour, carried the story of the National Gallery of Australia's acquisition of Jackson Pollock's **Blue Poles** under the banner of 'Would you pay \$1.3m. for this?' (It is now estimated to be worth \$40 million.)

Some newspapers even appeared as 'Extraordinary' issues such as the *Melbourne Morning Herald*, issued on 'Monday Evening, November 11, 1850' with the banner headline 'Glorious News! Separation at Last!'

In the case of photos, the photographer information contained on the back of the portrait, of the standard 2.5"x 4" 'Carte de Visite' can be of equal or more interest than the actual picture itself. It may ultimately lead to the identification of the picture's subject. Some even carry a faint embossed photographer's mark, as in the case of George William Perry (1824-1900) who worked in Melbourne between 1854-97.



Embossing detail not visible on digitised card. (Images: slv.vic.gov.au)

The Seminar is being held in the Red Rotunda (Cowan Gallery), State Library of Victoria on the afternoon of Saturday, 16 July, between 1.30-4pm and will draw on the Library's vast collection. Whilst attendance is free, booking is essential, as it is most likely that this 'must attend' event will be 'sold out'. RSVP: secretary@sluoc.org.au

STOP PRESS: The Victorian Daniel Andrews' State Government has just announced that the State Library's annual allocation will be increased by \$5 million. Indeed a very worthy contribution to maintaining and running one of the world's great libraries in Melbourne, one of UNESCO's seven Cities of Literature.

MIV'S *Historical Plaques Program*

SOMERVILLE MARKS 50 INSTITUTES THROUGHOUT THE STATE

Fresh from full restoration after being de-roofed in January 2015 the resplendent Somerville Mechanics' Hall is again open for business. That may be hiring, but it is also the home of the home of Somerville, Tyabb, and District Heritage Society which operate from the two front rooms, with one as a record centre and the other as a Museum.

Two anniversaries were being celebrated: the 125th anniversary of the building of the Institute in 1891; and the centenary of the building of the two front rooms, in 2015.

The first stage was built, on a site donated by **Henry Gomm**, by **BH Walker** of Frankston to the designs of **Thomas Watts & Sons**. It was officially opened on 17 July 1891 by **Louis Smith** MLA. The second stage was to the design of **Raymond Robinson** and built by **Ralph Philbrick** who also executed the work on the distinctive art-deco rendered façade. These rooms were officially opened on 31 December 1915 by Shire President **Cr George Griffeth**.

On hand for the official festivities were the Heritage Society's **Barbara Thornell** and Mornington Peninsula Council's Watson Ward **Cr Lynn Bowden** and Mayor **Cr Graham Pittock** and Shire CEO **Carl Cowie**.

Cr Bowden noted the Hall's historic use for dances, concerts and movies and concluded noting 'It's a lovely historic building with strong community ties and it is still an integral part of our community to this day.'

Mayor Pittock and Cr Bowden then unveiled the **MIV plaque No. 50**, also an historical event in itself.

The major early use of the Hall centred around the **Somerville Fruitgrowers' Association** and they later conducted annual shows in the Fruitgrowers Hall which was destroyed by fire about 1945.



Top: L-R: Cr Lynn Bowden and Mayor Cr Graham Pittock (Courtesy: Mornington Peninsula Shire News via mornpen.vic.gov.au); Bottom: Somerville Mechanics' Institute.

Mayor Pittock announced that \$120,000 had been allocated for the redevelopment of the adjacent Somerville Fruitgrowers' Reserve Playground. He also advised that the existing representative collection of fruitgrowing machinery would be housed in a new building with viewing windows and interpretative signage.

Those wishing to book the hall can call (03) 5950 1150 or email: hallbookings@mornpen.vic.gov.au. The Museum is open on Wednesdays 10am-3pm and Sundays 2-4pm and entry is free. The Society can be contacted on (03) 5977 6489.

The Plaque was later installed on the front of the Institute, to the right of the front door.

Check out the Plaques page on the MIV website for locations and individual citations - vicnet.net.au/~mivic/plaques

Recent Plaques

No. 47 **Ruffy Public Hall** - unveiled 22 May 2016. This unveiling will be featured in the next issue of *UK*.

No. 48 **Jeffcott North Mechanics' Institute** - unveiled November 2015

No. 49 **Kyneton Mechanics' Institute**

No. 50 **Somerville Mechanics' Institute**

No. 51 **Rhyll Mechanics' Institute** - to be unveiled later in 2016

No. 52 **Your Institute?**

To order a plaque (They will cost \$195 each, including delivery, and will require your installation.) or for more information, contact: Judith Dwyer, Box 482, Berwick, V 3806 or jad134@hotmail.com.

SAVE OUR INSTITUTES

At the last MIV Committee meeting Robert Kingston, our President, demonstrated the 'kit' assembled by the Trentham SAVE OUR INSTITUTE Campaign. The idea is that all MIV Members campaigning to Save Their Institute whether it be from wear and tear, takeover, closure, demolition, apathy or just plain poverty can hire the kit from the MIV for a small charge.

As Robert explained, Mechanic's Institutes enjoy support from across the political spectrum so it was important that the colour scheme be politically neutral. They also thought that yellow and black would stand out and perhaps hint at a work in progress and even danger ahead.

The focus of the kit is a bright yellow gazebo that comes with 12v LED lighting and includes AA battery powered emergency backup lighting.

Two 2400mm x 900mm matching vinyl banners emblazoned with SAVE OUR INSTITUTE and HANDS OFF THE HALL are included. These are ideal for attaching to your Hall, onto a fence or between the gazebo and nearby trees with the ropes provided.

The gazebo serves as a focal point for distributing brochures, signing petitions and the sale of SAVE OUR INSTITUTE balloons, stickers, placards and other paraphernalia all of which can be purchased from MIV in appropriate quantities (available in the next issue of *UK*).

SAVE OUR INSTITUTE and HANDS OFF THE HALL stickers along with three sizes (A1, A2 & A3) of similarly worded weatherproof korflute



placards are available, as are supplies of Velcro, plastic ties, poles and garden stakes. The balloons come with sticks, holders and a handy blow-up pump. Truly a kit ready for action.

The affection felt by communities for Mechanics Institutes

and their historic halls runs deep despite overworked Committee members sometimes being tempted with the thought that nobody cares. Far more people than you might imagine genuinely do care and will respond to a sustained campaign. However they do need to understand that the "Old Hall" is in real danger.

So before you succumb to the siren call of your local Council, Government Agency or property developer offering short term relief in return for the control they crave over the land under the Old Hall why not try a Campaign to SAVE YOUR INSTITUTE.

Work out what it is you need to SAVE YOUR INSTITUTE from. If it is just the cost of maintenance that is overwhelming you be positive. Thoroughly cost out the required repairs or works needed to keep the doors open. Take construction industry advice and set a fundraising target two and a half times your first estimate. Don't forget to advertise your need for people prepared to commit to the Committee for several years and give your turnaround a good chance of success.

Kick the campaign off with a series of Open Days or Market Stalls using the **SAVE OUR INSTITUTE** Pack and even an **MIV Travelling Exhibition** and alert your community to the dangers facing your Institute.

Only by asking for help will you find out who or what is going to turn up and help you SAVE YOUR INSTITUTE. One thing you can be certain of is that neither locals nor celebrities or cashed up donors will join your campaign if you don't launch one.

If you would like to SAVE YOUR INSTITUTE or tell someone to keep their grasping HANDS OFF THE HALL and would like to hire the SAVE YOUR INSTITUTE kit from the MIV contact Robert at: rjk.kapl@bigpond.net.au



Around Victoria's Institutes

This column is comprised of contributed articles and those written 'in house'. Whilst care has been taken to ensure dates and facts, the scant history of Institutes makes it an impossible task to verify these. If you find a date, spelling or fact incorrect let us know and we will publish amendments in our next issue. Our newsletter is indexed to enable histories of various Institutes to be aggregated over time.

ALEXANDRA FREE LIBRARY (Est. 1877)

The **Friends of the Alexandra Library** have put their money where their mouth is with the purchase of a copy *These Walls Speak Volumes* for the Alexandra Community Library. In addition to documenting the history of the Alexandra Library it all documents the history of other area Institutes including those that no longer exist.

In the meantime the Junior Friends of the Library continue with their various projects and author sessions funded partially from the proceeds of the Friends of the Library Bookshop in Grant Street, Alexandra. This is well worth a visit to show what can be done in a community.

BALLARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1859)



The front of the BMI was obscured behind scaffolding and sheeting for this year's Heritage Festival which seemed apt showing that a 'jewel' in Ballarat's heritage will endure as part of it. Melbourne architect **Quadratum** are overseeing the work on external rendering, metalwork and replacement of wooden window frames and restoration of doors. The task is being undertaken by Ballarat's **Nicholson Construction**, with works due for completion by

July. The \$300,000 funding has been provided by the **Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund** and **Helen Macpherson Smith Trust**.

During the 7-8 May **Ballarat Heritage Weekend**, BMI unveiled 'a teaser' of its most recent research asset, thousands of photographs from the **Max Harris Photography Collection** which feature Ballarat life since its early settlement. The collection was gifted to the BMI by the **Haymes family** of paint fame.

One of the features of the BMI Open Day was a photographic and documentary exhibition of Ballarat's Chinese families. Truly fascinating.

The **Max Harris Collection** will form a major exhibition which will be ready for **Open Day** on Saturday, 3 September, when other exhibitions, performances, demonstrations and lectures will take place.

The BMI is a very busy place with the Twilight Talks Series, Music –Jazz, Film and Theatre, and a jolly good read, in its many spaces, which are all available as a wedding venue. The Batten Room or Minerva Space being perfect for a wedding reception, dinner, meeting or conference.

To introduce new members to Ballarat's real-life 'Phoenix', BMI are also offering a three months free trial membership to sample the fare. Website: ballaratmi.org.au

BEECHWORTH ATHENAEUM/ BURKE MUSEUM (Est. 1857)

The dynamic team at the Burke Museum recently put together an exhibition of their genesis or beginnings. Titled '**Hunters and Collectors: The Hidden History of the Burke Museum**' the display told the story of some of the key exhibits from its 30,000 item collection. Whilst the exhibition closed on 29 May the 'bones' of the exhibition can still be seen amongst the various exhibits including the notable RE Johns Aboriginal Collection, the Natural History Collection of 'stuffed' native fauna and Geological Collection. The Museum has an active **Friends of the Burke Museum** which organises fundraising through special events and lectures and assists with staffing the Museum.

BERWICK MECHANICS' INSTITUTE AND FREE LIBRARY (Est. 1862)

Talks from the Balcony.

In the tradition of Mechanics' Institutes delivering talks and lectures to impart useful

knowledge, the Berwick Mechanics' Institute & Free Library (BMIFL) has initiated "Talks from the Balcony". The inaugural talk was in May 2015 when **Mr Neil Lucas, PSM, JP** entertained the audience with reminiscences and anecdotes of his early years in Berwick and the building of the new library for the BMIFL. In October 2015 author **Julia Drury-Catton** spoke of the challenge renovating an old family home on the Greek island of Lemnos.

Speakers stand on the "balcony" - the Mezzanine floor - and patrons sit and stand on the library's ground floor. The events have proved very popular with patrons and visitors.

The most recent "Talk from the Balcony" was the Celebration of Queen Elizabeth's 90th Birthday on Thursday 21st April. Guest speaker **Prof. Weston Bate, OAM** highlighted the Queen's dedication to duty and also spoke of early Royal visits to colonial Victoria when patriotic fervour was at its best. Attended by about 50 people, the event concluded with the lighting of the birthday cake and the singing of **Happy Birthday**.

Heritage Day 2016

The **Officer Public Hall** proved a popular venue for the Casey Cardinia Heritage Festival on Sunday, 15 May 2016. It is estimated that more than 100 local residents visited the hall to inspect the displays and reminisce about days past. A number of young people attended to obtain information for their projects on local history. Mechanics' Institutes were represented by the **Narre Warren MI** and the **Berwick MI**.

Judith Dwyer

BRIM MEMORIAL HALL (Est. 1905)



Photo: Sally Joustra

Brim residents have seized the moment down through the years since they purchased their own Hall in 1905. Over the years it has been upgraded to be what it is today. However in very recent times the conversation at the Seniors weekly lunches held in the Hall has been the progress

of the giant mural that has been painted on the disused Graincorp Brim silo complex.

The giant mural painted by Queensland-based artist **Guido van Helten** who has undertaken other large scale murals around the world. Funding was by way of **Regional Arts Victoria** and **Yarriambiack Shire Council**. Paint was donated by **Taubmans** and **Loop Paints** and the local caravan park and the pub provided the artist with free accommodation and meals. The project took three weeks of ten hour days, sometimes in 40 degree heat. Utilising a giant cherry-picker, the thirty metre high portraits of three men and one woman gradually emerged across the curved silo complex. The identities of those portrayed are known locally, but have not been publicised further. **Brim Active Community Group** can be well pleased with 'their own Mount Rushmore'.

CAVENDISH MECHANICS' INSTITUTE/ SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HALL (Est. 1885)

The Cavendish Free Reading Room and Library was established in 1884, with the reservation of a Crown Land site for a 'Reading Room' in Scott Street, gazetted on 27 February 1885. In the meantime the Institute probably operated from the Cavendish State School as the Institute Secretary **Frank Roberts** was School Headmaster. The Hall was built late in 1885. The Hall was extended in 1893 to a design by **Joseph Moynan**. The name was changed to Cavendish Mechanics' Institute and Free Library in 1894 and the distinctive lantern was given to Hall by hotelier **Gotthelf Fellenberg** between 1915-20.

With the old Hall proving inadequate for large gatherings it was resolved to build a new Hall elsewhere on the corner of Barker and Scott Streets and Shire Engineer **Algernon Abbott** prepared the plans. On 30 October 1923 the Trustees of the Cavendish Soldiers Memorial Hall called for tenders to erect a Hall. It was noted in November 1923 that the 55,000 bricks had been on the site for six months. Former local resident and Institute Secretary **Robert Young** laid the foundation stone on 29 January 1924. Speeches were made by **W Slater** MLA, **ER Waters** (Mayor of Hamilton), and **AS Rogers** MHR. Afternoon tea was served in the old Mechanics' Hall in a nearby street. The Hall was completed in November by contractor **William Diwell** at an eventual cost of £2,700.

The Hall was opened on 15 December 1924 by W Slater MLA. Members AS Rogers MHR and **McPherson** were also present and spoke. John McNeill MHR. Stanley Learmonth occupied the

Chair. The Library along with the distinctive lantern, was then transferred to the Hall. The Supper Room was added in 1929.

The Hall holds the local Honour Roll along with another from the former Bulart Primary School. The library continued into the 1940s and film screenings took place into the 1950s. The distinctive column-fronted Hall has been well used and maintained by the Cavendish community over the years.

In the meantime the community are again preparing for the Annual Fleece and Flower held in the Hall each year in November.

CLUNES FREE LIBRARY (Est. 1862)



Photo: Pam Baragwanath

The Clunes building has been closed for the past four years, following concerns about its structural integrity. Unfortunately its closure has attracted vandalism and windows have been smashed and the interior damaged and defaced. The cost of reinstating the building is now edging towards \$1 million and this has been the big stumbling block.

However the Management Committee headed up **Reg Kinnersly** and **John Almao** have taken the 'bit between the teeth' and with the technical assistance of Hepburn Shire's Heritage Advisor **Wendy Jean** they are developing a staged and costed works program. The first stage of which has recently been completed by local building restoration business **Blakes** of Creswick. These works have included: some weatherproofing; window refits; reinstatement of damaged rear toilets; interior repairs to plasterwork; and some painting. The opening of an entrance through north wall will also later permit wheel chair access to the building.

The next stage includes the construction of a swale drain to intercept water that flows down the slope towards the Hall and roof and spouting work. Clearly the Committee are in for the long haul as they plan to have the works all complete in time for the 150th anniversary of the building in 2022.

Whilst 1874 is on the front of the building, the building was actually constructed in early 1872 by **Short & Co.** at a contract price of £384. The name was changed from Clunes Mechanics' Institute to Clunes Free Library in 1874, hence its current badging. This building replaced The Institute's earlier home, the old Masonic Lodge in Service Street, which it purchased in 1864 and sold early in 1872

LANCEFIELD MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1868)

Lancefield pursue their dream of renovation and extension. Following the Macedon Ranges Council recent contribution of \$75,000 to upgrade the kitchen and foyer, it has recently been announced that the Institute will share in the bushfires \$1.4 million funding package, to the tune of \$150,000. This all follows on the major restoration of the main hall in 2013. Indeed those that dare to dream and have plans in the drawer!

MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM (Est. 1939)

WHAT'S ON AT THE MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM LIBRARY IN JULY

COLLECTING TRAVEL BOOKS - A talk by **Richard Overell**, Tuesday 19 July at 6pm

Discover the fascinating history of collectable books recalling stories of the Grand European Tours from the 17th to the 20th century. The ever-popular Richard Overell will present travel accounts by authors such as Sterne, Smollett, Johnson and Boswell. He'll look at examples of 18th and 19th century lady travellers, and 20th century accounts by Waugh, Durrell and Fermor among the works of many other, less well-known writers. Highly collectible travel guides such as the Baedekers will also be explored.

Richard Overell was, until the end of 2014, the Rare Books Librarian at Monash University Library. He is now working at the State Library of Victoria helping to catalogue the John Emerson Collection of 17th century English Civil War books and pamphlets.

A RARE ART FORM: POP-UP BOOKS - A talk by **Anne Kucera**, Wed 20 July at 5.45pm

Local Artist Anne Kucera is giving a talk on the wonderful world of the Moveable Pop-Up Book on Wednesday 20th July as part of her residency at the Melbourne Athenaeum Library. As a paper pop-up artist herself, she will discuss the origins of moveable books; from their evolution, to their now collectable status and their future conservation. Anne will also explore the idea of

the modern pop-up book as a form of art, which she illustrates through her own practice.

Anne Kucera is a visual artist born in Melbourne, Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Art from the Victorian College of the Arts and a Diploma of Visual Arts from RMIT. Exploring her affinity of working with paper, Anne creates pop-up Artworks made entirely by hand including; the pop-up design, mechanisms and the book cover.

Anne's work will be on display at the Melbourne Athenaeum Library during Rare Book Week and Open House Melbourne – from 14 – 30 July 2016 during normal opening hours.

Melbourne Athenaeum

MERTON MEMORIAL HALL (Est. 1910)



Work on the refurbishment and additions to Hall was commenced by Euroa-Based contractors **Harper & Morphett** commenced on 11 January. 'The community will then be fully involved in finishing off, painting and landscaping activities'. Besides the Mansfield Shire Council and Merton Memorial Hall and Recreation Reserves Committee, other funding partners include: **Ausnet Services**; the **Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)**, **Mansfield Community Bank**, the **Merton Community**. **Haymes Paint** generously donated paint for the completion of the whole building.

MITRE PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1915)

Mitre celebrated their Hall centenary on 14 November 2015. The event drew people from across the State and from interstate. Over 120 people sat down for afternoon tea from 3pm. A plaque was unveiled by Horsham Rural City **Councillor Mark Radford** and Member for Lowan, **Emma Kealy**. A time capsule of memorabilia was sealed and to be opened in November 2040. The day kicked on into the evening with a spit roast of lamb and pork with

salads provided by the local community. Music for dancing was provided by **Steven Greenaway** (piano) and **Garry Dickerson** (piano accordion). Indeed 'It was wonderful to see the hall, 100 years on, alive with activity and obvious enjoyment'.

ROMSEY MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1868)

During the weekend of the 19th and 20th March, Romsey Mechanics' Institute Committee of Management and Romsey Neighbourhood House held their 2nd Annual Antiques Fair. The weekend was catered for by the Romsey Golf Club and Romsey CWA. Numbers through the door were a little lower than that of last year, but the event was still a success, and discussion has begun for next year's Fair. Keep an eye on MIV's calendar for the 2017 event dates. romseymechanicsinstitute.com

SORRENTO MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1877)

The Institute's custodian, the **Nepean Historical Society** continues a busy round of lectures, exhibitions and the constant search for more history. Volunteers clocked up 5581 hours last year from amongst their membership of 300. Their evolving **ANZAC Honour Roll** of local men and women is being updated regularly on the web.

The long search for the nineteen gravesites of the nineteen free settlers who died at Sullivan's Cove in 1803-04 continues. This has progressed with research done recently in the British Library on the Harris documents of the Collins Settlement by **Cr Hugh Fraser**. Hugh recently addressed the Society on his findings from that research work.

The Society's Accredited Museum, and bookshop, is open on weekends between 1.30-4.30pm and is well worth a visit. They are also open to groups by appointment. Check out their website: nepeanhistoricalsociety.asn.au.

STANLEY ATHENAEUM & PUBLIC ROOM (Est. 1863)

Featured in a recent edition of the local paper is a pic of Stanley stalwarts, **Ros Woods**, **Chris Dormer** and **Helen McIntyre** holding their autographed copy of *These Walls Speak Volumes* standing in front of their Hall, which proudly supports an MIV commemorative plaque. (Helen collected Stanley's copy at The Ath launch.) Stanley is one of twelve Victorian Institutes that have their library intact. Like numerous other Institutes they have seen a revival in recent times and now stage regular exhibitions and

other fundraising events. The Institute holds the **Geoff Craig Local History Collection** which for those interested in Victoria's north-east history is an amazing resource.

May 2016 - Stanley Athenaeum News

The Stanley Times and Mining Journal - Geoff Craig's original history of Stanley (1979), has long been out of print and has now been re-typed by Ros Woods, a Friend of the Athenaeum. This new user friendly edition will be launched in May and available to purchase from the Athenaeum or by mail order (\$25 + postage). A number of historical booklets by the late Geoff Craig are also available for purchase at the Athenaeum. You may be surprised about what pieces of your family history are to be found in these books. The new edition of *The History of Hurdle Flat* is also available for \$25. (Geoff Craig left the copyright of all his Stanley books to the Athenaeum in his will).

New Catalogue

A new format copy of the historic book collection catalogue is now available to help visitors more easily find and access information on the books. Thanks to Friend Ros Woods for her work on the catalogue database.

Exhibitions to see at the Stanley Athenaeum

Botanical Treasures: Illustrations and Text from the collection at the Stanley Athenaeum, a selection of books in the collection reflect the interest in botany and plants from all over the world, 'a global fascination with plants from the New World' and their interest in the unusual. This new exhibition will begin on 1st July 2016 until 30 January 2017.

Memorials, Memories and Loss : Stanley & the First World War exhibition that tells the story of the young men of Stanley who enlisted and gave their lives in greater numbers than many other small towns, the exhibition concludes 30 June.

Euchre Nights - showcases the game of Euchre once a popular social activity of many Stanley residents, euchre nights were held regularly at the Stanley Athenaeum for many years to raise money to support the Athenaeum and to bring people together. The Euchre display has been made possible by extra space available with the recently completed glass cabinets funded by an Indigo Shire Council Community Grant.

Now Open Every Friday

Visit the Stanley Athenaeum and Public Room, Main Street, Stanley which is open every Friday & 4th Saturday each month from 10am to 12pm. *(other times by appointment)*

Contact - 0458 606 922 or 03 5728 6702

Email: stanleyathenaeum@gmail.com

Website: <http://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/stanley-athenaeum>

Chris Dormer

TRENTHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1878)

The Trentham Institute has been a busy and much talked about place in recent times. Hepburn Council's announced intention to demolish the building and replace it with a community hub is contentious to say the least. Notwithstanding this it has recently served the community well by hosting the **Melbourne Claddagh Irish Set Dancers** weekend of activities on 15-17 January. Then followed the **Trentham Easter Art and Craft Show** from 24-27 March. One hundred and thirty people attended **Trentham Food Hub's Growers', Cookers and Eaters Dinner**, where **Arkie T Williams** and the **Mudlarks** entertained, on 9 April. **The Chaplin's Barista Bar and Nosh Night** was held on 22 April. This featured the **Easy Street Quartet** comprising **Robbie Melville** (guitar), **Stephen Magnusson** (guitar), **Zoe Frater** (bass) and **Carl Pannuzzo** (drums) and improvised a 'sound track' for the screening of Charlie Chaplin's short original silent films **The Pawn Shop**, **The Floorwalker** and **Easy Street**. Most recently the Hepburn Shire Council met there on 17 May for their monthly meeting.

WAREEK PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1912)

Sunday 17 August 2015 was a red letter day for Wareek Hall, when it officially celebrated a century of community service. Balloons and streamers were in place to welcome visitors to the celebrations which kicked off at 12.30pm. Hall President **Barbara Ipsen** chaired proceedings at which Central Goldfields Shire Cr **John Van Beveren** spoke of the valued presence of the much loved and cared for Wareek Hall. Historian **Wes Jolley** took the gathering down memory lane.

A Hall was the goal of the Wareek and District Progress Association which met in the Wareek State School from 1912. In 1914 permission was given to erect the Hall on the School Reserve and no time was lost in its building. It was officially opened on 5 August 1914 by the **Hon. AR Outtrim** MLA and during the evening it was announced that Britain was at war with Germany. The Hall holds three matching Honour Boards - World War I, World War II and Other Conflicts. A cenotaph was erected in front of the Hall in the

about 2000 and when the State School closed in 2002 the flagpole was shifted to the site.

To permanently mark the occasion a celebratory plaque was unveiled by Central Goldfields Shire **Mayor Barry Rinaldi**. Behind the scenes were other Hall Committee members **Joan** and **Kevin Da Fonte** and **Pam Jolley** to ensure everyone had an afternoon cuppa.

WILLIAMSTOWN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1856)



Fear of the potential demolition of the Secretary/Librarian's Cottage at the Williamstown Mechanics' Institute has been allayed with the recent disclosure by **Hobson's Bay Council** that it plans to spend \$5,760,000 on the Williamstown Mechanic's Institute complex.

These works include restoration of the Secretary/Librarian's Cottage which will be in accord with the Council-commissioned *Williamstown Mechanics' Institute Conservation Plan* prepared by conservation architect **David Bick** in 2001.

The Institute has hosted the **Williamstown Historical Society** and their Museum Collection for more than fifty years and this is welcome news for the Society. This is Williamstown's main museum and given the area's maritime, shipbuilding and military significance, is a key Victorian heritage collection.

Williamstown's Cottage was built early in 1884 at a cost of some £430 and was first occupied by Secretary/Librarian **James Taylor Morrell** (1840-1903) who had been appointed in 1879. After his death his wife **Elizabeth** (1842-1933) held the position until 1909. Their son, who grew up in the Cottage, **James Charles Morrell** (1868-1943) was a pioneer of Town Planning in Australia and had early involvement with **Walter Burley Griffin** in Canberra.

Williamstown is believed to be the last Instituteto have a remaining detached caretaker's cottage, although St Arnaud and the Melbourne Athenaeum had 'in-house' accommodation.

There are also plans to upgrade facilities for the theatre which hosts the **Williamstown Musical Theatre Company** and which stages three shows a year. The building also hosts the **Williamstown Film Society**.

YARCK PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1887)



Photo: Corinne Brewis

Re-opening of Yarck Hall

After the completion of its recent renovation, Yarck Hall was officially reopened on 29th April 2016. This renovation has added more space to the building and includes a magnificent commercial kitchen.

A plaque commemorating the event was unveiled by **Sharon Fox** on behalf of her father **Mr Roy Fox**, a well known local identity. Both were present at the unveiling. As well as the original hall and its later extension to the front, the hall retains two small internal rooms with fireplaces and the bio box for film shows which were held in earlier days.

Committee Chairman, **John Drysdale**, spoke about the many hours of work undertaken prior to and during the renovation, noting the considerable amount of volunteer time and effort given to the project.

Amongst some fifty persons at the reopening were members of the Yarck Hall Committee, **Cr Margaret Rae**, Mayor of Murrindindi Shire, **Margaret Abbey**, CEO Murrindindi Shire, **Cindy McLeish**, MP for Eildon and **Dr Bill Sykes**, her predecessor.

The afternoon concluded with a magnificent country tea provided by the C.W.A.

Corinne Brewis

'halls may be burnt, flooded, blown apart by cyclonic winds, sink into the black soil or be devoured by termites or social change. Yet, because of the people involved, they are far from lifeless structures. Each country hall has its own personality.'

The Wonderful World of Mechanics' Institutes

AUSTRALIA - NEW SOUTH WALES

SYDNEY MECHANICS' SCHOOL OF ARTS (Est. 1833)

We recently sighted the impressive 2015 Annual Report of the SMSA and what a fascinating and enlightening read it proved to be. Firstly it showed the building which comprises eleven levels is a very busy place. The activities of SMSA occupy three levels and the remaining eight levels bring in some \$1.3 million in rentals. Hirings from the Institute's own spaces brings in a further \$200,000.

The thirteen member Board, which comprises six ladies (Women were first admitted as members during the first year of operation in 1833. They first joined classes in the 1860s, were admitted to the SMSA Debating Club, and first joined the Committee of Management in 1893.), serve variously on six Committees, or Ad Hoc Committees as required. There was also a growing number of volunteers.

Membership cards have been issued for the first time 'in many years' to the almost 1400 members. These also contain membership access details which enable on-line e-Book use. Cards will also be useful for developing partnership and discount offerings.

The core Library activities saw 20,000 loans, including over 24/7 2000 e-Book loans. There was also an impressive range of e-Magazines available for perusing.

The **Tom Keneally Centre** is now open three days a week, with author talks, writers' classes, and readings. Tom has just started to notate the significance to him of each book on the Centre's shelves, which is a daunting, but most worthwhile task.

In addition to a range of talks and events, there is the Mystery and Crime Reading Group, Poetry at SMSA Group, the Mah Jong Group, and Film Group with other groups being initiated for Chess and Scrabble. Library Lover's Day was celebrated with an afternoon tea and 'Blind Date' with a book. There was also the annual Members' Bus Trip.

The Members' Christmas Party was again held in conjunction with a showing of works from the **Julian Ashton Art School** which SMSA financially supports with scholarships. SMSA also conducts an annual grants program and it distributed over \$40,000 in 2015.

It also hosts activities of the **Association of Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts (NSW)**, our sister organisation.

TAMWORTH SCHOOL OF ARTS (Est. 1856)



Tamworth, located on the Peel River in northern New South Wales, lies in the rich farming region of New England. It is immediately

recognisable as the home of the Tamworth Country Music Festival held each year in January.

The Tamworth Institute had its start in 1856 with the selling memberships for its lectures which started with one on 'Genius and Talent'. **JH Scott Durbin** delivered a controversial lecture on 'Immigration' to the Institute in 1858.

Eventually a planned 25ft (8m) by 65ft (20m) building was constructed and this was officially opened on 24 May 1866, Queen Victoria's birthday. This seemed apt since both the names, of the town and the River on which it stood, were translated from England.

The new Institute provided a venue for lectures, discussions, debates and a library from which books could be borrowed and more importantly 'local' newspapers and periodicals could be read. Community and political meetings were intermingled with soirees of entertainment and music.

The first meeting of the local Council was held there as were the services for the various Church denominations and Lodge meetings until their own individual buildings were erected.

The building was later expanded to provide a Reading Room with an octagonal ceiling, which was later to become the Art Gallery.

The Institute was a busy place during wartime and for the duration of World War I it was used for recruiting, Red Cross fundraisings and Comforts Fund activities and of course Welcome Homes.

A large contingent of Army and Air Force personnel was stationed at Tamworth during World War II and the Institute was used for dances, entertainments or just reading.

Chess, draughts and whist were pre-1900 and enduring recreations. Billiards also became a feature of Institute life and the record breaking

visit of **Walter Lindrum** in 1936 saw record scores and crowds to see him play.

The building entered a new phase of life in 1961 when the **University of New England** established its largest regional office there. Its uses were expanded with film screenings, concerts and even trial broadcasts for Tamworth's Community FM radio station.

The building of a new Tamworth Regional Library in 1961 and an adjoining Art Gallery in 2006, freed the Institute for other uses. Computer courses were held there as were pottery classes.

In 1997 the **Australian Country Music Foundation** moved into the building and there its offices and archive expanded. Eventually the Foundation's offices moved to alternate premises and the building returned to U3A use. However the Foundation's archive and museum exhibits remained to form the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame. That grew to bursting point and in 2015 it moved out into its nearby new guitar-shaped premises.

So the Tamworth School of Arts building celebrated its 150th anniversary quietly. In the meantime it awaits new tenants in the form of: a children's gymnasium and active learning centre; and a family restaurant, which will open from 6am-10pm daily, and is expected to employ thirty people.

URANA SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HALL (Est. 1884)



Photo: Panoramio/andyhz1

The grand and imposing two-storey slip-form concrete front of the Urana Soldiers' Memorial Hall in fact combines two Halls: the original Urana School of Arts (1884) designed by engineer and architect **George Sheppard** (1853-1918); and the present façade and large hall (1924-25) designed by **Sidney James Hunnings** (1882-1961).

Thanks to a grant from Veterans Affairs, Urana was recently able to have their Honour Boards cleaned and relettered. Now fully restored, the Honour Boards are back on display in the Hall foyer.

QUEENSLAND

GOOVIGEN SCHOOL OF ARTS (Est. 1926)

The Goovigen district is located about 650km north-west of Brisbane. It was established as a



Photo: queensland.com

rail siding in 1925 but this was closed about 2000. However the town still has its grain receival centre at nearby Callide.

Today the area is noted for its cotton, cattle and grain production. Close by the township is the large Lake Victoria which is a quiet tourist destination and the free caravan park at Goovigen is well used by tourists. The district is named in the Aboriginal dialect as 'box tree'. Whilst the township is not prone to flooding, Cyclone Marcia which passed through in February 2015 did some damage.

Back in the early 1900s people felt uncomfortable meeting at Warren's Hall which was attached to the hotel conducted by **Charles George Warren**. Finally a meeting was held in the Goovigen State School on 29 August 1926 to discuss the building of a community hall.

About thirty people were present. 'Mr F Mathies explained the business of the meeting. He said that one of the local wants was a suitable building for holding meetings, dances, picture shows, etc. There was also the need of a library.' Suggested fundraising was to start with a sports meeting and dance in the evening. (**Christian Frederick William Mathies** [1871-1935] was the inaugural Headmaster at Goovigen State School.)

A half-acre site was donated in Rannes Street by **Stephen** and **Emily Stone** and three trustees were elected: **E Edwards**; **Ernst August Schuenemann**; and **F Norris**. A meeting was convened on 8 October 1927 from which plans were drawn up for the 30ftx15ft hall.

Eventually construction of the Goovigen School of Arts started early in May 1929 with the contractor being **WA Wilson**. No time was wasted and a sports meeting and dance was planned for the opening on 1 June. There was 'a large attendance' at the sports and 'Owing to the lack of time the Committee were unable to run off the full programme.' There was a 'very satisfactory' attendance at the evening ball, at which **Matt Reimer** was MC and the Wowan Orchestra played. The day's activities resulted in a profit of some £40.

The **Goovigen Country Women's Association** was formed at a meeting held in the Hall about 1933. In 1934 the CWA held a dance to raise money for the Hall and a Supper Room and kitchen were added to the Hall in the same year and the library was shifted into this area at the same time.

The CWA met regularly in the Hall until they purchased their own premises in Stanley Street, Goovigen about 1936, and they have continuously met there since then. The library appears to have been shifted to the CWA Hall about this time. However the CWA still used the Institute for major functions and World War II fundraisers.

From around 1936 the **Goovigen Jockey Club** held dances in the School of Arts and the New Year's Eve Raceday Ball. Races continued up until World War II. The Crown Reserve racecourse, out the Lake Pleasant Road, and opposite the cemetery, has since been leased.

Post-War community events were transferred to the picture theatre and the School of Arts was only used for an occasional meeting.

About 1964 a public meeting was called to decide whether to upgrade the existing hall or build a new hall and the meeting voted for a new hall.

Consequently the old School of Arts building was sold about 1965 to **Col Stone** who used it as a grain shed. About 1995 it was subsequently purchased back for the community by the **Goovigen Historical Society** under President **Desiree Turner**.

Percy Schluter subsequently became President of the Historical Society, which seemed apt, as Percy's father **Thomas Schluter** was the Secretary of the original School of Arts Committee back in 1926.

Percy and his wife **Elaine** threw their all into restoring the galvanised iron clad School of Arts. It had to be partially restumped. The stage which had been removed for a grain hopper was rebuilt by Percy, **Des Pitman** and **Gary Campbell**. Elaine Schluter and others including **Dee McLintock**, painted the external trims of spouting, windows and doors and the inside of the Hall. The verandah was also repaired.

Percy then dismantled the historic slab hut which had been the original home of **Carl Friedrich Wilhelm 'Bill'** (1891-1977) and **Laura** (1896-1974) **Engel** and relocated, it was rebuilt on the School of Arts site.

When Percy became ill the Society's reins were passed back to Desiree Turner. In General Committee Percy Schluter was duly elected a Life Member of the Society and it was resolved to name the refurbished School of Arts complex after him.

It was a proud moment for all when the Goovigen Historical Society opened their community museum in the School of Arts building. For Percy

and all residents it brought back a treasure trove of memories of local history and district people.

Percival Thomas Schluter passed away in 2004 and his wife Elaine was called to her reward in 2015. Both are buried in the Goovigen Cemetery.

In 2010 flagging interest and high overheads, which included insurance, saw a group of locals led by **Bill McLintock** and which included **Gwen Lucy, Mary Lang**, as well as **Dee, Jeraldin** and **David McLintock** set out to save the Hall.

They organised what proved to be a red letter occasion for the afternoon of 18 December 2010. The event kicked off at 4pm with a barbecue and then 'funny farmer' Geoff Maynard moved in as MC for a fashion parade with local ladies and lassies modelling a range of fashions from olden times to the present. Current with all this activity was the conduct of a 'traditional monster ham wheel night' with a host of multi-draw raffles, the prizes for which included twelve hams.

The Goovigen Community Hall, near the corner of Stanley and Stone Streets, was built about 1965 and now holds the District World War II Honour Roll. It's most talked about use was for the annual Miss Banana Shire Balls, which attracted up to 400 patrons. These ran post World War II for about thirty years. Today the Goovigen and District Progress Association manages the Hall. The Goovigen story is in fact the tale of four halls.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

GRANGE INSTITUTE (Est. 1888)

The folk of the historic Grange Institute recently participated in the **May History Festival**. They also conducted a very successful sale of second-hand books and library surplus stock, where one could have three novels for a dollar. The art gallery also did reasonable business during the day.

The Grange Institute Library is perhaps the last community library in South Australia to be run entirely by volunteers and proudly showcases the Institute movement.

PORT NOARLUNGA INSTITUTE (Est. 1914)

Port Noarlunga is a small seaside town about 60km south of Adelaide. Originally established as a seaport for the inland town of Noarlunga, the township was surveyed in 1859. The Post Office was opened in 1909. The first jetty was built in 1855, but this was destroyed by storms in 1915. The current jetty was constructed and opened in 1921.

The Port Noarlunga Vigilance Committee was formed in 1914 and on 7 November 1914 resolved to make inquiries about the establishment of an Institute. The Library was established in 1914 in a former Church, and later shifted to Skinners store.

A meeting was held on 21 June 1918 when it was resolved to build a hall and a site was purchased

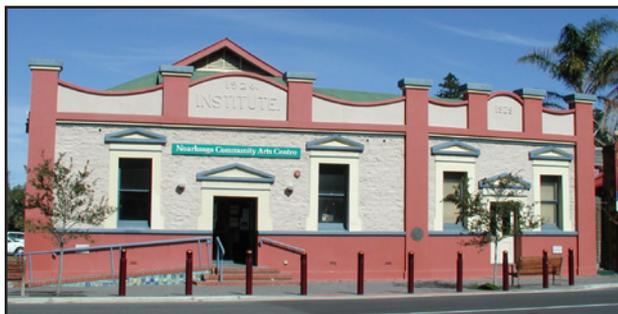


Photo: www.onkaparingacity.com

in June 1920 for £120. Tenders were called in May 1924. The limestone was supplied by local farmers and the blocks were cut and carted by volunteers.

The foundation stone, a gift of the **Cleveland Bros**, was laid on 9 August 1924 by **SA Hall**. The 80ft x 30ft Hall was built by **WH Hollis** at a cost of £1555, and was opened on 13 December 1924 by **Percival Heggaton** MP. The opening was followed by a fundraising fair.

The Hall was converted to cinema in the 1930s and regular Saturday night screenings continued until 1957, although there were occasional screenings after that date.

Institute inaugural President **Noel A Webb** laid the foundation stone for the Library Hall extension on 27 April 1929.

On 1 July 1942 **Janet Henderson Warren** died. She had been the Institute Librarian 1914 up until a short time before her death. Miss Warren had come to live in Port Noarlunga in 1913 and conducted a boarding house in Murray Road known as 'Angus House'. In addition to being Librarian she was also Institute Hon. Secretary, and was a Trustee. A large crowd turned out for her funeral and burial in the Morphett Vale Cemetery. In November 1942, **S Talbot Smith**, President of the South Australian Institutes' Association, unveiled a portrait of Miss Warren in the library, which was to be officially known as the Warren Library. A commemorative plaque to her memory can be seen in the Onkarparinga Room, at the Arts Centre.

The Hall debt was finally paid off in 1944 and the deeds were ceremonially passed over. The Noarlunga District Council took over the building in 1964, and it continued as the community library until 1985.

In 1983 Council restored and refitted the building and it was 'rebadged' as the **Noarlunga Community Arts Centre**.

Today it is very dynamic place with three exhibition spaces: The Foyer; Onkaparinga; and Linear in addition to the performing arts theatre.

TASMANIA

ELLENDALE HALL (Est. 1928)

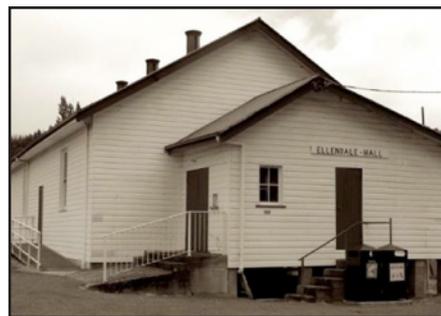


Photo: ellendalehall.com.au

Ellendale is a small rural community located 75km south-west of Hobart in the Derwent Valley.

The annual gathering of Ellendale inhabitants took place on 19 April 1887. An estimated crowd of 250 people of all ages had gathered for the occasion during which the distribution of the Ellendale Public School prizes took place, at which the **Hon. Nicholas John Brown** officiated. Mr Brown intimated 'that in view of the establishment of a library and reading room, he had brought with him a collection of volumes for lending out, also some periodicals to read in the room, which he said would come into operation immediately on completion of the new school room for which tenders had been invited.' Proceeds from the evening concert were devoted to the Library Fund.

'It is understood that the loyal people of Ellendale are determined to perpetuate the memory of the Queen's Jubilee by the establishment of the abovementioned reading-room and library, which it is proposed to call the Ellendale Jubilee Library and Reading-Room.'

It appears early community meetings and activities were held in the Public School and then in the Temperance Hall, which was built in the late 1880s. Community use of the Temperance Hall continued until the present hall was erected in 1928.

Charles John Holmes planted a King Billy pine tree outside the Hall about 1906. Nearby an Avenue of Honour was planted in commemoration of those who had enlisted in World War I on 23 August 1918. It was noted of the twenty-three local men who had enlisted seven had paid the Supreme Sacrifice: **Private James Cecil Bentley; Lance-Corporal Alfred Clark; Private Arthur Clark; Private Alfred Henry Davis; Private Gordon Harold Heron; Private Angus William Holmes; and Lance Corporal Henric Clarence Nicholas.**

The distinctive polished wood Honour Roll in the Hall lists those who had enlisted in either or both World Wars I and II. The central panel, which contains a list of the casualties, concludes

with 'Their bodies lie in the grave, their souls with God. Their spirit remains with us.' (The Ellendale Public School World War I Honour Roll now hangs in the Westerway Primary School.)

In 1923 **Inspector Brown** found that the Hall was suitable as a picture venue, but as there was no 'firebox' or projection room and he suggested that a hole be cut in the Hall wall and the projector be set up outside.

On 22 February 1928 tenders were invited for the erection of the Ellendale Public Hall (Labour only) and closed with the youthful **Rev. Kenneth John Hughes**, but over the name of Hon. Secretary, **Sidney E Read**.

Contractors **G & A Cooper** built the Hall, which rested on concrete footings, and was fitted with a stage, and the exterior hardwood walls were painted in a 'dull red'. In all the cost was £590 'ground included'.

The Hall was opened by **Hon. Louis Manton Shoobridge** MLC on the afternoon of 13 July 1928. This was followed by a Fair and Side-Shows at the Recreation Ground, with stalls for: Sweets; Afternoon Tea; Fancy Goods; Cakes; Produce; Dutch Garden; Chocolate Wheel; and Hoopla. There was a dance in the Hall in the evening, for which the Ritz Band played.

The original Temperance Hall then appears to have been sold and was converted into a residence for **Reg and May Holmes**.

The Hall's fifth anniversary was celebrated in July 1933 with a dance with music provided by the Carnival Band.

The **Ellendale Country Women's Association**, which appears to have started in the 1940s used the Hall for its meetings and fundraising. It also contributed significantly to its upkeep. Consequently in 1954 the Hall Committee was able to set aside £400 for 'improvements and alterations' to the Hall.

The 65ft (20m) x 30ft (10m) dance floor and a well equipped stage makes this an ideal dance and performing arts venue. In addition there is a full range of audiovisual equipment available for hire. The commercial kitchen facilitates its use as a meeting or wedding venue.

The Hall has long been the venue of Christmas related activities which today continue as the traditional Christmas Carols and a Christmas in July dinner. The Hall and surrounds hosts the regular **Traditional Country Market** on the last Sunday of every month.

The recently inaugurated **Annual Buskers Bash** held in March with prizemoney of over \$4000 has proved a 'winner' with talent coming from all over Tasmania to compete for the cash money.

GUNNS PLAINS COMMUNITY HALL (Est. 1925)

After overseeing the highly successful 90th birthday Hall celebrations in September last year longtime Hall President **Yvonne Downes** has stepped down to Vice-President and has been succeeded by **John Hoare**. Indeed behind every busy lady there is an understanding husband, in this case **Ray** and we commend them both for their dedication and contribution to the Hall and community life over the years.

Gunns Plains is now ramping up for its next annual **Indoor Woodchop** in July and **Potato Festival** in November, featuring historic and current Gunns Plains enterprises.

LAUNCESTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1842)



Left to right: Mary Dent, Bob McKinnon, Richard Mulvaney (QVMAG Director), Jenner Plomley (Plomley Foundation), Peter Richardson, Mike McCausland, Sue McClarron, Prue McCausland, and Dorothy Rosemann. Photo: Facebook/QVMAG

Following on news of their receipt of a Community Heritage Grant for a Preservation Needs Assessment (PNA), the **Friends of the Launceston Mechanics' Institute** (FOLMI) report that **Jude Fraser**, historian and manager of consultancy programs, of the University of Melbourne's Grimwade Centre visited in December 2015. This on-site inspection resulted in a valuable 58 page PNA report 'packed with practical advice that we can use to take care of our collection, focussing on the kinds of resources a community group like ours can muster or acquire'.

This was followed in March 2016 by a \$7197 grant from the Plomley Foundation. (The Plomley Foundation was established in 1984 by the late historian **NJB 'Brian' Plomley**, a former Director of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery from 1946-50. Brian had used the Launceston Mechanics' Institute Collection for research and recreational reading, he being a 'consumer' of fiction from the Victorian and Edwardian eras.) This grant will fund the ongoing cataloguing project by the training of a six member team, all professional librarians, to gain experience and registration to enter the LMI Collection on

the Australian National Bibliographic Database and the Australian National Library's discovery service TROVE. It is expected that the project will take two years.

Check out: launcestonmechanicsinstitute.blogspot.com.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PIESSEVILLE AGRICULTURAL HALL (Est. 1906)



Photo: Carol Goldsmith

This was a station on the Great Southern Railway in 1889, about 15km from Wagin, and 200km south-west of Perth. The district was originally known as Buchanan River and the township was gazetted in 1903, setting aside sites for a cemetery and rifle range. However since then it has seen several name changes: Buchanan (1903); Barton (1905), Piesse (1918), and finally Piesseville in 1923, named for local residents **Frederick Henry Piesse** and **Charles Austin Piesse**.

The Depression hit hard in Piesseville and the Barton Hotel closed in 1930 and many farmers walked away from their small holdings. But still the loads of bagged wheat came to the railway siding. This was not to become a bulk handling depot until 1949 and continued until the bin closed about 1982.

Whilst it appears some effort to erect a Hall was made in 1904, the real momentum to build a hall started with a meeting of the **Barton Progress Association** held on 5 May 1906. Tenders were called on 4 August 1906, with the **Zimmer Bros** of Wagin being successful with a contract price of £173.10s. The timber building, with a jarrah floor and corrugated iron roof eventually cost £180 of which £100 was defrayed by way of Government grant. **George Mallen** was a trustee.

In the absence of Hon CA Piesse MLC the Hall was officially opened by **Robert Sinclair**, storekeeper of Wagin on 10 October 1906. There was a sports meeting in the afternoon on the sports ground which was 'somewhat of a prehistoric nature, and needs a good bushman to locate it'. (The Hall is still situated some distance from the main road, and surrounded by trees, and is not easy to find.)

The Hall was initially used as a school from 1907 until one was built. The Methodist and Anglican churches continued to utilise the Hall down through the years and jointly conducted a Sunday School. Farmers held their meetings there as did other organisations.

An Honour Roll in Hall lists twenty-seven local World War I servicemen. It was unveiled on the night of Friday, 21 March 1919 by **Mrs Emily Vince** in the presence of **James Alexander Greig** MLC, **Sydney Stubbs** MLA and **Cr Ernest Henry Absolon** (Local Repatriation Committee).

Mrs Vince handed over the Honour Roll 'to the trustees of the hall to keep for ever and ever in perpetuation of the memory of those upon it'. **G Board; KG Clark-Kennedy; Private Samuel Robert Corry; A Crowe; *Corporal Clarence Theodore Elphick; Private Donovan Russell Elphick; F Griffiths; *Private Douglas Anderson Hendry; Private John Harold Hendry; Private Stanley Thompson Jarman; *Private Thomas Victor Lakeland; Private George Garfield Lloyd; W McLaren; P McMahon; Private John Nash; Sergeant Henry Burge Newman MM; Private Frank Robbins Rowe; Gunner George Sands; Private Richard Sydney Sands; Private George Edward Sutcliffe; Corporal Edward Samuel George Tilley; A Trembath; Private Ernest Vince (aka Ernest Rowe); and Lance Corporal Clement Harrington Glover Wood.** (An asterisk indicates those who paid the Supreme Sacrifice. The Honour Roll was updated after World War II.)

'Refreshments were then handed round by the ladies, and the ceremony, that will live long in the memory of those who were present, closed with patriotic songs.'

Cricket and Tennis were early sports played on the Hall reserve. At one time six tennis courts were in use, but as numbers dwindled it was difficult to field a team, and remaining members joined the Highbury Club. However social tennis has again returned to the courts in recent times.

A fiftieth anniversary celebration was staged on Saturday, 6 November 1954 which took the form of a Dinner and Ball. The one hundred and seventy participants were welcomed to a newly renovated hall, which was ablaze with light from the newly installed electric lighting plant.

The centre piece of decorations was 'a large poster [mural] depicting the advance of the district over fifty years. The central feature illustrated the early name of Barton merging into the present name of Piesseville, this was flanked on the one side with a depiction of the horse and sulky and on the other a modern car proceeding along a bitumen road. Great credit is due to **Mr and Mrs G [George] Justins** for the splendid portrayal

of the purpose of the occasion and it was greatly admired by everyone.'

Catering was done to full justice by Mesdames **H Cousins** and **C Turner**. Numerous toasts were proposed and drunk including to the : 'Descendants of Old Identities'; 'Original Hall Committee'; 'Present Hall Committee'; and 'Absent Friends'. The toasts to 'Ourselves and the Future of the District' was proposed by **CD Nalder** MLA.

After the Dinner the Hall was cleared, and the crowd increased to some three hundred in number. Master of Ceremonies **WE Davey** then called the gathering to order and dancing began to the music of Mac's Melody Makers.

The Piesseville residents and past residents were called together again for the 75th anniversary in November 1979. 'The day commenced with a luncheon with past and present residents being welcomed by **Mr Jack Moyses** this was followed by a choral item from the children and then a cricket match on the old cricket ground plus various

novelty games... In the evening a barbecue tea was held and this was followed by an old time dance to the music of **Mr Keith Stewart**. Everyone enjoyed watching and trying out the old dances not seen at Piesseville for many years. Many thanks to **Mr E Simms** for calling the Lancers.'

The roof was replaced in the early 2000s and the building was restumped about the same time. The sash windows have also been replaced by louvre windows.

The Hall centenary in 2004 drew three hundred people and **Kellie Blight** compiled a brief reminiscence of 'The Town I Know'.

Since then a new kitchen has been added, the Hall interior refurbished and a new toilet block and septic tank has been constructed.

The longrunning Christmas tree event has recommenced and dances, which are held every two months, are well attended.

The Hall is currently used for various activities by the Piesseville Social Club and the Tennis Club.

Case Study - OTLEY MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, UK

Our attention has been drawn to the plight of the **Otley Mechanics' Institute** (aka Civic or Town Hall) building in West Yorkshire (UK). Otley, on the banks of the River Wharfe, gained market status in 1222. To its early wool based industries, it added furniture and paper making, as well as tanning. Heavy industry followed, which produced the world renowned Dawson and Payne Wharfedale printing press.

In 1836 a branch of the Useful Instruction Society was formed in Otley with early meetings being held in Victoria Yard and the old Salem Chapel. This merged to become the Otley Mechanics' Institute (OMI) in 1839. Between 1840-45 the Institute leased and moved into the old Methodist Society's Meeting House, built in Nelson Street in 1771, that could accommodate '500 hearers'. The Institute 'fitted out' the two-storey building with a Reading Room, Library and Classrooms on the ground floor, and a large lecture hall above.

By 1851 the OMI had 264 members and fifty students and there were 1100 volumes in the library, with annual borrowings of 7000. In 1865 an Exhibition of the World of Art, Industry and Curiosity was assembled in the Institute. The exhibition, which drew on the collections of the stately homes of the region, was opened with the singing of the National Anthem. The



Secretary, solicitor **Henry Newstead** declared the Exhibition open.

In the late 1860s the Institute purchased several thatched houses on Garnett Street, abutting the town centre's Cross Green. These demolished, the foundation stone of the present hall was laid in the presence of **CH Dawson** JP, by his wife **Emma** and their son, in 1869.

The Institute was almost due to open, when in June 1871 lightning struck the nearby Maypole on Cross Green. Stones from its base were flung towards the Institute building which smashed windows and damaged the façade. After repairs the Institute was officially opened on 31 October 1871, with a soiree and public meeting.

Case Study CONT...

Mr Dawson subscribed £300 to the building of the Hall, a 'large and commodious' two-storey building, with basement, which cost around £5000. Carved stone heads 'of contemporary local industrialists, etc.' were above the arched windows and the Otley armorial device is above the front entrance. In addition to the large Hall, it also had a lecture room for science and art classes and had a library.

The community again came together for the annual 'merry month of May' in 1872, when a replacement Maypole, fitted with a lightning conductor, was erected.

In 1894 it was decided to extend the building to the rear to accommodate the Science and Art Schools and a Museum. Fundraising took the form of a 'Model Village Exhibition' and entertainments over an eleven day period which raised £467. The new extension opened in 1895. **Workers Education Association** lectures were also staged here during the first half of the twentieth century.

A well-used feature of the Institute was the snooker room from which a table still survives. The full sized table was purchased for £60 in 1905 by thirty subscribers who paid the two pounds each.

The Institute building was 'passed to' Otley Urban District Council in 1957 which then spent some money on its refurbishment. From 1959 it housed the Otley County Library, but this moved out in 2006 to purpose-built accommodation in Nelson Street.

Following the merger with the Leeds City Council in 1974, space became available in the building and the **Otley Museum Society** moved in. Other users included the **Otley Little Theatre** and it was the home of the **Otley and District Men's Forum** until 2000 when Council advised the closure of the meeting venue.

In July 2007 a violent storm caused havoc on Cross Green and windows on the front of the Institute building were damaged. There appeared to be also damage to the roof, for since then the ceiling has partially collapsed. Indeed it would appear that during the forty years of Leeds Council 'ownership' and use, little money has been spent on the building, save bare maintenance.



Following the advice of the Fire Officer, who condemned the electrics, Council declared the Institute building closed to public use in May 2010. In the meantime Leeds Council then leased premium real estate in suburban Otley to house the Otley Town Council.

Since then it has been revealed that the cost of the rewiring would be £20,000 and the 'distant' Leeds Council spends around £40,000 a year on outgoings and basic maintenance on the vacant building. Further Leeds Council appears to claim that the Civic Hall will incur an annual cost of £120,000 to run and maintain.

Various figures of between £2-£4 million have been advanced to restore the English Heritage listed Grade II building and rear structure. Council has advertised for expressions of interest to take over the whole building, wherein lies the catch, for the 1895 rear structure is very badly run down.

The issues appear to be that Council wants to restore both buildings in order to again occupy the front building and there is no will in the present Otley Town Council to move from their present reportedly 'top end' accommodation. Further there appears to have been no Council application to English Heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund for any restoration funding.

In January 2016 a group titled **Give Otley its Town Hall** was launched and headed by **Tom Featherstone**. Steering group member **Bob Brook** said 'I hope everyone in Otley will get behind the campaign, sign the petition, and spread the word, and that Otley and Leeds Council will make it happen' and the 400 seat auditorium be returned to full community use for theatre, cinema and Otley Town Council.

This group was amazed that in February 2016 Council announced it was spending £10 million on a facelift of the Leeds Town Hall. Then hard on the heels of that announcement came another, that an expansion of the West Yorkshire Playhouse would be funded with a further £4.9 million.

However it would appear the **Give Otley its Town Hall** group is heeding their benefactor Dawson's motto 'Perseverando' or 'Persevering' and we wish them success.

www: OtleyTownHall.co.uk

Where They Stood

DUTSON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE & FREE LIBRARY (EST. 1890)

In 1890 the Dutson Progress Association, which met in a room lent by **John McNaughton**, was the driving force for the construction of the Mechanics' Institute. **Charles McLean** offered 'the requisite land from his selection' on what is now the south-west corner of Johnsons Road and Longford-Loch Sport Road.

The Progress Association then wrote to the Department of Lands and Survey about the excision of the half an acre of land from the McLean property. Surveyor **James Robinson** of Sale surveyed the land and prepared the plan without cost. The site was next door to the Dutson State School, No. 2368 which had opened on 1 April 1881.

The tender of **Lars Jensen & Co.** for £80 was accepted and the building was erected on his behalf by the **Mallet Bros.** Much of the 'cutting and fitting' had been done in Mr Jensen's Sale timberyard and was carted to the site by Messrs **Tempest** and **Alderson**. The **Fraser Bros.** and **William McAndrew** provided their carrying services free of charge for other goods. Hall President **Matthew Carr** acknowledged the assistance of all in the speedy completion of the Hall.

The weatherboard Hall was completed on Christmas Eve 1890, and was 30ft x 20ft x 14ft and had a capacity of 100 people. It was fitted with a 1.5in pine floor and people were 'delighted to see such a fine floor to swing on in Dutson'. It was to be opened, after the New Year's Day Picnic, with a social and dance in the evening when 'there

Dutson Mechanics Institute		Expenditure		£	s	d
1890	By Jensen & Co. Sp.	30	0	0		
1891	" J. H. Parker "	0	10	0		
	" Lars Jensen & Co "	20	0	0		
					60	10
1892	Lars Jensen & Co	10	0	0		
18	Double expenses	1	0	0		
27	Fire Insurance	1	0	0		
	Stationary stamps etc	0	7	6		
					61	7

will be a good moon'. Picnic Secretary **William Cartledge** was to act as MC for the dance.

In January 1891 **Albert Harris** MLA donated several books 'bearing on agriculture' to the Institute. A Concert was noted as being held in March 1891.

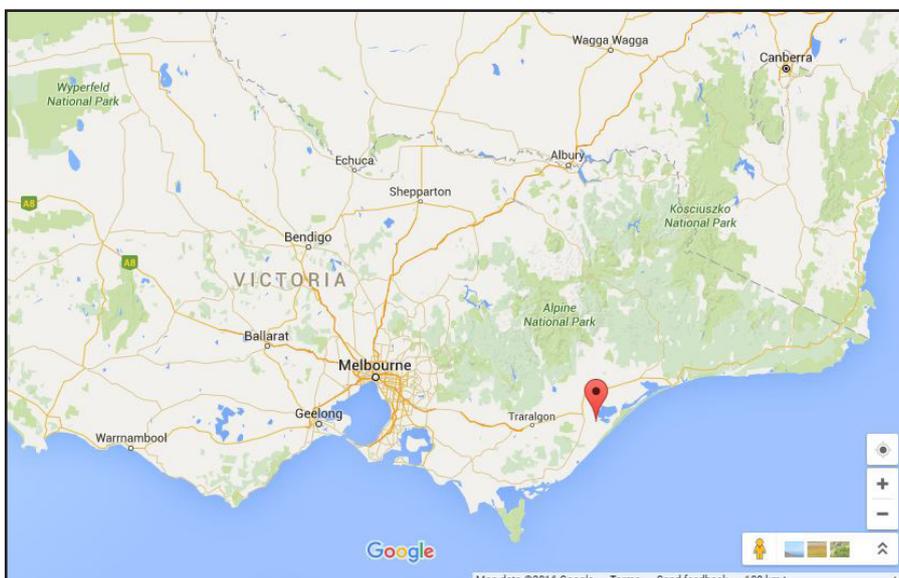
At a meeting on 16 March 1891 of twenty subscribers, the membership fee was set at 10s per annum. Those present were to form the Committee and seven trustees were elected to be effective from 19 June 1891: **John Bott; Matthew Carr; William Cartledge Jr; Robert McConnell; Charles McLean Jr; John McNaughton; and Thomas Tempest.** These included the three men who had undertaken the responsibility for paying off the debt.

The site was gazetted as a temporary reservation for a 'Mechanics' Institute and Free Library' on 29 May 1891. A Committee of

Management was gazetted on 12 June 1891 and the site was granted permanently on 17 September 1891.

In 1891 the Library had fifty books and opening hours were 7pm-10pm with yearly borrowings of 400 books. By 1894 there were 185 books with opening hours of midday-4pm Tuesdays and Fridays, and there had been 400 borrowings during the year.

The Hall reserve perimeter was planted with cypress trees and a cork tree in the



early 1900s and these still exist. These appear to have been Arbor Day projects connected with local resident **Thomas Alfred Robinson**, a keen horticulturalist. Robinson came to the district to be Head Teacher at the Dutson State School from 1891-1904, when he retired. He then purchased a property, which he named 'Armidale' and became involved with growing wild flowers.

The building was burned to the ground on 9 April 1911 and a piano and organ were destroyed. The building was insured through Australian Alliance Insurance Co. for £80.

No time was lost in replacing the Hall as the insurance money was enough to replace all the materials and it was decided to rebuild it with voluntary labour. **James Turner McNaughton** 'a fully qualified tradesmen' was the foreman and Hall Secretary **Thomas Joseph Carr** was the project administrator purchasing materials, etc.

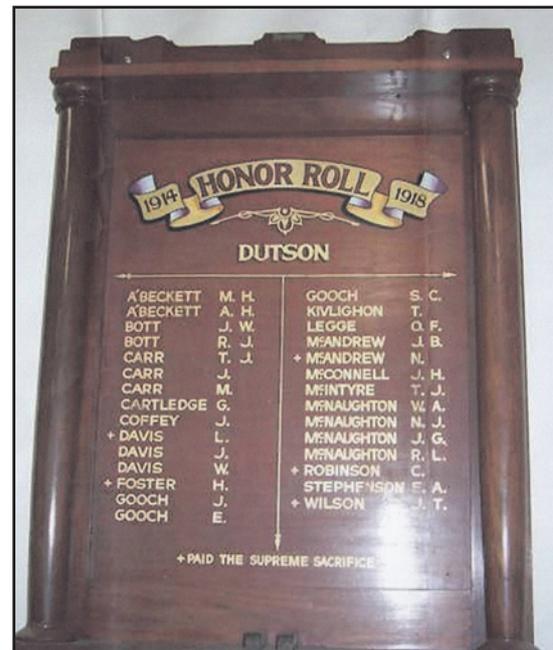
'The new building, which comprises a main hall 35 x 25 feet with porch and three rooms at the side was completed in about three weeks. It is lined and ceiled throughout, and the floor is a capital one for dancing.' It was opened in October 1911 with a social on a stormy night, with a small attendance. **James McNaughton** provided the music and a presentation was made to JT McNaughton of a saw, plane and spirit level for his dedicated work. 'The local ladies provided one of their usual high class suppers.'

The Hall was used extensively by the State School and for sendoffs and welcome homes for World War I and World War II service personnel. A World War I Honour Board was installed in the Hall, which carried the names of twenty-nine district servicemen: including five of whom had paid the supreme sacrifice: **Private Leonard Neil Davis; Private Harry Forster; Sapper George Neil McAndrew; Private Cyril Thomas Robinson; and Private James Thomas Wilson**. The Honour Board was unveiled by Hon. Edward Jolley Crooke MLC on 25 June 1919 in the presence of 'a very large attendance'. (This is now held by the Sale Museum.)

The Hall was used for: debates; school concerts, fancy dress evenings; and card nights. For the regular old time dances **Mrs Eddie Stephenson** was a later dance pianist accompanied by **Jim** and **Bob McNaughton** on their violins.

On 2 September 1944 an RAAF Kittyhawk made an emergency landing in the paddock adjacent to the Hall.

A murder-suicide occurred in the region of the Hall on about 23 October 1956. The body of **Martin Murray**, a rabbit trapper, was found in



long grass near the Hall, seemingly bludgeoned to death by an axe. The body of **Joseph White** was found in the old school house 'with an abrasion on the forehead and the wrists and throat were lacerated. A kitchen knife lay nearby.'

It appears the two had been camping in the Hall whilst trapping rabbits in the district. They both drank heavily. It is believed that in delirium tremens White believed Murray to be a monster and killed him. Then upon sobering up he realised his dreadful mistake and then took his own life. As the Coroner was not available until the next day, **Detective Donald Cadby** had to camp overnight in the Hall.

In 1966 **A Legge** wrote to the Department advising that because of vandalism that he believed that the Hall would soon collapse. Mr Legge was advised in a letter on 13 December 1966 that the Department had no objection to the Hall being sold or disposed of and the monies being used to build a new hall if required.

The Hall Financial Return for the period 1 March 1967-1 May 1970 indicated that the Hall had been sold on 1 March 1967, as well as the sale of timber and iron on 5 June 1967. In 2003 correspondence with the Department indicated that there was difficulty in forming a Committee of Management. The Committee was formally revoked on 5 March 2010 and the site is now directly managed by the Department.

Does anyone have a photo of the Dutson Hall?

Clockwise from left: Map showing location of Dutson (Source: Google Maps); image from the Dutson Mechanics' Institute's ledger; Dutson Honour Roll (Courtesy Sale Historical Society).

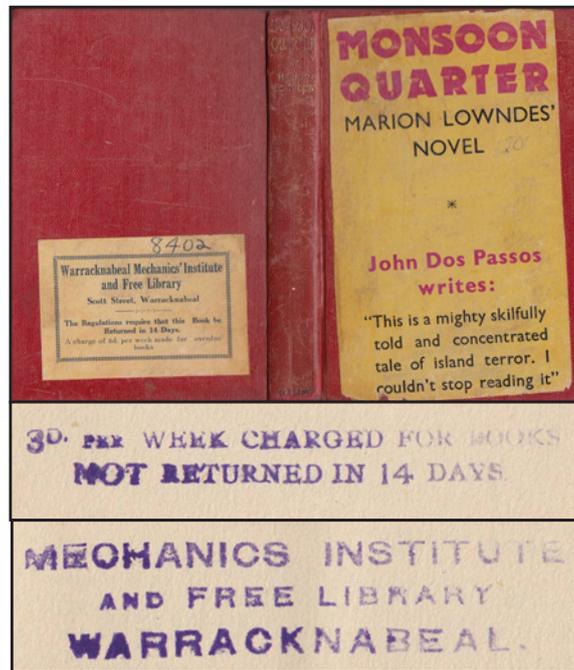
Ex-Libris - FROM THE SHELVES OF A MECHANICS' LIBRARY

The Mechanics' Institutes are known universally for their libraries, which were in most cases the first in the many communities in which they were established. Whilst many books were taken to the local tip or sold, even the blandest title can tell us much about the Institute and the conduct of its library.

Our item for this issue comes from the former library of the once well stocked **Warracknabeal Mechanics' Institute and Free Library**. The Institute appears to have as its genesis a meeting held by the Warracknabeal Tent of the Independent Order of Rechabites in June 1882 which resolved: 'That this meeting elect nine of the members to form a committee pro tem for the purpose of drawing up some plans towards starting either a reading room, library of mechanics' institute in this township...' It was noted that 'a library and debating society' had recently been operating and that it be reformed. In July 1882 a meeting was held to authorise the purchase of a site and 'and make the other necessary arrangements for opening the Institute'. In May 1884 it was noted a half acre site had been purchased in the 'centre of the main street' and trustees were elected and in June two designs had been received and were being considered for a building. Construction appears to have taken place in the latter part of 1884 and opened in early 1885.

In August 1885 it was mentioned as operating in 'a little building' which had been built for the purpose and it had 400 books on the shelves. In the 1950s it is noted as having some 7000 titles. The Institute continued to provide the community's library service until the Warracknabeal Council's Community Library opened on 8 November 1968. So it operated for around eighty years. The Institute was demolished in the 1970s.

Our book is a 130x170mm hardback bound in a heavy grained paper and this has been varnished. The book *Monsoon Quarter* is noted as the first and seemingly the only novel of New England (USA) born socialite **Marion Lowndes**, nee Smith, who married Lloyd, of a notable Philadelphia family. Lowndes had written two previous books:



Ghosts that Still Walk: Real Ghosts of America (New York: AA Knopf 1941), which deals with ghosts of her stately childhood home at Wiscasset, Maine; and *A Manual for Baby Sitters* (Boston: Little Brown, 1949), which is self explanatory. Our title was registered in the US for Copyright on January 1953. It was then issued simultaneously in three editions: Westminster Press of Philadelphia; Ryerson of Toronto, a subsidiary of the Methodist Church; and Victor Gollancz of London. Ours appears

to be the first printing of Gollancz, as there was also a marked 'Second impression', both printed in England by The Camelot Press of London and Southampton, and also issued in 1953. The book was advertised in the US *Library Journal* as 'The strangest story ever told about a woman in danger.' and is set in New Guinea. The reviewer noted on the pasted down dustjacket remnant, **John Roderigo Dos Passos** (1896-1970) was a friend, fellow author and a competent artist. Dos Passos' novel; *Nineteen Nineteen* (1932) is listed in *The Guardian's* One Hundred Best Novels at No. 58.

The book's blurb has been fixed to the front pastedown. It appears to have been purchased for fifteen shillings and sixpence and carries the number '8402' in three places, on the front and back pastedowns and on the 100x70mm library label pasted on the outside of the back cover.

The book carries two separate library stamps in purple 'Mechanics Institute/ and Free Library/ Warracknabeal' and on the last page '3d per week charged for books/ not returned in 14 days'. The back fly is used to record borrowings with a rubber date stamp in purple. It was first borrowed on '19 Oct 1853' and had another eleven loans, the last being on '8 Jun 1956'. It appears to have been later sold for '20c' handwritten on the cover.

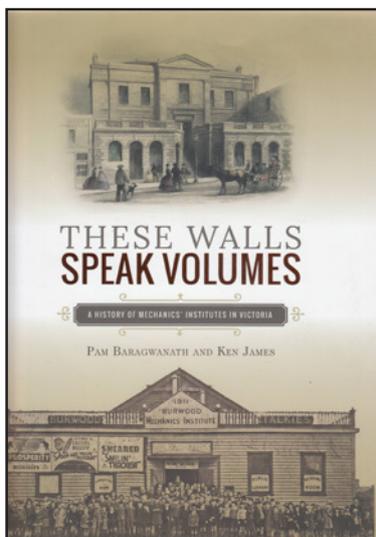
Book Reviews

These Walls Speak Volumes: A History of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria - Pam Baragwanath and Ken James. Self Published, 2015. Hardcover, dust jacket. 704 pages, illus, bibliography, index. 215x295. 9780992308780.

The Mechanics' Institutes, writes Pam Baragwanath, have been written off as a story of failure. This splendid history, of which she and Ken James are the co-authors, points to a different conclusion. Drawing on many years of dedicated research, it provides meticulously compiled entries for almost 1000 institutes, leaving no doubt as to the crucially important role that they have played in the life of Victoria. Although the intention of the early institutes to provide science classes for artisans had a fitful existence, this book shows that the wider aspirations of the 'useful knowledge' movement were not forgotten. Institutes provided libraries; there were lectures, classes and debates; some had museums; and there were musical performances.

Among the interesting features of this history are many striking examples that demonstrate how the beliefs and practices of migrants can be adapted to suit the conditions of life in a new country. The 'lofty ideals sometimes had to yield to demands for less cultured pastimes', but throughout Victoria the mechanics institute, housed as often as not in a simple wooden structure, became the hub of the community during the pioneering days, often serving as the only public building for miles around. It is hard to think of any get-together that did not take place there from court sessions, elections and religious meetings to weddings, balls, film shows, roller skating and billiards.

Weighing in at nearly three kilograms and 704 pages, an alphabetical list of short entries and appendices does not offer the promise of a good read, but, amidst the dates, listings of events and administrative information, there are fascinating glimpses of early Victorian social life. We can envisage, for example, how important the Casterton Institute was for its district when we read that during the 1880s there was 'a seemingly endless procession of lecturers,



dramatic and musical companies, acrobats, clowns and comics, novelty acts and religious fanatics'. When, as happened over and over again, communities experienced the loss of their cherished institute by fire, we find them steadfastly setting to work on a replacement.

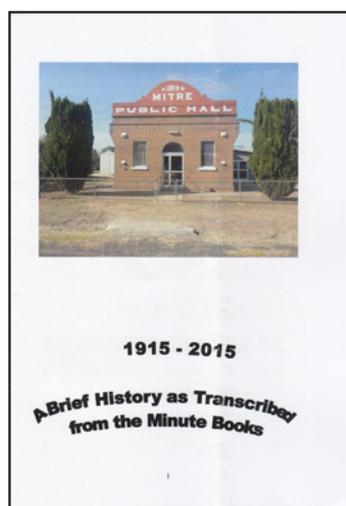
Admittedly, all was not always sweetness and light; human nature with all its foibles makes an appearance in these pages. The guardians of public decency at the Teesdale institute burned books that they deemed to be immoral. The 'disloyal, disgusting and

filthy' *Bulletin* was banned at Tatura. A major constitutional crisis erupted at Whittlesea when a formidable lady confronted the committee over the custody of the key and drove most of them to resign. The same institute descended into 'disorder' on several occasions when the local Church of England clergyman and headmaster clashed in angry disagreement. Obviously there were problems at the Wehla institute when the secretary was remanded for stealing books.

This is a beautifully produced volume, handsomely printed and copiously illustrated with photographs, many of them very old. It should serve, not only as a model for future publications about institutes in other parts of the world, but also as an indispensable source for the social history of Australia.

Reviewed by Alex Tyrrell

Available from: MIV, PO Box 1080, Windsor, V 3181. \$85 + \$15 postage.



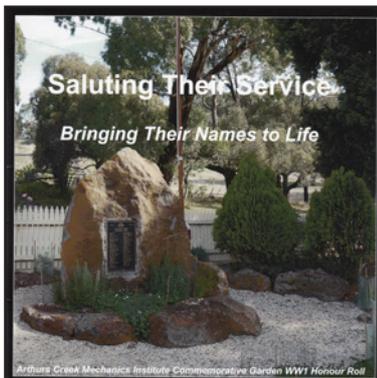
Mitre Public Hall 1915-2015: A Brief History as Transcribed from the Minute Books - James Aitken, compiler. Mitre: Mitre Public Hall Committee, 2015. Paper back, saddlestitched. 8p, illus. 150x210mm.

This slim volume tells

Book Reviews

a typical rural story of how generations of families have sustained their local Hall. In Mitre Hall's case those families are the: Aitken, Hateley, Lear, Mayberry, McClure, McCredden and Sudholz families. A member of the latter, Heinrich Sudholz agreed to sell a site to the Hall Committee for five pounds. Mitre is lucky that it has almost a full run of Minutes Books, save the one covering the 1941-47 period. Contractor and Committee man Charles John Pumpa did sterling service firstly in building the Hall and then serving on the Committee until he left the district in 1925. Scanning the Minutes we note: the Hall was not available for hire on Sundays for 'trading, business or amusement'; that Thomas H Light supported a motion to purchase Coleman lamps to improve the Hall's lighting; a piano was purchased from Sutton's in Ballarat in 1951; in 1958 Mrs S Alt leased the hall for teaching music at 7s6d per day; electricity was switched on in the district in 1958; and the Hall's Jubilee was celebrated with a concert and dance in 1965. Since then the wheel has indeed kept turning and a goodly number turned up in November 2015 for the Hall's centenary. Well done to all concerned in producing this trip down memory lane. Its themes will ring true for many Hall folk. It's something all Halls should do in case anything happens to the Minute Books.

Available from: Mrs Elaine Aitken, 314 Mitre-Nurcong Road, Mitre, V 3409. \$5, postpaid, with proceeds to Hall restoration.

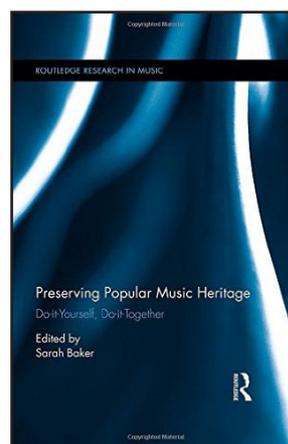


Saluting Their Service: Bringing Their Names to Life: Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute Commemorative Garden WWI Honour Roll - Peter Nankervis, ed. Arthurs

Creek: Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute Committee of Management, 2016. Paperback, saddlestitched. 20p, illus, many in colour. 200x200mm.

This booklet is a worthy tribute to the soldiers who enlisted from the districts of Arthurs Creek, Nutfield and Strathewen. It was

more than year in the reseaching, which started out with the basic surnames and their initials on an Honour Board that was in the Arthurs Creek Methodist Church. The Board carried twenty-eight names, which appear to have either lived in the area, had family ties, were members of the Arthurs Creek Rifle Club, local sporting clubs, had connection with the Arthurs Creek State School or were members of the Arthurs Creek Methodist congregation. Further research by the Project Committee eventually expanded the Roll to number forty-five and then they assiduously went to work putting 'flesh' on to just the basic name. The canvass was wide, but relied heavily on each soldier's service record which is held by the National Archives of Australia and is available online at the NAA website. Other people provided family details and pictures. The research team tracked them all down except 'B Allen'. The 'priceless' picture at the end of the booklet 'The Arthurs Creek Football Team' taken outside the recently demolished Doreen Hall, with a valuable names' list, depicts six of the local lads who went to War. Whilst the title page tells us 'This is by no means complete and only begins to illuminate each man's story.' it is a worthy and fitting tribute to the community's servicemen. The brass World War I Roll of Honour affixed to a large local stone in the Commemorative Garden at the front of the Hall shows that Arthurs Creek has 'remembered them' and this booklet has added another dimension to that memory. This is an excellent 'blueprint' which can be emulated by every community to bring their Rolls of Honour to life, with a completion goal of 2018. Available from: Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute Inc. C/- Peter Nankervis, 'Tryst', 79 Nankervis Road, Arthurs Creek, V 3099. \$15, postpaid.



Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together - Sarah Baker, editor. London: Routledge - Taylor & Francis, 2015. Hardback. 266p, illustrated, bibliography, index. 160 x 240 mm. 9781138781436.

The rapidly changing methods of recording

Book Reviews

music over the past century has established the need to develop methods and protocols for dealing with the various recording mediums from wax cylinder to digital files.

Much archive material did not make it beyond reel to reel tape and in some cases still exists in copious amounts. The issues that arise are dealt with in this edited collection of contributions from various 'local' practitioners from around the world. A great amount of this archival work is done by do-it-yourself personnel in music related regional museums.

Included in the book is an Australian case study of the Australian Country Music Foundation's **Australian Country Music Hall of Fame Museum at Tamworth**. Here the history and product of the Australian Country Music

scene has been collected for the past twenty years in many different formats.

The role of the DIY or Professional-Amateur is explored in their current archiving and preservation practices. In an international context, with a disciplinary approach, this book explores the 'bottom-up' approach to community based initiatives into the collection, preservation and archiving of music's material history. 'DIY preservationism', 'self-authorised' and 'unauthorised' methodologies are explored in relation to heritage practice and the DIY institution. This is a worthy reference for students of popular music, and cultural and heritage studies and is part of the **Routledge Research in Music Series**.

Available through Australian booksellers at approx \$239.00.

Curtain Call

MINERS REST MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (EST. 1865)

Miners Rest was settled before its neighbour Ballarat, it grew as a community midway between the goldfields of Buninyong and Clunes.

A public meeting was held in Miners Rest on 11 December 1865. A site was confirmed in 1866 but it was not until 12 February 1887 that five trustees were appointed for the temporary Mechanics Institute Reserve of two roods, that any real progress was made.

Originally known as the Miners Rest & Dowling Forest Mechanics' Institute and Free Library up until 1890, it had become Miners Rest Mechanics' Institute and Free Library by 1891.

Plans were prepared by architect **William Brazenor**, noted for buildings which had a curved roof, and construction got under way early in 1888. The building, which included a library, was opened on 24 August 1888, with a concert, supper and ball. It was noted that the district ploughing match was planned on the same day.

'A spacious room was annexed the Hall in 1889.' Various Ballarat performers gave of their talents for a fundraiser for the Institute in April 1890 and Hon. Secretary **Henry Loader** thanked them in the press.

A machine gun was unveiled in the Hall in 1919 and servicemen were given a Welcome Home from the War. Electricity was connected in 1946. The

Hall was extended to the rear in 1959 and these extensions were officially opened in 1960 with a Broadcast Ball. Water was connected in 1963.

The distinctive and colourful stage backdrop features 'The Erskine River near Lorne'. It was painted in 1955 by **Robert Flavell** (born 1936), a son **Thomas Lexington Flavell** (1899-1989) and **Melanie 'Dolly', nee Rigby**. Thomas was Headmaster at the Miners Rest State School.

In recent times the Hall has been used for a Day Care Centre and a Bookmobile stop. In addition the Hall is well-used for community events and by community organisations including Lions and Landcare. The Hall Committee hosts a welcoming morning tea on the 1st Wednesday of the month where community issues are informally discussed. (See story next issue).

Photo: Bill Loader



The History Page

STREETON AND THE LAND OF THE GOLEN FLEECE

After spending sometime in Europe painting, artist **Arthur Ernest Streeton** (1867-1943) enlisted in the British Army's Royal Army Medical Corps and worked at the 3rd London General Hospital (Wandsworth). In



1918 he was made an Australian Official War Artist and was attached to the Australian Imperial Force in France in May 1918 and remained there until October 1918. Two of his notable pictures from this time are 'Villers Bretonneux' and 'Boulogne'. Post-War he returned to Victoria and from a base at Olinda he did a painting tour of Western Victoria which included the Grampians. Streeton had the gift of capturing panoramic views from high vantage points.

Works from this period were exhibited and sold largely at an exhibition held at the **Melbourne Athenaeum Art Gallery** in early November 1920. Some of those pictures which are now held in private hands were again publicly exhibited at the Geelong Art Gallery's exhibition **Land of the Golden Fleece** which remained open until 13 June. The exhibition also featured Geelong's most recent Streeton purchase 'Ocean Blue, Lorne'. www.geelonggallery.org.au. Photo: Alice Mills (1870 - 1929), via <http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/>

VALE - PRINCESS MARY CLUB

Once the home away from home for many country girls who were either studying or working in Melbourne, the **Princess Mary Club** building in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne is to be demolished. It was built in 1926 on a site donated by philanthropist brothers **Alfred Michael** and **George Richard 'Rich' Nicholas**, the 'Aspro' kings.

The building has been vacant for about twenty years and it is estimated that it would take \$18 million to refurbish. Heritage Victoria has given

the demolition permit to the Uniting Church and Leighton Properties to build a thirty-four storey tower to replace 'a unique part of Victorian women's history'.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A sharp observer recently noticed an apparent name change in an article on the State Library noting it being referred to as 'State Library Victoria' instead of the long-used 'The State Library of Victoria'. The change we are told happened in November 2014 when it was shown on the State Library's website. However the official title still remains 'The State Library of Victoria' in accord with the passing of *The State Library, National Gallery, National Museum and Institute of Applied Science Act* (1960).

It is noted that the entity started out as the Melbourne Public Library 1856-69. In that year *The Library, Museums and National Gallery Act* combined the three institutions into the one administration. The Public Library of Victoria came into being as the result of the demerging by way of *The Public Library, National Gallery and Museums Act* (1944).

But the State Library change is not an isolated one, in recent years there has been another less subtle name change, **Healesville Sanctuary** replaced **Sir Colin Mackenzie Fauna Park**. However we understand officially the latter name still prevails. We are told it is all part of the marketing strategy. Come to think of it **WI** and **CWA** are universal, but we still see **MI's** relegated to the lowercase.

HISTORY WELL MADE

Whilst talking of marketing the publication of **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James'** *These Walls Speak Volumes: The History of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria* has seen an unmatched blitzing of the media. There has been radio and newspaper coverage across the State, reviews in major journals and in the National Trust and Royal Historical Society of Victoria newsletters, and Pam and Ken have been out on the lecture circuit. The meaning of the **Mechanics' Institute** and its purposes and uses is now well out there. This is our time to make the most of it with Councils, Government and other grant bodies.

Historians are like deaf people who go on answering questions that no one has asked them.

LEO TOLSTOY (1828-1910)

Our People

The Mechanics' family is vast and we would appreciate notification of any items that would be of interest to our wider readership in Australia and across the world.



Tamworth-based Schools of Arts historian **Dr Barrie Brennan** has been very busy over the past twelve months. He contributed a chapter 'Australian Country Music Hall of Fame: A DIY museum and

archive in Australia's Country Music Capital' in a book edited by Griffith University member **Dr Sarah Baker** titled *Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together*. Barrie has had a long time association with the **Country Music Hall of Fame** which moved out of the Tamworth School of Arts building where it had been since 1997. It moved into the new guitar shaped Information Centre, which partially opened in July 2015, but was officially opened on 16 January 2016. (Photo: www.historypin.org)



Former Minister for Local Government (and **Mechanics' Institutes**), **Candy Broad** is again entering into public service after leaving Parliament in 2013. Candy takes over as

Chair of **PrimeSafe**, Victoria's meat industry regulator on 1 July. She succeeds Mallee beef producer **Leonard Vallance** who was appointed in 2013. Primeafe oversees the red meat, poultry and fish industries. We all wish her well in this important role. (Photo: www.bordermail.com.au)

We overlooked the retirement of **Grahame Marks** from the **Sydney Mechanics' School of**



Arts after a term of five challenging years. We appreciated his cooperation with MIV and wish him well in his future endeavours. **Brian Johnston** took up the role in November and is now well settled into his Pitt Street

office. Brian comes from a long career in the health and social care sectors and from 2000-2013 was Chief Executive of **Australian Council of Health Care Standards**. He is also visiting Fellow at **Macquarie University**. We welcome Brian to the wonderful world of Schools of Arts and Mechanics' Institutes and look forward to working with him in the future. (Photo: smsa.org.au)



The **National Trust of Australia (Victoria)** have shown a long interest in the heritage of **Mechanics' Institutes**. Chief Executive Officer **Martin Purslow** has been part of that interest for the past ten years,

nine of which have been spent in the CEO's role. Martin brought considerable museum and gallery experience from his former English and Scottish engagements and he used those skills to upgrade and market the various National Trust enterprises. Martin is returning to cultural heritage work in England and we wish him well and thank him for his contribution to the innovative management and marketing of Victoria's public heritage. (Photo: Andrew De La Rue via theage.com.au)

With the final books back on the shelves after the massive move from High Street to St Edmonds Road, Prahran Mechanics' Institute's **Christine Worthington** has decided on a change. Christine

Our People



has recently taken up her appointment as Collections Manager/ Volunteer Coordinator with the **Royal Historical Society of Victoria**. Christine joined Prahran in 2000 and has been part of its remarkable growth and diversity,

including as Manager of the **Prahran Mechanics Institute Press** which has published seventeen

titles. I am sure we would all like to thank Christine for her support and cooperation with MIV over the fifteen or so years which has also seen our firm establishment. Christine and **Cathy Milward-Bason** were pivotal in the conduct of the **Mechanics' Worldwide 2004** and the landmark Conference Proceedings was the PMI Press's first title. That worldwide connection is ongoing with San Francisco in November. We wish Christine well in her challenging and exciting role and I am sure there will be opportunities of further cooperation with the RHSV. (Photo: Prahran Mechanics' Institute Facebook)

Vale



A woman's role in war and volunteerism was highlighted in the eulogy given at the funeral of **Sylvia Ross Eady** on 27 April 2007. Born Sylvia Bowman in Holbrook (NSW) in 1920, her family later moved to Melbourne and she along with her two other sisters were educated at Fintona

Girls' School, when the campus was located in Hawthorn. Sylvia cut short her University of Melbourne Commerce studies to work at Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, during World War II. She married Alan Scott in 1949 and they had three children Jennifer, Ross and Susan. Alan died in 1963 and Sylvia remarried Alan's longtime friend Wilton Eady, a former World War II prisoner of war in Germany. They shared a happy family life together which included time at their seaside home in Sorrento. There Sylvia and Wilton became involved in local Nepean Conservation Group and Nepean Historical Society and spent many happy hours over the years volunteering on various local Sorrento-based projects. Wilton, who was a Life Member of the Nepean Conservation Group, passed away in 2015.



Photo: www.smh.com.au

We note the passing of Williamstown identity **Dorothy 'Dot' Richards** (7 June 1916-9 February 2016). She was the daughter of David Hick and Lily, nee Stafford. Dorothy wrote *An Anthology of Aunts: Growing up in Williamstown* (1998); and *Free Range: A Collection of Short Stories* (2007). Her poems and short stories were published variously in the *Australian Women's Weekly* and *Weekly Times*. A founding member of Society of Women Writers (Victoria), Dorothy served variously as President and Secretary. Harold, her husband of 59 years predeceased her. She is survived by her four sons Philip, Michael, Andrew and Christopher and a large extended family. She will be much missed by the Williamstown community.

Community Page

RECIPE

Australian farmers and manufacturers, many of which are Institute volunteers and supporters and deserve your support. Hopefully the purchase of Australian grown or made product will help reward them.

BUTTER SHORTBREAD

Makes two dozen fingers

Ingredients

250 grams Butter
125 grams Caster Sugar
350 grams Plain Flour, sifted

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220 degrees.
2. Chop Butter into cubes and allow to reach room temperature.
3. Cream the Butter with the Caster Sugar, then combine with Flour.
4. Flatten mixture onto a floured board, cut into fingers, and pierce top with fork.
5. Line baking tray with baking paper or grease.
6. Place fingers on lined or greased baking tray.
7. Cook in preheated oven for 15-20 minutes until slightly golden.
8. Allow to cool for five minutes and sprinkle with grained Sugar.

COUNTRY KITCHEN

Small businesses are the lifeblood of the country and we will occasionally mention those within the catchment of our Hall members. In this case it is in Gippsland, where the **Bullumwaal Mechanics' Hall**, is the venue of the annual 'Miners and Prospectors Exhibition'.

The cottage industry is **Bullumwaal Preserves**. Google around the net for their range and check out specialist food stores. We're still working our way through a jar of their **Raspberry Jam**. A true delight.

SPOT THE BAKER'S DOZEN REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE NO. 40

1. Where was MIV Commemorative Plaque No. 50 unveiled?
2. Who painted the mural at Miner's Rest Community Hall?
3. Where was the War Memorial Commemorative Garden recently unveiled?
4. What is the title of the book featured in Ex-Libris?

5. Which Mechanics' Institute had a long-running Art Gallery space?
6. Where is and what is the name of the library that is celebrating its bi-centennial in the UK during this year?
7. At which two Institute buildings has scaffolding been recently erected?
8. Which Institute building and Secretary/Librarian's cottage is to be the subject of a \$5.76 million makeover?
9. Who produced the thesis on Queensland's Schools of Arts in 1980?
10. Which Institute hosts an annual Fleece and Flower Show?
11. Which firm donated the paint for the restoration of Merton Hall?
12. In which regional town were the silos recently painted?
13. What happened to the Dutson Mechanics' Hall in 1967?

SPOT THE BAKER'S DOZEN REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE NO. 39 - ANSWERS

1. Upper Plenty Mechanics' Institute, Scaddan Town Hall, Yarloop Town Hall; 2. Professor Weston Bate, OAM; 3. Somerville Mechanics' Hall; 4. Alfred Deakin; 5. \$71 billion; 6. Dr John Emerson, QC; 7. South Australia; 8. Gunbar Hall; 9. Miners Rest; 10. Deborah Cheetham; 11. Campfire Country Halls; 12. *These Walls Speak Volumes: A History of the Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria*; 13. 'The world needs visionaries'.

HERITAGE LOTTERY UPDATE

This matter was the subject of bipartisan inquiry following Parliamentary Debate last year. Ways were/ are being explored how this can be implemented by way of negotiation and/or legislation. We trust that following the elections this will continue to an eventual resolution to bring a new source of revenue to enable the restoration of historic buildings and artifacts.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY – BROMLEY HOUSE LIBRARY

Having spent two centuries providing a sterling library service to the citizens of Nottingham, we trust Bromley House will have a fitting year of celebratory events on Angel Row. Indeed Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43BC) was right when he said 'If you have a garden and a library, **you have everything you need.**' Alere Flammam – Nourish the Flame.

Ideas & Opportunities

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

We all stage various events in our Halls. The welcome that people and visitors receive varies greatly from place to place. This can either show your group to be welcoming or lukewarm. Next time you are holding an event put your best foot forward at the gate or door with a welcoming party, preferably bearing name tags with large printing. Introduce yourself and make them known to others. If time permits during the event follow them up during afternoon tea, supper or whatever.

There is a story told in one of the larger UK Institutes about an elderly gent who wandered into their Institute museum for a look around. He was made welcome and at the end of his tour he was given a cuppa and the small printed history of the Institute and he made a modest donation in appreciation.

Several years later the Institute received a solicitor's letter, Mr X had died. The letter noted that Mr X had visited the Institute museum in 1982 and was so impressed with the friendly welcome, that he wished to bequeath his notable specialist collection of books, prints and artefacts relating to an historic world celebratory. There was also a sum of money to curate the collection. You just never know who is visiting.

INDIGO SHIRE & BALLARAT CITY HERITAGE AWARDS

We commend the **Shire of Indigo** on this most inspiring initiative. 'The awards recognise those who have made outstanding contributions to cultural heritage, conservation, research, education, interpretation, training and awareness-raising.'

We know **Ballarat City Council** also give Heritage Awards. This is something every Council should emulate to raise awareness. It would be interesting to know if there are any other Shires of Cities in Victoria which have such awards.

Whilst on awards, the **NSW Government** has Annual Awards for Halls on Crown Land Reserves and it would be also good for other State Governments to join them, but with awards for **all** Halls, not just those on Crown Land.

THE DONATION BOX

Many Institutes hold events for which there is no attendance charge, but which some people may be moved to make or give a donation. People do appreciate the hard work of volunteer Committees

and a few dollars is their way of offering support and saying 'Thankyou'. One tip of warning though, tie the box down or up, the honour system does not always work.

NUMBER UP

We recently went to a Hall event where every issued Name Tag had a large number on it and this was entered into the Visitor's Book alongside the name. No it wasn't for a competition, it was for the photographer's use to later identify those that were in the photographs.

REMEMBER OUR YOUTH

When next staging an event in your Hall try to include the youth of your community, for these are the ones that will take over the running of the Hall in the future. Give them a role in perhaps designing an advertising flyer, being on the welcoming Committee, speaking about their aspirations for the Hall, community, etc. Try and run a couple of events each year that include the children, besides the Annual Christmas Tree.

WISH LIST

Every Hall should have a wish list from the big ticket items, sound system, stage lighting, to kitchen items or even a copy of *These Walls Speak Volumes* for the Local History bookcase which all Halls should have. And talking of big ticket items, a small Victorian regional Hall recently hit the jackpot with a **major grant** because they had a project ready for funding.

SILO SUCCESS COULD ALSO BE A HALL SUCCESS

Following on the world-wide attention gained by the portrait painting on the silos at Brim, \$300,000 in State and Federal funding has been allocated to create five more silo art sites across the Wimmera-Mallee region. This will establish what is claimed to be the biggest regional art project in Australia's history and the silo trail will stretch across a region of 200km.

Those silos earmarked for a makeover are **Rupanyup, Roseberry, Sheep Hills, Lascelles** and **Patchewollock**, and include existing or former Institute towns.

Whilst this creates a silos trail, the same could well be done with regional Institutes to establish a designated trail, with strategic Institutes being coordinated to open on a certain day or days to provide morning or afternoon tea and a nominated barbecue lunch site. Raise it with your Institute neighbours.