

### Useful Knowledge The Magazine of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria Inc.

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### GIDEON HAIGH TO DELIVER **WESSON LECTURE** 'IN SEARCH OF THE MECHANICS'





We are delighted well known that journalist, author and public commentator,

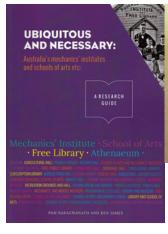
Gideon Haigh, will

deliver the Wesson Lecture, which will be held in conjunction with the MIV AGM. The lecture will start at 11am on Saturday, 24 September 2016 and you are asked to RSVP and priority will be given to those who attend the AGM.

Many will have read Gideon's carefully crafted article which appeared in the Australian 'Review Section' on 30 July. Whilst he once played cricket for the Little River Club, his conversion to the Mechanics' cause has come about only recently and he has joined the Melbourne Athenaeum Library. It was by a chance sighting of a copy of These Walls Speak Volumes in Readings', Carlton that the search began. This is his story... and the feature hall is Lake Marmal Mechanics', a pavillion for decades of cricket.

Following the Wesson Lecture, at 12.15pm will be the Official Launch of Ubiquitous and Necessary: Australia's Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts, etc: A Research Guide.

This massive 695 page tome contains Australia-wide sources to enable further national study of Mechanics' Institutes and their ilk. The book will be launched by Canberra-based





Helen Creagh, who has had widespread archive and research experience.

Helen is the Joint National Coordinator of the **ADFAS (Association of Australian Decorative** and Fine Arts Societies) Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts Research Project which has been operational for several years. The book is priced at \$50.00 and some copies will be available on the day or can be pre-ordered.

All events are being held at the Prahran Mechanics' Institute, William Moss Room, 39 St Edmonds Road, Prahran. The MIV AGM will start at 10am sharp and we hope many members will be present or represented.

Each Institute member should consider nominating an official representative to not only represent their Member's interests at the table but also to enable us to share knowledge and present a strong case for Government and Local Government support.

RSVP: mivenquiry@live.com.au, for seating, catering or book reservation.

NOTICE OF MIV'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IS ENCLOSED IN THIS ISSUE.

# Coming Events - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### **AUGUST**

Applications Close for Veterans Grants.

More information at www.dpc.vic.gov.
au/index.php/veterans/veterans-grants

#### **SEPTEMBER**

- 3 Ballaarat 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** delivered by Gideon Haigh, 11am, Prahran Mechanics' Institute
- Launch of *Ubiquitous and Necessary*, 12.15pm, Prahran Mechanics' Institute

#### **OCTOBER**

- 8-9 Birregurra Festival and Art Show. birregurrafestival.com
- 16-23 History Week sponsored by Royal Historical Society with events across Victoria. historyvictoria.org.au

### **NOVEMBER**

- 1-30 **Home Is Where the Hall Is** month
- 4-6 **Membership Libraries and Mechanics' Institutes Worldwide 2016** San Franciso Mechanics' Institute. Contact: dhunt@milibrary.org
- 7 American Membership Libraries Annual Meeting - San Franciso Mechanics' Institute, USA
- 7 Applications close for Protecting Victoria's Heritage Grants, see page 36
- 11-13 Ruffartz Biennial Art Show, Ruffy Hall
- 12 Wandong History Day

#### 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!

#### **NEWSLETTER ROUND**

Tick after reading and pass it on
President
Vice-President
Treasurer
Secretary
Committee (Insert your name)

#### THANK YOU TO OUR PRINTERS

Sean, Neal and the team from 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.

A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm. Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906)

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# Letter From The President



Every four years Mechanics' Institutes from around the world gather to discuss all things Mechanics'. This year's theme, *Reinvention: Thriving in the 21st Century,* could hardly be more relevant

Can our Institutes themselves, their objectives and history add anything to the debate?

At their best they are fiercely independent, community based institutions, open to all comers and seeking the best for everybody via the dissemination of scientific and literary information, useful knowledge and rational recreation.

They are not about religion, politics, sport or business but almost anything else worth getting out of bed for can be accommodated within their charters. So how best can they serve their communities for the next 100 years?

Firstly we see the need to encourage promising youngsters from within the communities we serve to strive for excellence. Our modern economy depends on initiative, innovation and excellence in so many fields. We need to go beyond the government responsibility and ensure that talented members of our communities have opportunities that distance, cost or other circumstances may deny them.

A community that nurtures talent will surely attract it.

Secondly there is what could be called the historically analogous role.

In the 19th century the working man was best helped through the provision of public lectures, evening classes and libraries. Keeping pace with technological and social change required access to information and education otherwise denied them.

A modern day equivalent? Have we not recently all been made responsible for the investment risk in our retirement finances? Are we equipped to manage? Are there vested interests just waiting to exploit our slightest misstep or hesitation? Sound familiar?

Will it be just a matter of time before we turn to our Institutes once again to provide access to genuinely unbiased information and the tools and knowledge required to cope?

There is more. We all depend on mobile phones, online banking and email. What chance do we have against the hackers, spammers and scammers? Another bout of extraordinary technological change likely to disenfranchise large swathes of the community. Surely there is a vital role for adult education, self-help and lifelong learning here.

Finally there is the information versus knowledge distinction.

It is said we live in a world of ubiquitous information, all you have to do is look it up.

That is true and information is all around, just like wallpaper, but knowledge is different. Knowledge is a personal asset and the process of acquiring it requires more than just having access to information.

Even if you only seek knowledge for its own sake you still need to acquire it through an experience, possibly in a social setting and perhaps having access to some infrastructure or other resource all of which our Mechanics' Institutes could easily decide to provide.

I can get the recipe for "Chupe de Camarones" off the internet but my ability to cook a good one will almost certainly benefit from attending a cooking class, access to someone else's experience, a very large cooking pot and specialist ingredients and possibly a few trial runs. Then of course there is the follow on Spanish course and how and where to catch your own yabbies. I may even want to sit down with my classmates and enjoy the results of my new found knowledge.

Yum. This reinvention business sounds both useful and fun. What can be more rational than that?

Robert Kingston President.

### Editorial

Born in 1800 and still going strong! Indeed, as we pack for the International Membership Libraries and Mechanics' Institutes Reinvention Conference in San Francisco it is timely to think of 'Our People'.

For it was their ideas that created the International Mechanics' Institute Movement and influenced other people, by way of varied spin-offs. In this issue our *Case Study* covers the remarkable **James J Hill Business Reference Library** in Saint Paul (1916), USA.

But there were other benefactors, such as: Andrew Carnegie, who firstly endowed the Braddock Carnegie Library (1889), and then another 3100 odd libraries worldwide: John Passmore Edwards, firstly built the Blackwater Literary Institute (1889), and another forty odd halls, libraries or museums in the UK; William Wagner and his Wagner Free Institute of Science (1855) at Philadelphia; Linda and Herbert Hall, Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering and Technology (1946), Kansas City, both in the USA; Dr 'Diamond Jim' Beaney, The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge (1899) at Canterbury or William Ewart Gladstone's Gladstone (St Deiniol's) Residential Library (1899) at Hawarden (UK); Thomas Heywood Hays, Neilson Hays Library (1921), Bangkok (Thailand); William and Thomson Leys, Leys Institute Library (1905), Ponsonby (New Zealand); Francis Ormond, Melbourne Working Men's College (1881), Melbourne (Australia); McLennan family, McLennan Travelling Library (1899), based on McGill University, Montreal (Canada); Albert Sassoon, David Sassoon Library (1870), which then housed the Bombay Mechanics' Institution (1847), Mumbai (India); and Jean Kerleo and others in the formation of the more recent international scent library and archive Osmotheque (1990) at Versailles (France), to name but a few.

These organisations have all stood the test of time by reinvention, as has Australia's oldest Institute, the **Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts** (1833) and the **Melbourne Athenaeum** (1839).

The 'Challenge of Change' is something **Alvin Toffler** pondered on in *Future Shock* (1970), and we note his passing in *Our People*. The elusive **Baron Charles Dupin** of the French Institute Movement has finally received a detailed biography noted in *Book Reviews*.

The 150th Anniversary of the *Plaque* Scheme in Britain is noted as we embark on plaquing another fifty buildings with the latest being Ruffy.

*Ex-Libris* takes us to Rainbow where the Mechanics' Library continues, albeit under another name, to provide a library service to its community.

Where They Stood takes us to The Heart in Gippsland, a settlement which has since disappeared.

Now for the challenge of **Reinvention** at San Francisco, to take us all through to Century 22.

Bron Lowden

#### **WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Steve Kellermeier Vincent Billan

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS WERE DUE 1 JULY**

Thank you to all our members who promptly paid their membership subscription for the 2016-2017 year.

If you are yet to pay your renewal and would like us to send you out a new renewal form, please contact Gary, our Membership Secretary, g.bester@bigpond.com

We also thank the members who kicked the tin with an added and generous donation. We're thinking how this can be best used.

### REGISTRATIONS OPEN -HOME IS WHERE THE HALL IS 2016



Registrations opened for this year's **Home Is Where the Hall Is** on 1 August 2016. If you already have a public event scheduled in November, be sure to register so that everyone knows about it.

This is a great opportunity to put your Institute or Hall on the national stage (This is no longer only a Victorian event!) so get planning and make the most of the free publicity that comes with being part of HIWTHI Month.

homeiswherethehallis.com

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

"Useful Knowledge" never expires! If you are a leader of a Mechanics' Institute, Athenaeum, or Independent Library come to San Francisco this fall to *join colleagues* from around the world in an exchange of ideas about how to "reinvent" and become "future ready".

Reinvention: Thriving in the 21st Century is a conference designed for practitioners of independent and subscription Libraries, Mechanics' Institutes, Athenaeums, Societies, LiteraryInstitutes,Lyceums,MercantileLibraries, Schools of Arts and Working Men's Institutes. milibrary.org/reinvention

The conference's program will present practical skills to aid organizations planning for the future. Keynote presentations will set the tone for each day and include wisdom from:

**Brewster Kahle**, Founder & Digital Librarian of the Internet Archive - archive.org

**Nina Simon**, Executive Director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History - santacruzmah.org

**Lee Rainie**, Director of Internet, Science and Technology Research for the Pew Research Center - pewresearch.org

Presentations, conversations, and roundtable discussions will be hosted by our colleagues from around the world and local experts on the following subjects:

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

The conference will take place, 4-6 November 2016, at the Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco, California - a leading cultural center that includes a vibrant library, engaging events, and a world-renowned chess program.



Conference registration is here: milibrary.org/reinvention/registration

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





Copies of Conference Proceedings are still available from previous Mechanics' Worldwide Conferences:

Buildings, Books and Beyond: Mechanics' Worldwide 2004, Prahran, Australia.

**Self Help: Mechanics' Worldwide 2009**, Bath, UK.

See vicnet.net.au/~mivic/mechanics-worldwide for more information on papers published from these Conferences, contact points and price and availability.

### GENESIS OF A GRANT AT BIRREGURRA

'Enlighten Me: I have a Hall in my Heart'

It was with a great deal of pride that we learned that long-time MIV member Birregurra Mechanics' Institute featured in the most recent Small Town Transformations, announced by Minister for Creative



Fiona Brandscheid,
Chair of Birregurra
Community Arts
Group and Small Town
Transformations
Project Manager – Arts
Programs; Emmalie
Cain, Hall Committee;
Anne Wood, Historical
Society; Tom Gittings;

Industries **Martin Foley** MP. On hand for the 28 May Melbourne announcement ceremony was a beaming team from Birregurra which comprised **Fiona Brandscheid**, **Vicki Jeffrey** and **Angie Smales**. Small Town Transformations is a Victorian Government initiative.

Heading the list of successful towns was Birregurra with the "enLIGHTen Me: I have a Hall in my Heart" Small Town Transformation—transforming the historical Mechanics' Institute Hall and other local spaces into thriving arts and cultural venues.' On presentation of their grant of \$350,000, each recipient had to explain the exact location of their town in rural Victoria.

Minister Foley noted: 'Creative projects have the power to transform people and places. The Small Town Transformation projects show just how they can enhance livability, drive tourism and the local economy and strengthen communities. Six towns are about to embark on an ambitious adventure that puts artistic practice at the centre of their community life. While these grants are substantial, ultimately transformation is priceless.'

The march to the project started in November 2015 with the call for Expressions of Interest. The Birregurra community assembled a group which was chaired by **Desma Hutchison** and included **Vicki Jeffrey**, Secretary and Secretary of Birregurra Community Group; **Chris Barter**, Treasurer Birregurra Community Group and Small Town Transformations Project Leader;



Silvio Guiliani; Susan Coulson; and Heather Mcfarlane.

Galvanised into action, the team met most Wednesday nights and widely canvassed the community for ideas. Youth was included and 75 Birregurra Primary School students submitted illustrated postcards with their wish list. Local artists **Angie Smales**, **Ron Eichler** and **Tim Lucas** also had input and so the concept 'enLIGHTen me: I have a Hall in my Heart' was born.

A key goal of the project is to physically and metaphorically 'shine a light' on the hall and inspire new generations in Birregurra to use and drive the facility's cultural and community vibrancy, ensuring its sustainability into the future. The project will include physical upgrades to the Mechanics' Hall and its surrounding landscape as well as numerous arts projects with the aim of developing skills and creating a collective passion for all facets of the arts. Artworks created will be drawn from the history of the Hall and a key project will be the collaborative development of a major projection art work from internationally renowned artist, Craig Walsh. All major artworks developed across the project will be unveiled during a festive weekend launch at the completion of upgrades in 2018.

The Birregurra Community Group became the lead applicant for the project, with project partners: Colac Otway Shire Council; Birregurra Mechanics' Hall Committee; Birregurra Community Arts Group; Birregurra Festival and Arts Show; Birregurra Senior Citizens; Birregurra Historical Society; Birregurra Primary School; and Birregurra Community Health Centre.

Work on the project starts this month (August) and is due for completion in November 2018.

www.enlightenmebirre.com

Photos: www.enlightenmebirre.com

### 'THERE'S THOUSANDS OF HALLS OUT THERE'

Indeed there are, and how do, or will, they survive? Our recent letter to the Shires in Victoria highlighted just how many halls are scattered around the various Shires. One of the most benevolent Shires, **Wellington** in Gippsland has forty-eight halls. About half of these are on Crown Land the other half are freehold sites, a number of the latter which were donated by the early pioneers.

It is a real dilemma for the Shire and the communities for which a few, 'their Hall' is the last record of that district name other than perhaps the CFA shed. What does a community do? Halls are meeting, celebration, recreation, exhibition and performing spaces. Think outside the square. Don't just roll over. Who are your potential users?

Rest assured you are not alone and there will be others who are prepared to help, perhaps not by serving on the Committee, but by providing trade and other services, however any necessary work needs to be itemised and costed. Put up the sign 'Save Our Hall' and plan a rally based on the Hall with a barbecue, hopefully sponsored by the local butcher.

At 2pm, bring out the butcher's paper and marking pen, and call the meeting to order and



SAVE OUR HALL: Bundalaguah-Myrtlebank Hall in 2013, now a successful entertainment and community venue. Photo: blogs.abc.net.au

solicit suggestions for events and fundraisers. This could progress to a monthly morning or afternoon tea, or a hearty walk along the back roads, during which ideas can be brainstormed. Don't forget the involvement of media savvy youth to get your ideas out there in the ether and into print. Put up your fundraising barometer.

If all else fails it could be a 'Back to' to close the Hall, and you could perhaps make a lot of money to fix it, as has happened on occasions in the past. For an interesting example, see the website: bundyhall.org.au.

# DORSET'S BRIDPORT LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE RESTORATION WORKS COMMENCE

A contract was recently signed with RG Spiller Ltd of Chard to undertake a \$2 million restoration program of the Bridport Literary and Scientific Institute. Spillers' have 160 years of experience in the building industry and



are widely known for their performance and expertise on restoration projects.

The building was passed to the contractor on 22 August and it is hoped that work will be complete by late 2017, a fitting tribute to mark the centenary year of **Sir Howard Elphinstone**'s death. (Sir Howard leased the building to the Institute for a peppercorn a year for 1000 years.) Funding has largely come from the **Heritage Lottery Fund** and **Historic England** and other sources.

This is a landmark event for Mike Carter and his team on the BLSI Working Group which have spent six years in its planning and financing. The next phase is to assemble an operations committee to oversee the management of the

building which will include training, meeting, and workspace to meet the need of new and existing small businesses in the area and the local community. A café will cater for general users and will also be open to the public.

In the meantime the Group has launched an Oral History Project to garner people's memories of the Institute and what it has meant to them prior to its being closed to the public in 1997. The Project plans a series of events and activities to further its aims and gather information.

### "Change is not merely necessary to life, it is life." ALVIN TOFFLER (1928-2016)

We note the passing of 'futurologist' **Alvin Toffler** at his Bel Air home in Los Angeles on 27 June 2016 aged 87. He challenged people and their institutions to constantly revaluate and reposition themselves in 'the roaring current of change'.

Toffler's landmark work *Future Shock*, published in 1970, foretold the rapid transition from the industrial age to the knowledge based economy. He cautioned that 'People and institutions that failed to keep pace with change would face ruin.'

Reflecting back over the forty years since Future Shock was published and translated into many different languages, it has been an epoch of great and ongoing change driven largely by his prediction for the personal computer and the then yet to be unleashed internet and chatroom. Toffler went on describe this in 1980 'A new civilization is emerging in our lives, and blind men everywhere are trying to suppress it. This new civilization brings with it new family styles; changed ways of working, loving and living; a new economy; new political conflicts; and beyond all this an altered consciousness as well... The dawn of this new civilization is the single most explosive fact of our lifetimes' (The Third Wave).

Alvin Eugene Toffler was born in New York on 4 October 1928 to Polish-born Jewish parents Sam and Rose and he was raised in Brooklyn. His early influence was his live-in uncle and aunt whom he described as 'Depression-era intellectuals...They always talked about exciting ideas.' His uncle was a journalist and his aunt wrote poetry. Toffler aspired to both.

Enrolling at New York University in 1946, he spent the next four years largely in political activisim. Along the way he met Adelaide Elizabeth 'Heidi' Farrell, 'a gorgeous blonde', and after he graduated they headed to America's industrial heartland, Cleveland, were they were married on 29 April 1950. There they both got production jobs. She in an aluminum foundry and he as a millwright, where he learned welding and plant maintenance, and ultimately convinced the Cleveland-based trade magazine *Industry and Welding* to hire him as a reporter in 1954.

Shortly after he was hired by *Labor's Daily*, and in 1957 he was sent to Washington to cover 'labour' stories there. In 1959, he sent a proposal



Photo: Wikipedia/ Vern Evans

to Forbes Fortune magazine about the 'economics of the growing interest in the arts'. This was knocked back, but he was invited to an interview and a result he was hired as Labour Editor and an occasional columnist, which progressed into articles on business and management. He left Fortune in 1962 and set up a freelance business with his wife producing articles on technology, politics and social science for specialist journals. He also contributed a series of long interviews for Hugh Hefner's Playboy magazine, including one with Russian novelist Vladimir Nabokov and another with female intellectual Ayn Rand.

In the meantime the Tofflers were assembling material on 'change', based on their work on: observations on the social and organisational impact on computers at IBM; the Xerox Research Laboratory; and American Telephone and Telegraph Co. future direction. This work all gelled into the publication in 1970 of *Future Shock*, the challenge of change and 'information overload' a term he coined.

The Tofflers went on to variously advise: the US Government, Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev; South Korean President Kim Daejung; and South American governments. In the meantime Chinese leaders Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang along with Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew cite the influence of the Tofflers' work on their administration of Government.

This work prompted the formation of Toffler Associates in 1996 to guide Governments and industry to **Future Proof®** their operations

and 'survive - and thrive - in an environment of accelerated change by creating agile and adaptive organizations'.

His honours and awards from nations and institutions around the world are too numerous to list. However it his teaching at various universities that has and will continue to shape the Third Wave as he termed it, the first two being agriculture and industry, which impacts on our lives and all aspects of society.

Alvin Toffler is survived by his wife Heidi. Their only child Karen died in 2000. His legacy of thought, besides *Future Shock*, includes twelve other books a number if which he co-authored with his wife: *The Culture Consumers: A Study of Art and Affluence in America* (1964); *The Schoolhouse in the City* (1968); *The Futurists* (1972); *Learning for Tomorrow: The Role of the Future in Education* 

(1974); The Eco-Spasm Report (1975); The Third Wave (1980); Previews and Premises: An Interview with the Author of Future Shock and The Third Wave (1983); The Adaptive Corporation (1985); Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century (1990); War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century (1993); Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave (1994); and Revolutionary Wealth (2006).

'The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.'

'We must search out totally new ways to anchor ourselves, for all the old roots – religion, nation, community, family, or profession – are now shaking under the hurricane impact of accelerative thrust.'

Layla tov Alvin Toffler.

# "At some stage in our lives, each of us is a 'collector'." RODNEY DISNEY DAVIDSON (1933-2016)

On 13 April 2016 Rodney Disney Davidson AO, OBE passed away in Melbourne, aged 83. By profession he was a solicitor and company director and was a long-time patron of Victoria's heritage and the arts. In 1958 he joined the fledgling National Trust of Australia (Victoria), which had been established in 1956 and became a Councillor in 1960, and was Chair and President from 1965-82.



Born in Melbourne in 1933, Rodney was educated at Melbourne Grammar School and the University of Melbourne. He joined Home, Wilkinson and Lowry, Solicitors in 1959 and retired a Senior Partner in 1993.

Under the watch, as Chair of the Exhibition Building Melbourne Trust 1989-96, the Exhibition Building underwent a massive restoration and this led ultimately to World Heritage Listing in 2004.

Rodney very much drove public heritage policy and was Chair of the Victorian Government's Committee on the Preservation of Places of Historic Interest, which heralded in the *Historic Buildings Act* (1974) and which created the Historic Buildings Preservation Council of which

he was Chair 1974-77. The securing of the Johnston Collection, saw him as WR Johnston Trust, Chair 1995-2009 and the establishment of its centre in East Melbourne. He took the heritage conservation fight nationally through the Australian Council of National Trusts to see a Federal Register of the National Estate established.

A passionate bibliophile, he authored *A Book Collector's Notes* (1970) and was University

of Melbourne, Friends of Baillieu Library, President 1978-96, and Patron 2002-16; and State Library of Victoria, LaTrobe Society, Chair, 2003-09. Rodney also assiduously amassed one of the most significant private collections of Australiana, even to the point of hiring a private detective to hunt down John and Eliza Batman's papers. His unique collection was dispersed by auction during 2004-08, the catalogues of which are of immense interest to book collectors and historians. Indeed, proud of his Scottish heritage, he lived life according to the clan motto 'Sapienter si sincere' or 'Wisely if sincerely', in community service and our sincere condolences go to his family.

Photo: Cathryn Tremain via theage.com.au

### HISTORY OF THE HALL IN AUSTRALIA

National interest is gathering apace in the future listing and documentation of Mechanics' Institutes, Schools of Arts and their predecessors and successors throughout Australia. The very recent publication of **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James**' *Ubiquitous and Necessary: Australia's Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts, etc.– A Reference Guide* fulfils a national Australian longfelt need.

Pam has also generously gifted some forty individual Institute histories to the **Mechanics' Institute Resource Centre** (MIRC) and these will appear on the catalogue of **Prahran Mechanics' Institute** in due course.

The **Friends of the Launceston Mechanics' Institute** has recently formed a working party to investigate MIs and their ilk and have started to assemble a basic list of Tasmanian Institutes. FOLMI's blogspot will also show other elements of libraries and those of the book. One recent post concerns the elusive **Lefroy Mechanics' Institute and Library** (1881- early 1900s) and a distinctive bookplate printed by the Launceston Examiner in a book bound by **George Rolwegan** of Hobart Town. George was drowned in the sinking of the *London* in the Bay of Biscay during a storm whilst returning from a visit to England in 1866.

The Association of Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (ADFAS) groups have also been active in promoting research on Institutes and individual members have actually been in the field assembling the stories of individual Institutes.

So far some forty Institutes have been researched, mostly on the eastern Australian seaboard, and these are available on the ADFAS website.

ADFAS has thirty-five member Societies and four are based in Victoria and we hope these and their interstate cousins will take up the *Ubiquitous and Necessary* challenge, which compilers **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James** have presented us.

Elsewhere around the world interest is being generated with the availability of on-line material including by the University of Durham publishing e-Theses on their website. One thesis of note was **Clifton Stockdale**'s 'Mechanics' Institutes in Northumberland and Durham 1824-1902', submitted as a PhD thesis in the Faculty of



Social Sciences, School of Education, University of Durham, 1993. www.etheses.dur.ac.uk/5614

This is an admirable adjunct to **Dame Mabel Tylecote**'s masterly *The Mechanics' Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851* (1957) and the pioneering **James William Hudson**'s *History of Adult Education* (1851).

The impending bicentennial of the founding of the **Edinburgh School of Arts**, now **Heriot-Watt University**, in 2021, would appear to be a potential focus for report on where the Institute movement went and what it has progressed into. Institute Universities in the UK, USA and Canada could challenge staff and students to document their regions and provide that research to a worldwide meeting in Edinburgh in 2021.

All of the above references and more are available through PMI or in the MIRC at PMI.

#### DO YOU KNOW THIS INSTITUTE?

The writing on the front of the building says "Public Library and Mechanic's Institute A.D. 1868". If this building looks familiar, please let us know. It would be great if we could put a name to a face...or frontage...



# MIV'S Historical Plaques Program. PLAQUES SCHEME CELEBRATES 150 YEARS

The idea of plaquing buildings connected with notable figures started in 1866 when library promoter William Ewart (1798-1869), Christmas card promoter and 1851 Great Exhibition planner Henry Cole (1808-82) and **The Royal Society of Arts** (established in 1754) Committee members met on 7 May 1866 to consider erecting plaques 'to increase the public estimation of places which have been abodes of men who have made England what it is.' The original plaques were not in the now well known blue colour but in ceramic terracotta red. The colour was changed to blue ceramic during the oversight period of the London County Council, with an encircling laurel wreath. During the 1920s experimentation was made using different designs and materials such as bronze, stone and lead. In 1938 the design was simplified to the circular surround being a single band and these were then subsequently cast in bronze with a blue glass enamel inlay.

The first plaque was erected at 24 Holles Street, Cavendish Square the birthplace of poet Lord Byron (1788-1824) in 1867. The house was demolished in 1889. The second plaque, which was also erected in 1867, still exists, but has since been recast in blue. It was to Emperor Napoleon III (1808-73) who lived in exile in leased premises on King Street, London from 1847-48, before heading back to France leaving his 'bed unmade and his marble bath still full of water'.



Photo: Flickr user: Spudgun67

The first plaque erected to a woman was in 1876 to actress **Sarah Siddons** (1755-1831),

but this plaque has not survived. The second to a woman was in 1885 and it was erected at the former Bolton Street, Mayfair home of novelist and playwright **Fanny Burney** (1752-1840).

The most recent plaque was unveiled to music promoter and author **Sir George Grove** (1820-1900) on 5 July 2016 at 14 Westwood Hill, Sydenham, near the Crystal Palace. Sir George was author of the legendary *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1878-1889) in 4 volumes, and since universally known simply as Grove.

In London there are eighteen properties which have two plaques, one example being at 29 Fitzroy Square where separate plaques have been placed for **George Bernard Shaw** (1856-1950) and **Virginia Wolf** (1882-1941).

The Royal Society of Arts, after erecting thirty-six plaques, passed the scheme to the **London County Council** in 1901. This was succeeded by the **Greater London Council** in 1965 which erected 252 plaques. In 1986 **English Heritage** took over the scheme and they have since erected over 300 plaques. This entity was demerged in 2015 and the scheme is now managed by the **English Heritage Trust**.

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

### **Recent Plagues**

No. 47 **Ruffy Public Hall -** unveiled 22 May 2016.

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

No. 49 Kyneton Mechanics' Institute

No. 50 **Somerville Mechanics' Institute** unveiled 12 February 2016.

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

No. 52 Moonambel Mechanics' Institute

No. 53 **Merton Hall -** to be unveiled later in 2016

No. 54 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.

# Useful Knowledge MIV'S Historical Plaques Program. PLAQUE NO. 47 HNIVEHED AT DUES. PLAQUE NO. 47 UNVEILED AT RUFFY

The district of Ruffy, in north-east Victoria, lies to the east of Euroa and spreads onto the Strathbogie Ranges. The area was first settled in the 1840s and was known as Terip Terip and a Post Office opened in 1881. The district and Post Office was renamed Ruffy in 1895, after the Ruffy brothers, early settlers. The district received National prominence when a several members of the Ruffy

Mounted Rifles volunteered for the Boer War 1899-1902. One such member was Leslie Cecil Maygar who was awarded the Victoria Cross.

The close-knit Ruffy community is well resourced with community infrastructure: the Ruffy Recreation Reserve where the long-running annual gymkhana has financed a fine oval, with cricket pitch, surrounded by mature oak trees. Overlooking Maygar Park is The Pavilion with a large catering kitchen. Strathbogie Council have recently purchased the former Ruffy Primary School campus from the Education Department and this is now known as The Tablelands Community Centre. Both buildings and ovals are available for hire.

Complementing these facilities is the Ruffy **Mechanics' Institute** precinct, which also hosts the Ruffy Country Fire Authority establishment, with a large station comprising three trucks, associated parking and water storage. The abutting road reserve, also contains Ruffy's War Memorials, a cairn and seat, both built in local stone, and a row of trees honouring the district's World War II dead.

The building of the Ruffy Mechanics' Institute was first considered in 1888, and the Government set aside the site in 1890. Building began in late 1893 by Mr Sinclair and the Institute was opened in 1894 with a library. The original structure was sold in 1904 and a new hall was built.

The Hall remained much the same until the Supper Room was extended in 1965 and this was followed by the electricity switch-on in 1967. A toilet block was installed in the west end of the Hall in the 1980s. However the Hall's real renaissance started with the Centenary Ball in 1994 and this provided funds for restoration works.



The establishment of the **RuffArtZ** program in 2000 showed the typical long elongated hall provided little stage space at the east end. Sustained RuffArtZ fundraising enabled the building of a new stage area along the north side of the Hall. The auditorium was then extended with an addition on the south side of the hall and a modern kitchen was established on the rear south-east end. North of the kitchen is an undercover concrete pad.

The 2011 Community Accessibility and Enhancement Project resulted in the installation of a wheel chair accessible toilet at the southwest end. Café curtains were fitted on the east side of the back skillion, where a massive open stone fireplace was built and a barbecue area was established.

The Project also enabled the landscaping the area to the east of the Hall. This 'break-out'



area extends from the barbecue area as lawn, where four specimen trees commemorate the long and faithful service of three Hall Committee members: TWG [Thomas William George] Noye; Dawn Artridge, nee Noye; and REJ [Ruth Eunice Jane] Atkins, nee Penney (1908-90). This secluded treed and shrubbed area is used for outdoor functions,

for outdoor functions, receptions and even wedding photographs.

Water harvesting from the roof is done on a large scale, into two 20,000 litre tanks. The recent installation of solar panels has seen a massive reduction in electricity bills.

The Hall walls, in addition to the Honour Rolls, carry panels of RuffArtZ event posters and photographs, which is indeed an impressive range of performers. With an annual season of at least four events each year, and occasional extras, RuffArtZ has quite a following, as does their legendary 'real' milk coffee and homemade cakes served at interval. The latter is documented in the RuffArtZ's bestseller *The Little Black Book of Coffee and Cake*.

Further the Ruffy Mechanics' is well resourced with lighting, sound, electrical and digital projection capability for visiting exhibitions, shows and performers. There has even been consideration given to the starting of an Annual Film Festival. Watch this space.

And yes we visited Ruffy for the first time for the unveiling of MIV Commemorative Plaque No. 47 on 22 May 2016. The SatNav took us into the north end of Ruffy and the impressive and well maintained Hall complex. The function was held at the rear of the Hall in the barbecue skillion where a table of historic photos and memorabilia took us on tour of hall and event history.





The event was ably chaired by Hall Secretary Sharron **Batt** who outlined the history of the Hall. She then introduced President Henry Hall Nove. whose mother produced the bestest corned beef sandwiches and father made real milk coffee. Stan Artridge. who arrived in the district in 1949, recalled the night the hotel opposite the Hall

burned down. He also noted how an electric lead from Sinclair's 32 volt generator provided light for the Hall and replaced the candles, lanterns and lights generated by 12 volt batteries taken out of cars.

Next came **Bill Eddy** who had been on the Hall Committee for thirty-nine years and was still taking Hall bookings. Bill recalled the night **Rex Sinclair** lit his pipe and put the smoldering match back in the wrong end of the matchbox and caused a sudden flash fire, which luckily did no real damage, except to Rex's ego.

MIV Committee Member **Corinne Brewis** gave a brief overview of the Mechanics' Institute movement in Australia and the Commemorative Plaque program.

Mayor of Strathbogie Shire, **Cr Colleen Furlanetto** then spoke. She had grown up with the Hall, where both her parents were on the Hall Committee. Mayor Furlanetto said the Hall to many was a lot more than a few boards fixed with nails, it was a place of memory, a thing that was not readily comprehended by many.

The plaque was then unveiled on the front of the Hall by Mayor Furlanetto and Hall President Henry Noye.

The legendary Ruffy Mechanics Institute afternoon tea followed with tables 'groaning' with plates of local homemade cakes and other goodies. When we left there was still fair pickings from the usual over catering at Ruffy.

The day's experience gave a whole new meaning to the connotation of 'Ruffyan'. It was one of a very special and caring community that was thriving on activities largely centred on the Hall. It also provided for a varied cultural program, unmatched, by many even much larger communities.

Photos, clockwise from left: inside the Ruffy Hall; Henry Noye and Cr Colleen Furlanetto unveiling the plaque; Ruffy Hall; and Plaque No. 47.

### MIV Bus Zour - SOUTH-EASTERN SURPRISE

Another Magical MIV Expedition, visiting five original Mechanics' Institutes, all still going strong, and a marvellous mansion from the same era on the shores of Westernport - By John Merry.



One recent Sunday morning my partner **Sally Edwardes** and I arrived at the Prahran Mechanics' Institute to find the **Bunyip River Bus Line** Mercedes parked by the door, and a group of members from Berwick enjoying a tour of our still very new-feeling Library and Meeting Rooms in trendy St Edmonds Road. Pausing only for a quick cuppa, we boarded the bus along with members from other Mechanics' Institutes, including two intrepid travellers from Ballarat, and headed south.

First port of call was **Frankston**, where the **Free Library and Mechanics' Institute** was opened at a grand ball in 1880. Today, enlarged and renovated, it remains a valued venue for events of all kinds, though we had an unexpected event of our own when the burglar alarm went off at the door. Luckily, we managed to dial the correct combination before security arrived.

Next stop was the **Somerville Hotel,** where we enjoyed a light lunch (all part of the \$50 ticket), and then a short stroll to the adjacent **Mechanics' Institute**, which has served this community since 1891. It has been beautifully restored, including a sizeable auditorium for community use, and in 2008 the local council refurbished the two front rooms for the use of the local Heritage Society.

Now came our 'South-Eastern Surprise'-'Harewood' the mysterious Heritage Listed Victorian homestead on the edge of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp – but en-route we passed two

buildingswhichwere previously Mechanics' Institutes – the Public Halls at **Pearcedale** and **Tooradin** – both destroyed by fire, but rebuilt to continue as Community Halls. Everyone who has travelled the South Gippsland Highway, on the way to the Phillip Island Penguin Parade, has noticed 'Harewood' – all alone on the swampy foreshore of Western

Portjust past the Tooradin Airport. Surrounded by ancient trees, it looks every minute of its 150 years. Our indefatigable Tour Designer, Judith Dwyer from MIV, had obtained permission to visit the property – not

usually open to visitors- and our curiosity was finally to be satisfied. Built of handmade brick, the two-storey house was erected by William **Lyall**, a Scot, as the homestead for his 30,000 hectare property, on which, as a leading member of the Acclimatisation Society, he released various imported species - hares (after which the property was named), partridges, deer, pheasants, Highland cattle and various plant species. He also pioneered the reclamation of swamplands. The current owner of Harewood is only the third in all these years, and each time the property has changed hands, it has been sold with all furniture and fittings intact, and remains in very good order. The result is a Victorian time capsule, and we were delighted, and privileged, to have this rare experience.

Back in the 21st Century, we journeyed on to Narre Warren, only to find ourselves back in 1890! This sturdy weatherboard structure is one of only two public buildings from this era surviving in Narre Warren. Luckily, the Narre Warren Mechanics' Institute is in safe hands, in excellent repair, and offers a large hall, three smaller meeting rooms, and appropriate food and drink preparation facilities to cater for functions large and small.

And last, but not least, we found ourselves back in **Berwick**, one of the jewels in the Mechanics' Institute crown, where a 30,000 volume Free Library welcomes residents and visitors to the

original Mechanics' Institute, now much enlarged while retaining the original façade. Supported by the local council, and run by volunteers, it continues to provide a service which began over 150 years ago.



### Around Dictoria'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.

### BALLARAAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1859)



Photo: Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute Facebook

With a much revamped website, and a restyled newsletter, BMI is bounding into Spring with a three day, 1-3 September, showcase of its building and activities.

On Thursday evening, **Ballarat Songwriters** will showcase their works. This will be followed on Friday, with **An Evening of Jazz and Soul.** 

Just to show that the old taboo of silence is no longer required in the library, the OPEN DAY, Saturday 3 September will kick off at 10am sharp with a band recital in its midst under the approving eye of Librarian Rosemary McInerney. The Ballarat Memorial Concert Band, which is successor to the Returned Soldiers, Sailors and Airmens Band formed after World War I, was traditionally a brass band, until it adopted a woodwind section in the 1970s. Today it has about forty members which muster under the baton of Musical Director Wade Carman. Interestingly they are also in the process of forming a junior band, which will ensure succession.

On show for the first time will be a selection of images from the large photographic archive of **Max Harris**, which is now housed at the BMI.

There will be supporting lectures by **Roger Burrows** and **Adona Kmiec** on photography.

For those agile bodies, on the Minerva Space there will be a **Go-Go Dancing Class** with **Miss Daisy Amazing** at 2pm and will continue until 2.45pm if you can still stand up. For those who would like something a little more sedentary there will be an exhibition 'At The Pictures: Cinema History at the BMI'. A program of **Vintage Cinema and Sounds** will take place in the evening. In the Humffray Room there will be Devonshire teas, and **Federation University second year drama students** will give poetry and prose readings. In addition there will be pop up performances around the building during the day. Check out the BMI website for the full program.

It's been a busy year with the most recent major event being the **Australian Historical Association Annual Conference** which was hosted by Federation University from 4-8 July. There were some 350 registrants from across Australasia that participated in the theme 'From Boom to Bust'. President **Phil Roberts** was voted to the chair at the most recent AGM and five new members joined the Board.

ballaratmi.org.au

### CHARLTON - GOLDEN GRAINS MUSEUM (Est. 1882)

After recovering from the disastrous flood of 14 January 2011, when a metre of water from the flooded Avoca River went through the building, the Museum was able to reopen on 17 March 2013. The Museum was then named in the 2013 **Museums Australia (Victoria) Awards** for 'Museum Display Redevelopment'. Needless to say there was celebration and this led to the kitchen being fitted out in 2014.

Museum Secretary Carolyn Olive had involvement with the commissioning and unveiling of a bust of locally born World War I General Pompey Elliott on 24 May 2015. The distinctive work is by sculptor Louis Laumen and Carolyn wrote the text for the plaques and the Museum contributed to the cost of the works. On hand for the occasion was Pompey Elliott biographer Ross McMullin and Victorian State RSL representative Harold Heslop OAM. The Museum is open on Sundays between 11am-3pm or otherwise by request. charltongoldengrainsmuseum.webs.com

### **MALDON ATHENAEUM (Est. 1863)**

Maldon recently celebrated 150 years as one of Victoria's oldest continuous independent libraries run by volunteers. They are also in fundraising mode and are staging **A Night with Gideon Haigh** which will be held at Maldon Community Centre, Francis Street, Maldon on 19 October 2016 at 7.30pm. Gideon is a most engaging speaker and has some thirty books to his credit, with twenty being on cricket, and is a regular panellist on the ABC's Offsiders sporting program. *An evening not to be missed.* Tickets are \$20, and are available from Lesley 5475 1371; Liz 5475 2370; or Joy 5475 1326.

An interesting proposal in their latest newsletter challenges today's generation to get into some of the old classics: Christie, Dickens, Du Maurier, Galsworthy, Hardy, Hemingway, Huxley, Kipling, Lawrence, Priestley, Shute, Tolstoy and Wheatley. Reviewer **Liz Pollard** had just re-read Daphne Du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn* (1936), which she interestingly notes still stands as a landmark between the Cornish towns of Launceston and Bodmin, and offers accommodation and pub food. Perhaps we all should be putting up signs 'Get into the Classics at...'. Food for thought.

maldonlibrary.org.au

### **MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM (Est. 1839)**

The Melbourne Athenaeum recently undertook a book shuffle to integrate all fiction books in their collection into alphabetical order. The Ath had previously had their books grouped by genre, and then alphabetically within that which resulted in books by the same author, but classified under different genres, occasionally being spread throughout the whole library, rather than side by side. A count of the catalogue showed more than fifty authors of at least ten books were split between two or more genres. The Library closed its doors on the Friday 5 August 2016 for the week long alphabetisation; reopening on Friday 12 August. Throughout the move, new shelving was installed to house the collection.

Following on from The Ath's participation in International Table Top Day, board and tabletop games will feature in the Library on the first Saturday of the month starting in September. This has proven to be a great inter-generational interaction activity where you can test your game skills against some more or less studied than yourself. So come on down on Saturday the 3rd and enjoy some screen-free game play with your friends, or make some new friends, at the Melbourne Athenaeum Library.

### NAGAMBIE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est 1873)



Photo: Yvonne Deering

The Nagambie Mechanics' Institute hall now sports a shiny new roof complete with whirly ventilators. This major work was undertaken with funds raised largely by the opportunity shop volunteers together with income from hall hire.

Regular community use of the hall has increased with old-time dance classes as well as table tennis nights. The latter have proved so popular that a second night each week was started up.

Increased use has led to more improvements including upgraded lighting, tightening of ceiling battens and clearer op shop signage.

The Institute was fortunate enough to be able to take advantage of the MIV Scanning Project and this was completed in 2015.

The Committee of Management has submitted an application for a Community matching grant from the Shire of Strathbogie which, if successful, will assist with the purchase of a sound system for the hall.

Projects for the future include new stage curtains and complete re-painting of the hall interior.

Thanks go to the Committee, the volunteers and those who use the hall, all of whom contribute to keeping the hall 'alive and well'.

Yvonne Deering

### PRAHRAN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1854)

Prahran has been busy, they have just worked through National Family History Month culminating in a successful seminar on 'Tracking Your Ancestors' and 'Ancestry Library Edition'. The Short History Prize entries are now with the judges, members of the Professional Historians Association. Prahran have also received grants of \$12,000, one from the Prahran Historical and Arts Society will enable the cataloguing of the Institute's library on to the National Library's Trove system which will promote the

PMI to much wider community. Book sales can be profitable, as was shown from the sale held at on 23 June, which realised \$1,100, thanks to **Wendy Eldridge** and the **Friends of the PMI Library**.

An excellent example of how to showcase collection strengths, is a planned series of talks by **Dr Judith Buckrich** 'Shining the Light: Looking at the PMI Collection of [400] books about Australian art.' Her first lecture was given on 28 April and a further one is planned for 17 November.

Again, as part of its wider outreach, PMI staged its **Melbourne Rare Book Week** inaugural lecture which was delivered on 21 July by **Professor Wallace Kirsop** on 'The People of Prahran and District Important to the Melbourne Book Scene', which hopefully will find its way into print.

PMI also participated in the recent **Open House Melbourne Weekend** on 30-31 July. The main activity was in the William Moss Room, where they mounted a display of key Local History references, but also conducted library and computer 'tours'.

MIV also had a display, which featured a range of Hall pictures, along with plans and documents sourced from our diverse scanned collection, which was ably mounted on stands by **Judith Dwyer**.

Also in the Moss Room were displays by our co-tenants the Cinema and Theatre Historical Society (CATHS) and the Australian Railway Historical Society (Victorian Division) (ARHS). We attended on Sunday, when all groups were ably represented: Ursula Zamecnik and Ellen Coates, PMI; Judith Dwyer and Gary Bester, MIV; Peter Wolfenden, CATHS; and Donald Barker, ARHS.

A good touch was the loop of pics, from the different organizations, which flickered across the big screen during the day.

Visitors of varied interests happened by during the day. The general feeling was that it was worth being in it again next year, but with a more aggressive street front appearance, banner and balloons, and inside perhaps some activity, like a model railway with a [model] Railway Institute featured, and a scheduled talk and short film or two.

There is also recent news of two new part-time staff appointments: **Ellen Coates**, as Collections Librarian; and **Chris Moysey**, as Marketing and Communications Officer. We wish them well in their exciting new roles in this dynamic and unique Institute.

### **STANLEY ATHENAEUM (Est. 1863)**



L-R: Chris Dormer, Christine Cansfield-Smith (seated), Ros Woods and Helen McIntyre. (Photo: Ovens-Murray Advertiser)

Stanley's current exhibition **Botanical** Treasures: Illustrations and Text opened on 31 July 2016 with a lecture by botanical artist Christine Cansfield-Smith. The exhibition draws on the rich collection of illustrated books. which the library holds from the 1800s and the then universal interest in botany and plants. particularly those from the New World. Included is a rare hand-coloured print of 'Stanley, Ovens' by **Edward Hulme** (1818-1904) who lived near Stanley for a time in the late 1850s. Hulme is also is known to have produced a number of botanical works and authored A Settler's Thirty-Five Years Experience In Victoria, Australia: and how £6.8s became £8,000 with advice to settlers (Melbourne: ML Hutchinson, 1891). Also included in the exhibition is a first edition of Australian Botany: Specifically Designed for Use in Schools (Melbourne: Samuel Mullen, 1878) by William Guilfoyle (1814-1912), Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne.

Curated by **Helen McIntyre, Chris Dormer** and **Ros Woods**, the exhibition runs through until 30 January 2017, and is open every Friday and on the 4th Saturday of each month from 10am-noon. Other times by appointment. Why not book in a group? Tel: (03) 5728 6702 or stanleyathenaeum@gmail.com.

### TRENTHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1878)

The Trentham Mechanics' Institute has been under threat of demolition since the appearance of a Council sponsored facilities review in November 2013.

Hepburn Shire Council, in conjunction with a group of locals were intent on demolishing the

Institute's historic hall to make way for Council's proposed Trentham HUB.

Furious debate has raged ever since with the Trentham SAVE OUR INSTITUTE Campaign leading the charge to not only save the "Old Hall" but also to re-energise the original Trentham Mechanics' Institute (Established 1878).

Following recent protests there was a belated recognition that funding for the HUB would not be forthcoming while the community was so hopelessly divided. On 16 August 2016 Councillors were finally able to resolve the matter by deciding to build the Trentham HUB on a vacant 5000 sqm block nearby long owned by Council.

Councillors also instructed Council Officers to return the management responsibility for the Crown Land Reserve on which the Trentham Mechanics Institute Hall stands back to DELWP.

As a result of this decision Trentham will now get: A new HUB; and a revitalised and restored Mechanics' Institute.

Trentham is indeed fortunate in having its original Mechanics' Institute operating from its original building, on its original site and continuing to serve its community on a daily basis.

Sadly like many other communities Trentham almost forgot what they had and the resulting imbroglio has brought animosity and resentment in place of a long history of community solidarity.

Take steps now to save your community from the division and acrimony that Trentham has had to endure. Ensure that your Institute is a dynamic, open and imaginative institution deeply engaged with all elements of your community.

**Robert Kingston** 

### WALHALLA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1865)

The Institutes and Walhalla's big event of the year the **Walhalla Vinter Ljusfest**, staged in August for the past five years, was cancelled by **Walhalla and Mountain Rivers Tourism** for this year at short notice on the grounds of lack of funding. Whilst the blame has been handballed, it highlights a need for longterm thinking and ongoing dialogue.

Drawing on the Swedish roots of the name Walhalla, it drew on all of Walhalla's assets, its rail, tunnel, the Institute and its streetscape. Night train rides, ghost tours, hill on hill puppet show, night floodlighting, and a dinner at the Institute with a spit roast of suckling pig, all added to the month long celebration. Last year it was estimated that 5000 people visited the normally sleepy Walhalla for the event.

When community wide activities are abandonned the local hall generally takes a hit by way of usage and revenue. In this case it is a double whammy for the Walhalla Institute has three tenant shops. We hope that the Vinter Ljusfest gets up for next year and more will know about this innovative event

### WANDONG PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1902)

The well-cared for Wandong Hall, sits in the midst of a rapidly growing community, that has a rich industrial heritage by way of sawmilling, timber treatment, the use of sawdust in brick making, and a busy rail siding. Archaeology of these once booming activities is dotted around and in Wandong.

The Hall hosts a range of activities: book club; Community Group; crafters; dance classes; History Group; knitters; quilters; and U3A.

The Wandong Hall and the Wandong History Group are assembling as much information as they can, particularly in the way of photos, before the area is totally built upon. To this end they are holding a **History Day** on Saturday, 12 November, which is part of the **Home is Where the Hall Is** month-long November activities.

If you are looking for a central well-resourced place to meet in the country and close by a railway line, the Wandong Hall could be for you. www.wandong.vc.au

### WARRANDYTE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1882)

The multi-talented **Kavisha Mazella**'s recent appearance, along with her longtime collaborator and violinst **Matthew Arnold**, proved a real crowd pleaser. The Hall was echoing to the Gypsy, Celtic and Fado rhythms as the duo presented a smorgasbord of music and voice. Keep your eye out for their appearance at another venue. Check out Kavisha's presentation of 'If these walls could talk' on YouTube.

Celebrating sixty years of productions, the talented comrades of the **Warrandyte Theatre Company** have taken on George Orwells' challenging **1984** as their September offering. (The book **1984** is No. 2 on *Time* magazine's Top 100 Reads of All Time.) Certainly 'Big brother is watching you!' and indeed 'Who controls the past controls the future and who controls the present controls the past.') Hopefully the recent reappearance of unwanted presence of whiteants have not been a sinister part of it all, and they will be given marching orders.) You can book for **1984** at their new online booking system www. trybooking.com/MGYL.

warrandytehallarts.asn.au

### The Wonderful World of Mechanics' Institutes

### **CANADA**

**BROUGHAM HALL (Est. 1841)** 



Photo: pada.ca

Located in Ontario Province, some 50km east of Toronto, is the village of Brougham, in the region of Pickering. The area was surveyed in 1791 and given the name of Glasgow. Settlers then began to arrive and utilised the old Wyandot Indian trail through the forest to their holdings, which they also gradually cleared. In the early 1800s, the arrival of English, Scottish and United States settlers accelerated the forest clearance and the cultivation of the resulting rich farm land.

By this stage the town was known as Pickering and was at the crossroads of two major eastwest and north-south communication routes, now Highway No 2 and Brock Road. It became a market and business hub.

The 1837 'Rebellion' led by printer William Lyon Mackenzie, saw people captured from the region. In spite of petitions for clemency, two, Peter Matthews of Brougham and Samuel Lount, were martyred 'hung' on 12 April 1838, not knowing that their reprieve was 'in the mail' from Queen Victoria. Other rebels, charged with treason, were shot, or were sent to England and held in Newgate Prison. Henry, Lord Brougham presented a petition to the British Parliament seeking their reprieve and release. This finally occurred in July 1839. All rebellion participants were pardoned in 1845, but the escaped leader Mackenzie was not finally pardoned until 1849 and he was then allowed to return from the US.

Local Government arrived in 1840 and this continued as the Area Board until 1967, when it was superceded by the County Board. The old Brougham Common School, built in 1859, was closed in 1959 and this has since been turned into

the town's museum. The new School remained until it too closed in June 1972.

Brougham's community was decimated on 2 March 1972 when the Government decided to buy up 18,000 acres of farmland and the village of Brougham to establish a second Toronto airport. Not surprisingly the bell that William Lyon Mackenzie had tolled at the old coach house to summon his supporters in 1837, rang loudly once more. This time the 'rebels' of Brougham promised that all previous collaborations by Canadians to save landmarks were but mere 'skirmishes', this would be 'a real fight' for the Brougham lands. So the 'People or Planes' (POP) movement began. All those affected received the Government's appropriation notices just in time for Thanksgiving 1972. An Inquiry was called and residents rallied to the call of 'mons pays, mon amours'. The resultant Report was a vindication for all their efforts, but still the tumbrel rolled on. Properties had been valued at 1967, depression prices, and further administrative dysfunction and ongoing uncertainty prevailed. Subsequently property holder numbers plumetted from 700 to the little over 100 today.

The second major blow came in 2012 when the 407 Tollway split the remaining Brougham community and passed within 200 metres of the Hall. However there has been a recent upside to this alienation, for with further community activisim by way of the 'Land over Landing' (LOL), the airport land has now been handed back to public use: 10,000 acres is to be returned for farming; 4000 acres has been designated as the Rouge National Park; and 4,000 acres has been returned to the village of Brougham.

The Pickering (Brougham) Mechanics' Institute appears to have its genesis in 1841, when the Pickering Town Council, passed its third by-law and resolved 'a librarian be appointed in order to make the books [and journals for the House of Assembly for 1837 and 1838] given by Mrs [Frances Elizabeth] Small [wife of James Edward Small a sitting Member of Parliament] available to the public. The tavern keeper Andrew Thomson was appointed to the post'.

On 18 January 1854 William Bentley sought Council permission to build a hall at Bentley's Corner. It was subsequently built as the Pickering Mechanics' Institute, from locally sawn weatherboards and featured 12-paned windows and a distinctive entrance porch.

The Hall was passed to Council use and Council held their first meeting there on 18 January 1858. Henceforth it was used for Council meetings and became known as the Town Hall. It also had use for Sunday Church services and other community events.

The building appears to have been extended to the rear some time, perhaps in the 1880s. In the 1890s it was still being called the Pickering Mechanics' Institute, as evidenced by a still extant Minute book now in the Ajax Archive at Pickering.

In 1895 it was noted that shoe shop proprietor William J Bodell kept books in his shop, mostly the classics and some technical titles, and these were loaned to the villagers and local farmers. (The technical component was consistent with receiving Government grants.) The locals dubbed Bodell's shop as 'Tammany Hall'. Those authors in the classics list included: Dickens, Dumas, Charles Reade, Walter Scott and RL Stevenson.

The Hall's pressed metal interior roof lining was probably installed in the early 1900s.

On 4 March 1922 the Brougham Library Association was formed to come under the provisions of the *Public Libraries Act*. Mrs TC Brown was appointed Librarian on 30 April 1922. The library collection was moved to her home on the north side of Main Street and she was paid a salary of \$5, with \$5 rent. The Pickering township Council gave an annual grant of \$40. Mrs Brown remained as Librarian for the next thirty years until she was succeeded in 1952 by Mrs Lloyd Johnston, a professional librarian.

The Library Association merged with other district Library Boards to form the Pickering Township Library Board in 1967.

The Brougham Branch of the Women's Institute of Ontario was formed in May 1910 at the home of Mrs Hugh Mechin. They met in the Hall from the 1940s-60s. As a WI project Mrs Thomas Norton started the Tweedsmuir History Scrapbook in 1945 and the WI promoted the idea of a town museum. The WI also fundraised for various Hall projects: stage curtains; a piano in 1973; and shared in the cost of the stove in 1957; in addition to many other community projects. The Pickering Standard Church also met in the Hall until their own Church was built.

The renovated stage and surrounds date from 1946 and the building has had periodic updates since then, including toilets, kitchen and electrical wiring.

In 1973 **Gordon McGregor** and his young family moved into the area and he was appointed to the Hall Committee. With four young children, he organised kids programs based on the Hall. These included games nights and badminton. A pool table was purchased and the Hall became a meeting place for youth for the next thirty years, but a declining population saw these activities discontinued. However after some fifty years Gordon McGregor still serves on the Hall Committee.

The Hall has served the village down through the years as a meeting place for community groups. It also used for several years by the Backwoods Players which at one time produced around three shows each year. In recent times this has fallen to an occasional show.

To find out more on Brougham and its Institute see: Robert A Miller, *The Ontario Village of Brougham Past! Present! Future!* (1973), well indexed, which can be read online.

#### **IRELAND**

### **GALWAY MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1826)**

Located on the west coast of Ireland, on the River Corribb, and adjoining Galway Bay. In Norman times it became a strategic fortified city under the control of the merchant Tribes of Galway and mayoral status was conferred on the city by the English in 1484. In 1562 a by-law was passed stating 'neither O' nor Mac shall strutte nor swagger through the Streets of Galway' without permission. The Tribes held power over the wealthy city until the Battle of Aughrim in 1691 when it was part of the Catholic Confederation of Kilkenny. It did not recover its economic status until well into the 20th century. Today it is the sixth most populous city in Ireland with a population of around 80,000.



Photo: www.gmit.ie

The National University of Ireland – Galway has its genesis in the establishment of Queen's College in Galway in December 1845, with Arts, Medicine and the Law being the main faculties, but schools also included Agriculture and Engineering. Its first President was the Catholic educationist Rev. Dr Joseph William Kirwan

(1796-1849), who guided its formation through to its opening in 1849.

Its name was changed to **University College, Galway** in 1908, and finally took its current title in 1997. In recent times the University has embarked on a €400 million 'Campus of the Future' for the now 17,000 students.

The Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) opened in 1972 in the former Redemptorist Monastery and now comprises four course strands: Business; Engineering; Science and Computing; and Tourism and Arts. A vital part of College activity is the Innovation Hub – the Lifelong Learning Centre. GMIT has 9000 students spread over four campuses.

According to historian Elizabeth **Neswald** the first Institute was established in Galway in 1826. Another, and perhaps a successor, was formed by the Galway **Trades** 



**Temperance Society** in winter 1840. It was led by the Prior of the Dominican Convent **Very Rev. Thomas Agnew**.

It 'combined temperance sociability with scientific lectures, working class interest in a benefits society and small savings bank with a more middle class interest in self-improvement through practical and moral instruction.'

The Institute has had a long-running library, which according to J W Hudson's survey in 1850, had 60 volumes and had 160 members.

**Galway Corrib Rowing and Yachting Club**, established in 1864, met here occasionally in transition between the Woodquay and Earls Island in 1903.

In 2015 **Nuala 'Lazarus' Nolan** was the first woman elected to Board. A colleague congratulated her with the utterance 'Blessed art thou among men, Nuala.'

The Art Group, formed in 2014, comprised mostly graduates of the part-time Degree Course in Art and Design at the GMIT. They staged an exhibition at the Institute in July 2016 for two weeks.

This year has been a busy one for the Institute which has hosted a number of events during 'A Nation Rising – History Ireland Hedge School' commemoration. It is also a partner venue in annual The Fringe Festival.

Occasional Poetry Readings; weekly Bridge; Snooker Tournaments utilising two tables on the

top floor; along with the bar and meals on the ground floor, makes for a busy venue.

#### **NEW ZEALAND**

### TAURANGA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. c.1867)



Photo: Google Street View (2013)

Tauranga is located on the Bay of Plenty at the north of the north island of New Zealand, and with a population of around 125,000, is the nation's fifth largest city. It is a major international port and horticultural region.

Itappears that a move to establish a Mechanics' Institute in Tauranga dates back to the late 1860s, for in July 1867 two allotments 164 and 165 were set aside for a Mechanics' Institute on the corner of Durham and Spring Streets, when the military township was surveyed. However these were to be later considered 'too far from the populated area'.

The **Tauranga Mechanics' Institute** was formed in 1871 and **William Walmsley** (1828-1913) became its Secretary/Librarian from 1871-84. Books were purchased and were located in a room in James Bodell's house in Cameron Street. The annual subscription was set at one guinea and the estimated cost for building the library was £187.

The hall and reading room were built in 1873, and the library was relocated to there and a museum was established. In 1877 it had 84 subscribers, and 133 volumes of general reading and 18 volumes of magazines were added during the year. Total borrowings of books and magazines for the year was given at 2760.

The 'Great Fire' of 31 May 1881 destroyed most of the buildings in the town centre, including the Mechanics' Institute, but most of the books were saved. The Hall was then rebuilt. At the time there was the suggestion of a library catalogue, but this was not completed until 1923.

The Institute continued to house a museum collection until it was transferred to the Town Hall in 1938. There it opened as the Bay of Plenty Museum and Art Gallery on 9 April 1938. An attempt to establish a branch library in Katikati proved unsuccessful.

In 1898, after 'the [Institute] doors had been closed for some months', and with a debt of over £35, 'things seemed hopeless'. Management was then taken over by Council, with a community Committee. The debt was cleared in the first year, even after spending £20 on new books and the employment of librarian Miss K Simpson.

In 1906 it became known as the Tauranga Public Library. The Library continued to operate from the Harington Street building until the new Municipal Offices were built in Willow Street in 1930 and the library was shifted into the upstairs section.

After this the building had a number of uses before becoming a hotel night club with a string of names across the late 20th century: La Casa Bar; The Temple Bar; The Colosseum; Lucky Clover/Route 67; Illuminati; and most recently as Flaunt and the Vault.



Photo: sunlive.co.nz

The Institute building and its neighbour were demolished in August 2016. The cleared site is being used by the JWL Investment Trust for a three storey building, plus basement, which will be designed and built by the Brunel Group.

However the library and museum legacy continues on. Further the reclaimed kauri and pine timbers from the demolition have been made available to district furniture makers so the memory will continue.

### **UNITED KINGDOM**

### **ENGLAND**

### WARK MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1873)

Wark is 12 miles from Hexham, in the North Tyne River Valley of the County of Northumberland. It was originally a strategic Anglo Saxon settlement. In Norse 'Wark' means 'Earthworks' where a central meeting hall once stood. This



Photo: warktownhall.moonfruit.com

regional significance continued through until quite recent times.

The railway opened through to Wark in 1862, and closed in 1956 and was dismantled in 1963. Part of the former route has now been submerged beneath the Kielder Dam. It became the first village in Northumberland to trial solar powered street lights. Today it has a population of around 6750 people.

In Wark, Main Street leads into the Village Square or Green in which the War Memorial is located. It was abutting the Village Green that the **Wark Mechanics' Institute** was built in 1873, with a distinctive clock in the front pediment and a dovecote topped with a weathervane on the ridgeline.

Down through the years the Hall has served as a library and Town Hall until the merger of Councils in recent times, when the Hall reverted totally to community use. The Grade II listed building is now managed by Registered Charity No. 522157. The main hall, which has a well resourced stage, seats 100, and has a supper room and kitchen. Meanwhile upstairs there is a meeting room, a library and a billiard room with a full size snooker table.

Dedicated local fundraising enabled the extensive refurbishment of the interior of the building in 2005-06. Since then the weathervane was restored in 2015 and the face of the clock is undergoing restoration at the present time.

The success of the Hall is the conduct of a program of regular and varied events. The Annual Jumble Sale in August is a good money earner. This is followed by catchy Yuletide events such as 'A Brassy Christmas', featuring brass band music or 'Carolling and Crumpets'.

Being on the 'Highlights North' circuit the Hall has access to top entertainment and the string quartet BowJangles 'On the Box' show played to a full house with a mix of music and repartee.

Spread throughout the year, is the Friday morning 10am-noon coffee, with free refills, and this activity raised £1213.40 in 2015.

#### **SCOTLAND**

### **SCALLOWAY PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1902)**



Photo: Scalloway Public Hall Facebook

Scalloway is the ancient capital of Scotland's one hundred Shetland Islands, of which eleven are occupied. Its rugged landscape derives from its glaciated history, and the fierce Atlantic gales permits the Scalloway Museum to open only between May and September.

The Picts settled here some 5000 years ago and it was also on the historic Viking seafaring routes. Scalloway Castle witnessed the witch trials between 1600-1650 and suspects were hanged on a nearby hill. Fishing has been the mainstay of local industry until the development of the North Sea oilfields in the 1970s.

During World War II Scalloway was the British base for the **Shetland Bus** which ferried resistance personnel and refugees from Norway to Scalloway and supplies on return journeys.

Today Scalloway hosts the annual **Scalloway Fire Festival** which focusses on the region's Viking heritage in January, and swells the normal 800 population to several thousand.

The town also hosts the 1902 two-storey stone Scalloway Public Hall, apparently built with an Andrew Carnegie grant. Besides being topped by a large clock, internally it also features a very old stage curtain which depicts a panoramic view of the township believed to be from the mid 19th century.

Our attention was drawn to their plight when the April 2016 AGM lapsed for want of a quorum. An Extraordinary General Meeting convened on 12 May 2016 was successful and resulted in the election of: **Peter Mouat**, Chair; **Ali Laver**, Vice Chair; **Elizabeth Mouat**, Treasurer; and **Linda Hughson**, Secretary.

The Hall's past uses have included courses of the North Atlantic Fisheries College of the University of the Highlands and Islands. The last event according to their Facebook website was in July with a very well supported Coffee Morning which featured tables of bric-a-brac, as well as secondhand books and toys. It was a success and we wish the Hall folk of Scalloway well in their future endeavours.

### **WALES**

### RHOSLLANNERCHRUGOG MINERS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1926)



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Rhosllannerchrugog, known locally as 'Rhos', which taken from the Welsh means 'Moor of the Heathery Glades'. Until 1844 the area was known as Morton Above (Moor town, above Offa's Dyke). Located in the Clwyd region of North Wales, the town today has a population of around 10,000, about half of which speak the Welsh tongue. Sport, band music and choral singing are notable recreations. Miss World 1961, Rosemarie Frankland, lived in Rhos and is buried in the local cemetery.

It was developed as a coal mining community in the 18th century. The last of the large mines, The Halford, closed in 1968.

The visiting Baptist preacher the **Rev. RB Jones** brought the Welsh Religious Revival to Rhos in November 1904. His 'mission' is remembered in the bardic line 'Beibl a Rhaw i Bobl y Rhos' a Bible and a Spade for the People of Rhos.

The impact of mining is left in the **Miner's Institute** built from a £20,000 grant from the Miner's Welfare Association and was officially opened on 25 September 1926 just after the General Miners' Strike. The miners then paid 20 pence each week for the maintenance and running of the building.

Known affectionately as 'The Stiwt', it has long been the cultural centre of the community and was pivotal to Rhos's hosting of the National Eisteddfods of 1945 and 1961. At the latter, the Celtic League was formed and poet **Harri Webb** remembered the night in his poem 'The Cross Foxes', 'In Rhosllannerchrugog we drank the pub dry'.

The Stiwt was closed in 1977 and Council purchased the building in 1978. In 1985 it resolved to demolish it, but a strong community backlash eventually saw it reprieved. In 1990 the **Stiwt Arts Trust Ltd** was established to manage the building. Fundraising took place and grants from the **Heritage Lottery Fund** and the **Arts Council of Wales** in 1996 saw it restored.

Local stained glass worker **Emyr Prys Jones** was commissioned in 1997 to create a stained glass window to depict the mining heritage of Rhos and the Stiwt and the result is a stunning montage.

The Stiwt was finally reopened in September 1999 as a 490 seat community theatre and it has hosted a range of film, theatrical, choral and other events since. In addition it has hosted the annual Wrexham young people's music festival since 2006.

This year sees the Stiwt celebrating ninety years in the community and a series of events have and are being held. 'Penblwydd Hapus (Happy Birthday) to the Stiwt of Rhos!'

www.stiwt.com

#### **UNITED STATES**

### MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART (Est. 1826)

Baltimore, established in 1729, is the second largest seaport on the Mid-Atlantic coast. An early centre of industry, now sees the city's two largest employers as Johns Hopkins Hospital and Johns Hopkins University. Some 65,000 of Baltimore's properties, or one in three, are on the National Register of Historic Buildings. Today the population of the Baltimore region is around 2.7 million.

The **Maryland Institute College of Art**, the oldest continuous degree granting College of Art in the USA celebrates 190 years since its establishment this year.

It commenced as the Maryland Institute for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts, with lawyer and inventor John HB Latrobe as its head. It was granted a charter on 10 January 1826 'to encourage and promote the Manufactures and the Mechanic and Useful

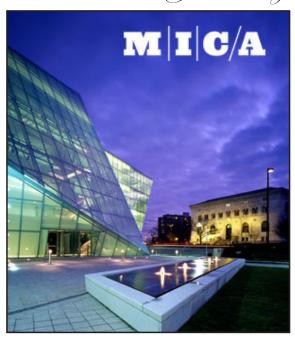


Photo: www.artandeducation.net

Arts, by the establishment of popular lectures... a library and cabinets of models and minerals; by offering premiums for excellence in these branches of National Industry deemed worthy of encouragement; by examining new inventions... and by such other means as experience may suggest.'

The Institute opened in the Baltimore Athenaeum the south-west corner of Paul and Lexington Streets, which had a lecture hall, reading rooms, and instructional spaces.

Annual membership of \$3 admitted 'the bearer and one lady' to the lectures, library and exhibitions. The first lectures focused on: architecture; the arts; chemistry; history; mineralogy; and music. A School of Drawing was set up and fine arts classes were open to all, including women.

In 1879 it firmly set its present course under the new name Maryland Schools of Art and Design and transformed its Center Hall into classrooms with a new mission 'diffusing a knowledge of art... fostering original talent... laying a foundation for a genuine school of high art in Baltimore', all modelled on the best facilities established elsewhere. Chemistry and music were phased out.

Renamed **Maryland Institute School of Fine and Practical Arts** in 1926, and was styled **Maryland Institute, College of Art** in 1959. The comma was eliminated from the title in 2000.

Following the destruction of Center Hall by fire in 1904. A site at Bolton Hill was donated by **Michael Jenkins**. **Andrew Carnegie** and the

State of Maryland provided the funds to build a new campus. Since then further campus teaching and residential sites have been created, mostly in reconfiguring earlier buildings, including the former Mount Railway Station and Women's Hospital.

It has been a remarkable story of community engagement, staff and alumni involvement and philanthropy.

Visionary staff have adapted courses and programs to fit new technologies, circumstances and community needs, such as female classes, night or Saturday school. MICA took the lead with running: lithography, wood engraving and printmaking (1850s), photography (1850s), teacher training (1880s), fashion and jewellery (1909), camouflage designs and accelerated war manufacturing training (1916), occupational therapy courses for disabled soldiers (1917), aviation (1928), fashion parades (1935), and digital design courses first utilising the Apple IIe in 1983, and graphic design for public health campaigns (2001).

The consistent use of exhibitions whether they have been in the Center Market Building or the current Pinkard Gallery, or the recent Maryland Art Space have engaged the community. Exhibitions have been mounted utilising local collectors works or drawn from overseas artists. Abstract art and Civil Rights have also featured.

Similarly lectures have, almost since startup, involved a large variety of presenters from around the US and more recently from overseas. In more recent times travelling scholarships have enabled students to travel and study overseas and MICA has a base in Brittany, France where its artist and writers can stay.

Students have played a lead role in enriching the Institute and the community by returning as staff or being involved in fundraising. Their annual Fete of Lights Ball started in 1927 and more recently the Loose Caboose Ball in the Station Campus have raised sizeable sums. The Alumni Association set up in 1895, now comprises some 60,000 members, who contribute to capital works and student programs by way of scholarship or mentoring.

Two alumni, **Ethel Kessler** and **Whitney Sherman** designed the Breast Cancer Research stamp for US Post, its first such fundraiser. By recent count some US\$58 million has been raised. The one ton peanut butter sandwich, created in 1971, made another record, in the *Guinness Book*.

Philanthropy has been highlighted throughout MICA's long history. **George Peabody** started

giving student prizes in 1858 and his trust continued with these until 1960. Peabody and others such as **Johns Hopkins**, **John W Garrett**, **Enoch Pratt**, **AS Abell**, and **William** and **Henry Walters** contributed when the Institute faced difficult times.

The very significant **George A Lucas** art collection which it was gifted in 1910, was transferred on permanent loan to the **Baltimore Museum of Art** on 1933. In 1996 ownership was transferred to the Baltimore Museum of Art and **Walters Art Museum** and the sum received was placed in the endowment fund.

Civil rights has been on Baltimore's agenda since 1811 when it was legislated that slaves were not to be sold outside the State. MICA was accepting black students in the 1890s, but the Plessy v Ferguson ruling of 'separate but equal' specified segregation. This was reversed with the ruling of Brown v Board of Education and MICA immediately complied. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jnr in 1968 saw the MICA campus closed during the riots. Since then MICA has honoured the life and legacy of the late Dr King with its annual Unity Week celebration.

Visionary principals have headed up the Institute: Hans Schuler 1926-51; Margaret FS Grace 1951-61; Eugene W 'Bud' Leake 1961-77; and Fred Lazarus IV 1978-2014. Fred Lazarus drove the Institute forward in many ways, doubling the endowment not being the least, and engaging the community in all aspects of art. The seven year Capital Raising cycles under his watch have amassed well over US\$100 million.

Fred Lazarus had an able lieutenant the **Rev. Dr Richard B Kalter** from 1979, as Philosopher in Residence. Ex-Yale, The Rev. Dr Kalter, a poet, painter, theologian and teacher, brought ideas and the community creatively together at MICA until his death in 2004.

The present incumbent as MICA President, Samuel Hoi, is a graduate of the Colombia Law School, and is an experienced arts college administrator. Taking up office in 2014 Dr Hoi, is MICA's eighteenth leader, and lives within walking distance of his office and is very much part of the Baltimore community. His words 'We are in it together. We are together, not fighting for a footprint in the city.' These sentiments are most appropriate for an Institute, a national centre of sustained excellence, that has played a significant role in the social, economic and cultural advancement of Baltimore for one hundred and ninety years.

See more: www.mica.edu

### Case Study - JAMES J HILL REFERENCE LIBRARY, ST PAUL, MINNESOTA USA

This privately funded not-for-profit JJ Hill Centre Library, was endowed to the people of St Paul by the heirs of **James Jerome Hill**. It has stood the test of time and change to reposition itself to become a national icon of Small Business and entrepreneurial endeavour.

The source of funds came from the estate of James Jerome Hill, who was born in Eramosa, near Guelph

in Ontario, Canada in 1838 of Scotch-Irish Protestant ancestry. A childhood accident with a bow and arrow caused the loss of sight in one eye. He was forced to leave the Rookwood Quaker School in 1852 after the death of his father, with proficiency in English and mathematics and its various applications.

On the advice of a visitor to 'move south', he moved temporarily to Kentucky where he trained as a bookkeeper. This was followed by a permanent move to St Paul where he became bookkeeper for a steamboat company which operated on Mississippi River. Next came a position handling freight for wholesale grocers. Shortly after he was in business with partners in the **Red River Transportation Company**, which moved into the supply of coal. By way of merger in 1879, a monopoly position was gained in the local supply of coal.

Using his motto 'work, hard work, intelligent work, and then more work' he started buying bankrupt businesses, restarting and selling them for profit and along the way he got on to boards of several banks. In 1879 his syndicate bought the bankrupt **St Paul and Pacific Railroad**. It started to generate profits which fuelled a



massive expansion of a track network and establish lucrative permanent farm settlements along the way, hence he became known as 'The Empire Builder'.

His most ambitious raiload line, the St Paul to Seattle, a distance of 1700 miles through the Rocky Mountains, was completed in 1893 in spite of doomsayers. Hill countered these with 'Give me Swedes, snuff and

whiskey, and I'll build a railway through hell.' Hill's Folly soon became Hill's Fortune. Seattle became one of Hill's Asian supply ports and he opened up markets in China and Japan for American commodities.

Hill later teamed up with **John Pierpont Morgan** on further railroad amalgamation and one of their final acts together was to raise a USD\$500,000,000 Anglo-French loan in 1915 to prosecute World War I.

He authored a number of pamphlets and a book *Highways of Progress* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1910), the Introduction of which begins 'Nations, like men, are travelers. Each one of them moves, through history, toward what we call progress and a new life or toward decay and death.'

James Jerome Hill died at his on 29 May 1916 at 'Hill House' his Summit Hill mansion in St Paul and was survived by his Catholic wife, Mary Theresa Mehegan whom he had married in 1867. They had ten children. He left an estate valued at USD\$53 million.

Hill had long bemoaned the need of a reference library in St Paul. In 1911 he hired New York architect **Electus Darwin Litchfield** 



## Case Study CONT ...



to draft plans similar in design to New York's JP Morgan Library, and Litchfield promised 'to do my durndest'.

Work on the library began in 1913, but Hill's death in 1916 delayed construction. Eventually a non-profit corporation, comprised of family members, restarted the building and it was opened on 20 December 1921, a month after his wife's death. Hill intended that the library would contain only the latest and most authoritative reference works. However he specifically excluded medicine, law, genealogy and popular fiction, but every other subject – history, science, economics, art, music, geography was to be included.

It was his hope that the library would be able to provide answers to questions 'from the origins of art to the electric current, from the philosophies of the sages to soap'. In 1929 it was noted that 'merchants call for the addresses of firms all over the world. The Library's trade catalogues contain the names of importers from all over the world. The Harvard Business [Review] and the Poor Financial Services are used frequently by investors.'

In 1976 the Board of Directors resolved to specialise in business reference services, thus pursuing Hill's earlier aim. In the 1980s and 1990s computers enabled the accumulation and dissemination of current detailed business and economic information. This immediacy would have pleased Hill.

The Hill Center for Ethical Business Leadership was established to assist in the Library's mission to help businesses prosper through a strategic commitment to ethics and social responsibility. The change of name in 2013 to the James J Hill Center reflects the

wider commitment to business and the varied use of its spaces and its motto 'Our Space. Your Success. Research. Meet. Grow.'

The **Hill Club** has been formed in recent times to bring the widely diverse community together to network and use the buildings spaces, for meetings or socialising. An aggressive

marketing campaign saw seventy weddings being held in its Great Reading Room in 2015.

Every Wednesday the 1 Million Cups St Paul Project sees two early stage startup entrepreneurs make a six minute pitch to an audience of mentors, advisers, entrepreneurs or the general public and subject themselves to a twenty minute question time. The free event is followed by ample complimentary coffee. On the last Wednesday of each month a Business Networking takes place between 8am-9am when coffee and pastries are served. This is again a free event. The US Small Business Administration also runs sessions in the Hill Center.

The **Funders School**, with website videos, **Angel Investors** and the Center's **Venture Capital Panel** provide a range of services and advice for business start-ups.

However it is the impressive core business of the 200,000 item library and free public access to a large range of databases, research tools and skilled librarians that makes the Hill Center one of America's leading business resource centres. The **HillSearch** free research service is used by business worldwide.

'The highest conception of a nation is that of a

trustee for posterity. The savage is content with wresting from nature the simple necessities of life. But the modern idea of duty is conservation of the old and modeling of the new to the end that posterity may have a fairer dwelling place and thus transmit the onward impulse.'

www.jjhill.org.

Clockwise from left: Dinner reception in the Library Hall (Photo: www.jjhill.org); Exterior shot of the building (Photo: Paul Vincent via www.jjhill.org); JJ Hill Centre logo; balcony and mezzanine levels of the Library (Photo: www.jjhill.org).



# Where They Stood THE HEART HALL (EST. 1893)

The Heart takes its name from the 30,000 acre Gippsland station of **John Foster** who held it from 1843-58. **CJ Tyers** referred to the area as 'the heart of Gippsland'. The remnant station was later acquired for Closer Settlement and subdivided and the district developed a specialty in dairying.

The move to erect a Hall at The Heart appears to have started from a meeting held at 'The Cheese [The Heart and Clydebank Cheese Factory] factory in the mid-1880s. Some time later this was followed by a meeting held at The Heart State School on 14 October 1889. That meeting appointed a delegation comprising Messrs J Collins, Kelly, Matthew Lawless and White which was sent to Avon Council to seek financial support and as result £20 was made available for such a purpose.

However it was not until late 1893 that a meeting resolved to erect a hall. **Eugene Duturbure** was elected Chair and **John R Kelly,** Hon. Secretary. **John White** donated a site, which adjoined that of the Church of England.

The Chair drew up plans which were accepted by the Board of Health. **SE Wynne** submitted the successful tender and **Mr Kinder** and his two sons from Morwell constructed the 60ft x 35ft building, with 15ft high walls. The structure, erected on 2ft 6in blocks, comprised a hall, stage 3ft high, 18ft wide x 14ft deep and two dressing rooms of 8ft x 13ft. The exterior was clad with softwood weatherboards, and a corrugated iron roof. The interior floor was 4in x 1½in kauri pine boards. Insufficient funds meant the building was unlined.

In spite of torrential rain, it was officially opened on 19 July 1894 at 7.30pm by **Albert Harris** MP. This was followed by a concert which included an hilarious comedy sketch 'The Milkmen's Revenge', a supper presided over by **John Ingleton** 'and a staff of waiters', then a ball for which **D Sayer** and band played and which concluded at 5.30am.

In 1912 Tennis Courts were erected on donated land adjoining the Hall. Their Hall use and that of the Church continued for many years.

The Hall was used extensively for World War I sendoffs, fundraising and welcome homes. Alas former school student **David Thomas** did

not make it home, for he paid the Supreme Sacrifice.

In the 1930s, Cobains CWA, established in 1931, met in the Hall.

Hall Secretary William Hicks was faced with a dilemma in 1938, when the regulatory and required upgrade to the Hall could not be immediately undertaken. Hicks advertised a public meeting for 25 July 'to discuss important business in connection with the hall'. A later canvass of the district residents soon provided the required money.

An advertised public meeting to appoint trustees in 1951 noted 'Those who are interested in the district should be in attendance as there is little interest being displayed in the building to date outside the few stalwarts.'

In 1959 the Department wrote to Hall Secretary MW (Matthew William Robert) Lawless about non-payment of the annual fee and he stated the Hall had little use and the Department then considered the Hall deregistered. Someone might know when it was demolished, or has photos.

Above: Concert flyer from 1895; below: location of The Heart (Source: Google Maps)





### 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 chosen title *Come into the Sunlight: The Story of My Edwardian Mother* by Nerina Shute comes from the now defunct **Rainbow Mechanics' Institute**.

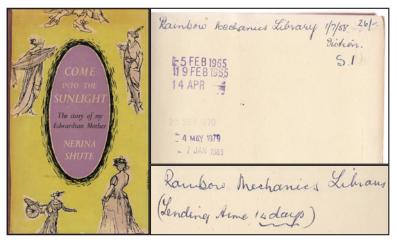
Elizabeth Nerina Shute (1908-2004), was the daughter of Amy Bertha Ernestine 'Rennie' Pepper-Stavely (1878-1958) who came from well to do aristocratic family, and her second husband Cameron Dimsdale Shute. Being sedulous in sleeping with her lovers, her mother then went on to marry six of them. Her mother also authored the 'raunchy' Edwardian novel The Unconscious Bigamist.

The *Sunday Times* described English-born Nerina as 'the amazingly colourful, brilliant and bisexual film critic'. As a teenager she went to Hollywood with her mother and returned to England and became a noted film critic. After several marriages and as many affairs, she settled in Putney, with the last of her female lovers, and died there, aged 96.

This book was published in January 1958 by Jarrolds Publishers (London) Ltd., an imprint of the Hutchinson Group and printed by Anchor Press Tiptreee, Essex. There was also a second printing of the UK edition later in the year.

John Jarrold started in printing in 1815 and diversified into bookselling and later publishing and the firm exists today as a property developer and department store owner. Hutchinson, started with **Sir George Hutchinson** in 1887 and in addition to books, published a range of magazines. Hutchinson merged with Century Publishing in 1985 to become Century Hutchinson, which became part of the British Random House Group in 1989, which is part of Cornerstone Publishing. Anchor Press was established in 1900, and thanks to Hutchinson printing contracts, grew to be the largest printer in the UK, but alas is no more.

The book carries the bookseller label of 'Booksellers to a Continent' Robertson & Mullens Ltd, 107-113 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, successor in part to Mullen's Select Library and Melville, Mullen & Slade. It was seemingly purchased from them for twenty-six shillings and accessioned to the Rainbow Library on 1



July 1958, where it was allocated to the subject 'Fiction' with the locater 'S1'. (The book is in fact the 'steamy' biography of the author's mother and contains pictures from the family album.) All this information and 'Rainbow Mechanics' Library' has been handwritten on the front endpaper. Rubber stamps indicate it had been borrowed six times the first date being '5 Feb 1965 and the last '7 Jan 1983'. On the last page of the text is handwritten 'Rainbow Mechanics Library/ (Lending time 14 days)'.

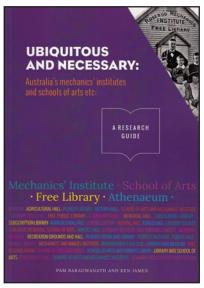
Bound in cloth, the book has been varnished on the exterior. The distinctive dustjacket, designed and illustrated by a then youthful **[Brian] Wildsmith** (1930-), was cut up. The cover being pasted down on the exterior of the front cover. The blurb has been assembled and pasted down on the verso of the cover, and the rear of the jacket cover is pasted on the free endpaper at the rear of the book. The spine was goldblocked, with title being over a block foil panel.

The Rainbow Mechanics' Institute & Free Library was established in 1910 and its Hall was built in 1912. The Institute library was shifted to the Rainbow Civic Centre (formerly the Mecca Theatre) in 1969. The Institute was then turned into a pre-school centre, until a purposebuilt one was erected before 1978, after which the Institute building was demolished. The Institute's 'library' collection appears to have been taken over, and a remnant today forms part of the Rainbow Lending Library which is run by volunteers in rented premises.

# Book Reviews

**Ubiquitous and Necessary: Australia's Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts, etc.- A Research Guide -** Pam Baragwanath and Ken James. Ringwood North/ Camberwell: Authors, 2016. Paperback. 696 pages, numerous illustrations, tables, bibliography. 210x295mm. 9780994470164.

In 2001 NSW historian **Dr Barrie Brennan** wrote on the occasion of the publication of Pam Baragwanath's *If the Walls Could Speak* 'The reading of the Victorian story is likely to reignite local, regional, state, national and even international interest in the Mechanics' Institutes'. Since then there has been a massive probe into the Victorian Mechanics' Institute Movement and a valuable start has been made in NSW. However there is still much to be recorded, based on the huge body of resource material assembled in this book for Victoria, and similarly for each Australian State and even the Northern Territory.



It is clear that Mechanics' Institutes and their ilk played, nay many still play, a major and pivotal part in the cultural and intellectual development of Australia. The fact that much of SO this extensive network community infrastructure,

put in place by community fundraising, still remains, to give us a sense of belonging and identity is remarkable.

However as each Institute was a separate entity, and there are so many themes working within and about Institutes and their buildings, it has been a very difficult subject to approach in an academic curriculum.

This book demonstrates and teases out that wide diversity, whether it be geographic, fundraising, architecture, library, museum, film, music, public debate, or even the history of lighting in halls, and so will encourage hopefully more than a few academic theses. The community at large, and particularly regional Australia owes Pam Baragwanath and Ken James a huge debt in assembling this *Ubiquitous and [indeed] Necessary* massive evidential resource, alas utilising their own resources.

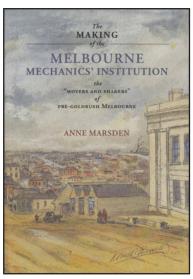
This Research Guide deserves a place in every major public and academic research library as part of its core reference collection of Australiana. Mechanics' Institutes were and still are a vital part of Australia's story, and can no longer be largely ignored.

Available from: Ken James, 18 Lofty Avenue, Camberwell, V 3124. \$65.00 posted.

The Making of the Melbourne Mechanics'; Institution: The 'Movers and Shakers' of Pre-Goldrush Melbourne – Anne Marsden. Melbourne: Melbourne Athenaeum/ State Library of Victoria, 2016. Paperback. 187 pages, illustrations, portraits, bibliography, index. 180x255mm. 9780646949413.

In 2013-14 Melbourne Athenaeum Archive volunteer Anne Marsden undertook a **State Library of Victoria Creative Fellowship**. This book is the result of her research in our Great Library of the World. The author has unearthed much valuable information about The Ath and the Office-Bearers and the fifty people who formed the original Committee in 1839. She has bravely advanced suggestions for elusive names to engage and encourage further research, which deserves great commendation.

The investigation of Tasmanian and/or New South Wales influences centres around the newspapers of **John Pascoe Fawkner** from



Tasmania and George Arden from New South Wales. The move for the Separation of the Port Phillip District (Victoria) from **New South Wales** came early and was relentlessly and successfully prosecuted over a decade Institute

# Book Reviews

membership to be achieved in 1851, before the goldrush. This may have been initially fuelled by the making available of land grant to the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, but Melbourne's request was declined.

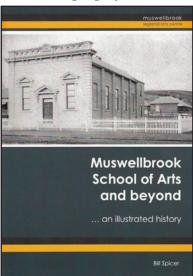
This book goes much beyond The Ath connection, for as the subtitle states it covers the 'Movers and Shakers' of pre-goldrush Melbourne from a time when Melbourne was but four years old. The Ath and its membership are inseparable with the formation of the majority of community organisations and its institutions in the 1840s and 1850s.

It is recommended for all interested in the pregold history of Melbourne and Victoria an area in which there is a great paucity of information about the actual 'movers and shakers'. This is a book most worthy of Victoria's oldest continuous cultural institution, and it deserves to be in every Local History Library in Victoria and elsewhere as a vital tool in the pre-goldrush kit. All those involved in its production are to be heartily commended.

Available from: The Rural Store, 29 Lisbeth Avenue, Donvale, V 3111. Tel (03) 9873 7202. \$30.00 posted or from good bookshops.

Muswellbrook School of Arts and Beyond... An Illustrated History – WM 'Bill' Spicer. Muswellbrook: Muswellbrook Shire Council, 2013. Paperback. 79 pages, illustrations, with some in colour, facsimiles, plans, portraits. 210x300mm. 9780959678154.

Local historian Bill Spicer takes us through the history of the Muswellbrook School of Arts and its enduring legacy which includes its landmark



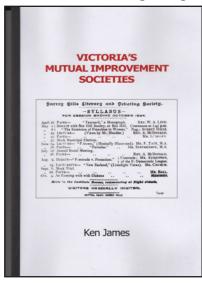
building which today largely hosts the Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre. This space nurtures a thriving Upper Hunter River regional arts community. The Institute was established in 1867 as the Musclebrook

[sic] School of Arts. The 60ft x 30ft building was designed by **John Wiltshire Pender** and the foundations stone was laid on 7 March 1871 by **Mrs Amelia Una White** and opened later in that year at a cost of some £1300. It was extended and again reopened on 28 August 1913. The building served as the community library until 2000 when it was reconfigured and integrated into the 1976 gallery annexe. Indeed if those walls could only speak, but the author has done much to make that happen by way of text and a valuable collection of contemporary photographs and memorabilia. This is a worthy addition to the libraries of those interested in the MI or SofA movement.

Available from: Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, Cnr Bridge and William Streets, Muswellbrook, NSW 2333. \$35.00 Posted. Tel: (02) 6549 3800.

*Victoria's Mutual Improvement Societies* – Ken James. Camberwell: Ken James, 2016. Paperack. 169 pages, illustrations, bibliography, locality index. 210x300mm. 9780994470157.

Prodigious author Ken James, fresh from his collaboration with Pam Baragwanath in producing *These Walls Speak Volumes: A History of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria* has explored a heretofore little known aspect of Victoria's social and cultural history, the Mutual Improvement Society, in a plethora of names. At first count we are told there was over four hundred Mutual Improvement Societies, starting with Geelong in 1850. A number had their own libraries, including: Portarlington. A few had their own buildings, which included: Ascot, Bostock, Brown Hill, Bullarook, Bung Bong, Cardigan, Lovely



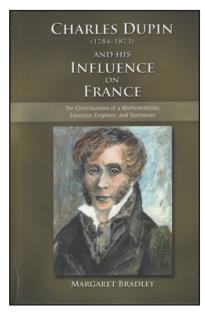
Banks, St James, Tennyson, and there may be others. They were established by a range people, but with strong presence of clergy school and teachers, which itinerated around the State.

## Book Reviews

bringing a range of new ideas to their present communities. The author interrogates their fare: lectures, essays, debates, readings, mock trials or elections, dances, visits, fundraising and the address of contemporary issues. The final chapter touches on yet two further allied groups the Australian Natives' Association, formed in Victoria in 1871, and the Australasian Women's **Association** formed in 1900, again in Victoria. Jim Menadue started the Natives' roll call in A Centenary History of the Australian Natives' Association in 1971. Pam Baragwanath followed with her Mechanics' mission more than a decade later to finally document almost one thousand Institutes in Victoria, with Ken last year. Victoria has led the way by example by organisation and research, and Ken continues the latter in this landmark work on the Mutual Improvement Society and their ilk. Indexed by place name, this book will a valuable reference work in any local history collection.

Available from: Ken James, 18 Lofty Avenue, Camberwell, V 3124. \$45.00 posted.

**Charles Dupin** (1784-1873) and his Influence in France: The Contributions of a Mathematician, Educator, Engineer, and Statesman - Margaret Bradley. Amherst: Cambria Press, 2012. Hardback. xx, 368 pages, chronology, bibliography, index. 155x235mm. 9781604977516. One of the Papers given at Mechanics' Worldwide 2004 gave cursory coverage to some of the people of the Mechanics' Movement around the world. It was noted at the time that there was no comprehensive biography of Dupin, a true polymath who made contributions in many spheres of French life. In 2006 a colloquium was assembled to deal with the various aspects of Dupin's life and career, with a key participant being Fernand Perrin who had produced his doctoral thesis on Dupin in 1983. Margaret Bradley was also at that Conference and it was resolved that they write the biography together, but Perrin died and his copious notes were passed over to her. The result is this first book, which charts the many



faceted career of a remarkable public servant, through tumultuous time in French history. Dupin's first study tour of England was in 1816 and on his second visit in 1817 met Dr **Andrew** Ure. who was involved with adult education at Glasgow's Andersonian

Institution and that started Dupin's ongoing work in adult education and vocational training. He was to later meet **George Birkbeck** and **Henry Brougham**, and the latter he was in touch with for the rest of his life through various groups in Paris and both shared a lifelong interest in mathematics and the promotion of Mechanics' Institutes. In 1819 Dupin joined the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers as chair of Géométrie et Mécanique Appliquées aux Arts and taught there until 1865. His last visit to England was as chair of the French delegation to the Great International Exhibition in 1851.

Nationally honoured, he was created a Grand Officer de la Légion d'Honneur in 1840 and was appointed a Senator by Napoleon III in 1852.

This is a worthy addition to the Mechanics' shelf, and a working knowledge of French will be a bonus to work though his selected correspondence and the bibliographies. Available from specialist bookshops at around \$180 or the publisher Cambria Press, 20 Northpointe Parkway, Suite 188, Amherst NY 14228, USA.

If you think of life as a good book. The further you get into it, the more it begins to make sense.

HAROLD KUSHNER (1935-)

To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is worth the human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO (106BC-43BC)

Roman philosopher, politician, lawyer, orator, political theorist, consul and constitutionalist.

# 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.



In the Queen's Birthday Honours we noted Warrandyte's Patricia McKenzie 'Pat' Anderson OAM. Since coming to Australia from the UK more than forty years ago, Pat was employed with the Shire from 1973-2000 in the conduct

of its Living and Learning Centres.

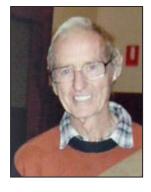
Music has been a vital and ongoing part of her life and the community has benefited. In Warrandyte it started with: the **Astra Choir;** then **Diamond Valley Singers;** and more recently with the handbell ringing in the group **Ringspiration**. In addition Pat has been Warrandyte's versatile oncall, play for all, resident pianist.

The Warrandyte Arts Association started in 1956, and used the Mechanics' Hall for its functions. Pat became the Association's Music Group Coordinator and Association Secretary in the 1970s. Under her watch the Warrandyte Mechanics' Institute and Arts Association was incorporated to take over the Institute building in 1986. To say the least the Hall was then very much down at heel. However since then with astute fundraising it has been progressively upgraded to become the valuable community and much used facility it is today, with its core activities of theatre, music, pottery, craft and art. Pat still remains as Association Secretary.

In addition to the above she has had long-standing involvement with the **Warrandyte Historical Society, Neighbourhood House, Warrandyte Community Centre** and the **SES.** Pat's other longstanding interest is gardening and more particularly the study of the plant genus of salvia for which she is widely known and contributes to and is involved with a number of related horticultural groups.

Congratulations Pat, your award is very much deserved and we have greatly valued your cooperation and assistance over the years!

(Photo: Warrandyte Diary, July 2016)



It is pleasing to see long and distinguished recognised within our Institutes and a case in point is **Koonwarra's Mechanics' Institute**. In November 2015 South Gippsland Shire's **Mayor Bob Newton** presented **Ken Caithness** with the Institute's highest honour

Life Membership and praised him for his fiftyeight years of service to the Hall Committee. In response, a surprised Ken thanked the Institute for the honour and noted comments by late fellow Committeeman **Fred Holt** 'If the local hall dies, then part of the district goes with it.' Hear! Hear! Congratulations Ken and the Koonwarra Institute for long and distinguished service to the community and long may it be so. (*Photo:* The Star, *December 2015*)



UK Association of I n d e p e n d e n t Libraries Chair and former British Museum, Director, Dr Robert Anderson made a fleeting visit to Federation University, Ballarat on Thursday 7 July, where he delivered a Paper 'The Changing

Nature of Museums: Booming, Busting or What?' Robert looked around the Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute during his fleeting visit. Check out Robert's on-line video 'Circa 1951: Presenting Science to the British Public' of a lecture delivered at Oregon State University in 2007. (Photo: Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute Facebook)



Former MIV
President and
Life Member and
State Library User
Organisations'
Council stalwart
Professor Wallace
Kirsop chaired their
Annual Seminar
on 16 July at the

# Our People

State Library. This year's event highlighted the role of the Library and its History of the Book, Manuscripts and Pictures teams in collecting, preserving and making available the physical objects that underpin Victoria's rich history. Also during Melbourne's **Rare Book Week** on 21 July, Wallace spoke on 'People from Prahran and District Important to the Melbourne Book Scene' at the **Prahran Mechanics' Institute.** (Photo: monash.edu.au)



MIV historian and author Pam Baragwanath recently gave a Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute Twilight Talk on 13 May and delivered the Prahran Mechanics'

Institute's Annual Bruce Turner Lecture on 28 May. Pam also featured in an article 'Bush dances to polling booths: Mechanics' Institutes' role in democracy' by Tony Wright on 18 June. It appeared in the Age, Sydney Morning Herald and Canberra Times and elsewhere, and the on-line version featured pics of: The Melbourne Athenaeum; Wingello Mechanics' Institute (NSW); Kyneton Mechanics' Institute; former Wunghnu Mechanics' Institute, now an hotel; and the former Prahran Mechanics' Institute building. (Photo: Kristina Holdaway)



heartily congratulate the Australian National Library's Director-General Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, who on 27 July 2016 was awarded the Sir Redmond **Barry** Award, the library sectors highest honour, by the

**Australian Library and Information Association**. The award, named for the founder of the State Library of Victoria, one of the great libraries of the world, and Anne-Marie's immediate past place of employment, from 2003-11. The citation stated Anne-Marie as being 'an outstanding leader in the library and archives

sector'. She has had a strong career path in records management with the Australian War Memorial, Australian Archives, and has been Director-General of the National Library since 2011, the central home and coordinator of the much-used TROVE which went online in 2009. (*Photo: nsla.org.au*)

We officially welcome two new Prahran Mechanics Institute staff to the wonderful world of the Mechanics' Institutes. We wish them both well in their challenging new roles.



Ellen Coates joins Prahran as Collections Librarian. although she has been a volunteer since 2013. Delighted to join the PMI staff professionally from Wednesday-Friday, Ellen states 'I see the PMI and its collection being as

fundamental importance and playing a crucial role in preserving the history of Victoria and Australia. As an historian and a librarian by training, I am very excited to have the opportunity to grow such a crucial collection and to make it accessible to members. I am really looking forward to getting to know everyone who uses such a wonderful resource.'



Marketing and Communications Officer is the role that **Chris Moysey** has taken up at Prahran working on Monday and Tuesday. She comes from a similar position at the Mornington Peninsula Library Service, with a solid

library background. Chris enthuses 'Along with its rich history, the PMI Library contains so many valuable resources that can be of benefit to many different people whether they be historians, students, those interested in Victorian history or finding out more about their own family background. I look forward to putting my skills and experience in promoting the PMI Library and forming some beneficial networks.'

# Community Page

### SPOT THE BAKER'S DOZEN REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE NO. 41

- 1. What was the 'South-Eastern Surprise' on the most recent MIV Bus Tour?
- 2. Where is the McLennan Travelling Library based?
- 3. Who will deliver the 2016 Wesson Lecture?
- 4. Who made the 'bestest' sandwiches?
- 5. What scheme celebrates 150 years in England this year?
- 6. Where is the project 'Enlighten Me: I have a Hall in my Heart' being developed?
- 7. What are *Ubiquitous and Necessary*?
- 8. What does the acronym ADFAS stand for?
- 9. Who wrote Future Shock?
- 10. In which city was Mechanics' Worldwide 2009 held?
- 11. Who wrote *Victoria's Mutual Improvement Societies*?
- 12. Who recently chalked up fifty-eight years of service to the Koonwarra Mechanics' Institute?
- 13. What is the Osmotheque?

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

1. Somerville Mechanics' Institute; 2. Robert Flavell; 3. Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute; 4. *Monsoon Quarter* – Marion Lowndes; 5. Melbourne Athenaeum; 6. Nottingham – Bromley House Library; 7. Ballaraat Mechanics' Institute/ Healesville Mechanics' Institute; 8. Williamstown Mechanics' Institute; 9. Steve Kellermeier; 10. Cavendish Memorial Hall; 11. Haymes Paint, Ballarat; 12. Brim; 13. Dutson Hall was sold.

#### **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.

#### HENRY'S FAMOUS MILK COFFEE

'Historically the Ruffy district has been renowned for the fabulous Ruffy Suppers provided in the Ruffy Hall. The crowning glory of the local dances was always groaning trestles carried out of the kitchen by 'the men' at the end of the evening. Trestles laden with the lightest of passionfruit sponges, powder puffs dripping with farm fresh cream and homemade raspberry jam, vanilla slices, lamingtons, pavs., delectable slices, rich chocolate logs, Swiss rolls, jelly slices, butterfly cakes, ginger fluff sponges, plus sandwiches and homemade sausage rolls.

Topping off this culinary extravaganza would be the traditional Ruffy supper beverage – the Noye's special milk coffee. Henry, a stalwart of the Ruffy Hall Committee, concocted this delicious brew with fresh cow's milk in a huge pressure cooker on the old Kooka gas stove. Sweet and strong it was served from the Hall's giant green enamel teapot in thick white porcelain teacups. Henry noted that his mother used to make the coffee in old 4 gallon honey tins over the open fire. The brew had to be carefully watched so that it didn't burn.

For old time's sake we are privileged to include the recipe for Henry's Special Brew (BYO enamel teapot) in this collection.'

#### **Ingredients**

A bucket of fresh milk (preferably straight from the cow)

2 bottles of Bushell's Coffee and Chicory Essence (or to taste)

#### Method

Mix essence with milk and stir with large wooden spoon until heated.

Henry Noye, 'Thoroughlea', Ruffy Recipe from: *RuffArtZ little black book of coffee and cake.* Available from: RuffArtZ, RMB 2317, Ruffy, V 3666. \$15, posted.

### VICTORIA'S CHIEF SECRETARY REPORTED

The number of [Mechanics'] Institutions sharing in the building grant in the financial year 1876-77, 88; do do, financial year 1886-87, 338; number of Institutions sharing in the book grant in the financial year 1876-77, 152; do do, financial year 1886-87, 338; total amount granted by the Government during the years 1877-78 to 1886-87 inclusive – building grant £59,490, book grant £41,000; total amount expended by mechanics' institutes and free libraries in erection of and repairs, etc. to buildings and purchase of sites up to September, 1887, £191,273.1s.4d; total amount locally collected by mechanics institutes and free libraries in aid of their building funds up to September, 1887, £95,967.1s.3d; total number of books in institutions on the 31st December, 1886, 265,737.

# Ideas & Opportunities

#### GETTING OUT THERE IN THOUGHT AND DEED

Geelong has certainly put its best foot forward with a new library in what has been described by its colourful mayor **Darryn Lyons** 'That dome is Geelong's huge brain overlooking Silicon Bay'. Whilst the branch of the Guggenheim Museum is yet materialise, the new \$45 million **Library and Heritage Centre**, opened on 21 November 2015 has certainly put Geelong on the world stage.

Designed by **ARM Architecture**, who recently achieved national recognition for its redevelopment of Melbourne's **Shrine of Remembrance**, it sits 'wedged between a Victorian bandstand adjoining Johnstone Park and the Mid-century, low lying Geelong Art Gallery' in a cultural hub as it were.

Each floor level of the 'big brain' is coded in a technicolour outburst and overlooks Corio Bay, the You Yangs or on a clear day the Melbourne skyline. The Kid's Space is modelled on the story of the *Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Complete with 'super hi-speed wifi' and games stations, and a 100 inch gaming screen, and a café, this is a meeting hub.

The third floor of the 'egg' as it has been dubbed locally, and themed in bright red, is 'dedicated to all things history' as described by **Patti Manolis**, the library's Chief Executive.

Mayor Lyons adds 'It resembles a brain and teenagers can enjoy 21st century technology into the future. It used to be about whispering. [But] have a look at that, it has to be heaven for a teenager. Kids have to be in a space they can interact in in the modern century.' That 'heaven' is backed up by 4.2km of shelf space housing books and information material.

And the reward, the **Geelong Library and Heritage Centre** has been shortlisted for the **Public Library of the Year** by the **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions**. Other contenders are the **Success Library** at Cockburn in Western Australia and libraries in Denmark and the USA.

And what do we gleen from the above. Our Halls must make a statement in their community. They must be welcoming and resourced as hub meeting places. Perhaps for a couple of hours on a weekend they could be a drop-in centre for a coffee and to change the books at the roadside library. Or even look something up on the 'Local History and Studies Bookshelf'. **To get there think outside the square!** 

#### **HOW'S YOUR HISTORY**

The Centenary of Anzac has got us thinking along the lines of what those Honour Boards on Hall walls really mean. Certainly they are a lot more than a list of surnames and initials. Arthur's Creek Mechanics' showed that with their recent research. Not all Halls can afford to produce a book but they can start a book by setting aside a page for each name and start to fill in the details. The Australian War Memorial website and the National Library's Trove can provide much information. Perhaps you could turn the Anzac project over to your local school as part of their Anzac Day and/or Remembrance Day Celebrations. They could participate in a local Roll Call at these events. Small teams could mount a poster on a particular soldier and these could be exhibited on Anzac Day.

But let us not stop there. Has your Hall had a history written? And an Honour Roll of the Office-Bearers been compiled? After all these are our pioneers, and the names of the land givers, donors and long-term supporters must be much more than mere initials. These are real people who have left a great community legacy. What of the Big Events: Laying the Foundation Stone; Ned Turner's wake; Tom and Francie Smith's wedding breakfast; Slim Dusty's concert; the electricity switch-on; the ball the night the local hotel burnt down; the night the film projector caught fire, etc. These are all part of hall histories.

Perhaps we can have a schools' competition for cash and/or books for schools to compile a: Hall History; Hall Person History; and Hall Event Story. We could also have a best Hall Drawing Competition with the entrants firstly exhibited in the local Hall, and the finalists exhibited at a suitable State venue.

### **GRANTS - PROTECTING VICTORIA'S HERITAGE**

The Victorian Government recently announced \$7 million over four years had been set aside to fund grants 'that will support the repair and conservation of 'at risk' heritage places and objects included in the Victoria Heritage Register. The Living Heritage Grants program will provide opportunities for community and not-for-profit organisations, committees of management and local councils to obtain funding for heritage works.'

Applications close on 7 November and application details and guidelines are available online at www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/heritage/about-heritage-in-victoria/living-heritage-program.

#### **AWARDS**

We note the publication of the finalists for the *Bartender* magazine's Australian Bar Awards and the prominence of the **Mechanics' Institute**Bar in Perth WA in the nominations. Bar of the Year – National; Bar of the Year – State Awards – WA; Best Bartenders' Bar; Bar Team of the Year; Cocktail Bar of the Year – State Awards – WA; Manager of the Year, Dimitri Rtshiladze; and Rookie of the Year, Mitch Gurrins. An impressive list and 'Good Luck and Best Wishes to all!'