



Useful Knowledge

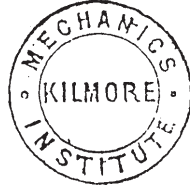
BUMPER EDITION

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
MECHANICS' INSTITUTES OF VICTORIA INC.

NO. 34 – AUTUMN/WINTER 2014

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

Reg No. A0038156G ABN 60 337 355 989 Price: Five Dollars \$5



WE'RE LISTENING KILMORE REGIONAL FORUM

Proudly supported by **Wallan & District Community Bank® Branch**  **Bendigo Bank**

'A smorgasbord of information!' was an apt description of the Kilmore Regional Halls Forum conducted on Saturday, 22 March.

Another observant comment was that 'It was good to see the active involvement of youth [on the day].' One of our speakers was effervescent **Michelle Ryan**, an active member of the Picola Mechanics' Institute Committee, a member of State Executive of the 'new' progressive Victorian Young Farmers Inc., and their 'fantastic' newsletter editor. Videoing the day was **Olivia King** from the Kilmore International School who gave up a day of paid work to volunteer. The other was our **Bronwyn Lowden** who ably ran the all-important data projector for the day.

The day was co-hosted with the **Kilmore Mechanics' Institute** who generously helped with the staging of the day. It was the first of what will be hoped series of Regional Forums to bring information on all aspects of Institute management and interest.

The Forum was conducted in the John Taylor Room, named for John Taylor one of Kilmore's visionaries, and a longtime Kilmore Mechanics' Institute member, office-bearer and trustee. It was the Kilmore Institute that had saved the former Kilmore Civic Centre from becoming a gaming venue back in 1995, and today instead it is the community library, open seven days a week. 'Uncle John', as he was affectionately

known, would have been well pleased with the outcome of 22 March.

Proceedings started with preliminary introductions by Kilmore's President **Wilma Hammond** and the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria's President **Robert Kingston**. Mitchell Shire's Deputy Mayor **Cr Rhonda Sanderson** officially opened the Forum.



The fifteen-strong speaker panel most certainly did not disappoint. The 'add ons' of: the Victorian State Orchestra and the impending ANZAC Centenary also rated well. In the first **Bob**

McIntosh gave us a fascinating look into the history of orchestra music in Victoria and the possibility of Institutes, in collaboration with other community organisations, bringing the **Victorian State Orchestra** to your rural community. There is also the potential to raise some money.

Then **Dr David Holloway** instanced three 'typical' Anzacs that were in his family's genealogy and how we might look at assembling the World War I district Roll Call descendants for 2015.

Over the next few issues we will be running summaries of the various Papers presented on the day and an overview of the Workshop.

Most welcome cash support for the day came from the **Wallan and District Community Bank Branch of the Bendigo Bank**.

Coming Events - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JUNE

- 1 **Home is Where the Hall is!** registrations open. Sign up your events now! homeiswherethehallis.com
- 14-15 Acheron Mechanics' Institute - Gala and Acheron History Project Book Launch. MIV Plaque Unveiling. Tel: (03) 5772 1442.
- 20-22 UK Association of Independent Libraries Meeting, Gladstone's Library, Hawarden, Wales.
- 27-29 **Robert Burns Scottish Festival**, Camperdown Mechanics' Institute, Derrinallum Mechanics' Institute and Scotts Creek Hall. Inquiries: (03) 5593 7100

AUGUST

- 1 *Useful Knowledge* No. 35 submission deadline.
- 9 MIV Meeting - Footscray Mechanics' Institute, 209 Nicholson Street, Footscray, 10am.
- 16 Taggerty Rocks, Taggerty Mechanics' Institute, Taggerty-Thornton Road, Taggerty. Mostly Rock n' Roll. 7pm-Midnight. Good Supper. Tickets \$30. Inquiries: (03) 5774 7201.
- 16-17 Hall Centenary and Book Launch, Dunrobin Public Hall. Contact: Judi Rees (03) 5581 1187
- 17 Wareek Hall Centenary. Tel: Wes Jolley (03) 5462 2225.

SEPTEMBER

- 12-14 'Banjo' Patterson Bush Poets Festival - NSW Bush Poetry Championship, Binnalong Mechanics' Institute. Contact: robysykespoet@gmail.com

OCTOBER

- 19-26 **History Week** - Start planning your event now!
- 26 **CJ Dennis Poetry Festival**, CJ Dennis Hall, Toolangi, with a Special Reading by Ted Egan, Patron of the CJ Dennis Society. Contact: Jan Williams (03) 5962 9282
- TBC American Membership Libraries Meeting - Athenaeum of Philadelphia

NOVEMBER

- 1-30 **Home is Where the Hall is** month - Make something happen in your Hall this month and start planning now.
- 18-19 11th Australian Library History Forum, Sydney.

FUNDING FOR A SECOND EDITION OF *IF THE WALLS COULD SPEAK: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTES OF VICTORIA* ANNOUNCED.

Historians **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James** have been awarded two grants to complete a second edition of *If the Walls Could Speak: A social history of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria*. They successfully applied for a \$15,000 grant from the **Public Record Office Victoria Local History Grants Program** while a further \$15,000 was awarded by the **RE Ross Trust** in April. The second edition will be relaunched as *The Walls Speak Volumes* and will include a further 400 carefully researched entries taking the total number of entries to approximately 850. This comprehensive publication, documenting the remarkable resilience of the Mechanic's Institute movement in Victoria, will be launched at a special event marking the 175th birthday of The Melbourne Athenaeum Incorporated in November 2015.

WANTED: Notice of your forthcoming events. Email: bronlowden@hotmail.com

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Letter From The President



Welcome to the latest edition of *Useful Knowledge*, the first issued under my watch. Congratulations to **Bronwyn Lowden**, our Editor, and all our regular and occasional contributors for another magnificent effort.

Also I would like to thank **Peter Pereyra**, our outgoing President, for his commitment and hard work during the past three years. On behalf of the Committee I wish him well in his studies and look forward to his continuing participation in the MIV's activities.

Building on the Past, Open to the Future

Much has changed in the fifteen years since The Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria was formed. A sense of inevitable institutional decline has given way to one of excitement as an uncertain but fascinating future beckons. The **Prahran Mechanics' Institute** and its unique **Victorian Local History Library** will soon be taking up residence in their new building, Ballarat Mechanics' Institute, following a major restoration, has resumed its place at the centre of Ballarat's literary and cultural life. Rural communities are rediscovering neglected halls, harnessing the power of the internet and bringing them back to life. Elsewhere throughout Victoria much loved Institutes continue to survive despite the odds.

Despite these successes there is still much to do. Long suffering trustees and put upon volunteers worry about the future of historic collections and buildings in their care. The need to master the Internet and modern technology can prove daunting. Just keeping the doors open raises the never ending issues of building maintenance, public liability, insurance, O, H & S, emergency response and fundraising.

So what role does the MIV, an organisation that offers membership to both Institutes and individuals, play in all of this?

As a free association of organisations descended from or with a strong association with Victoria's original Mechanics' Institutes, MIV neither directs nor interferes in the affairs of our Member Institutes. What we seek to provide for them is a forum for addressing common issues and looking towards the future.

MIV's Historical Plaques and Scanning projects have proven popular. Many Member Institutes now proudly display their provenance on an MIV Plaque and have their vulnerable paper records safely stored and available in digital form, especially important in fire prone rural communities. The recent Regional Forum held in conjunction with the Kilmore Mechanics' Institute, was a great success and highlights what can be achieved.

For our Individual Members MIV provides an avenue to engage in the broader Mechanics' Institute scene, meet and socialise with kindred spirits and play a role in forging our future. Individual Members often have an involvement with one or more of our Member Institutes although it is not mandatory.

If you are passionate about libraries, historic buildings, maintaining community halls or the spirit and events that dwell within, local history, theatre or arts and crafts, or would just like your own subscription to *Useful Knowledge* I look forward to welcoming you as an Individual Member of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria.

In the meantime I hope you enjoy (and pass on) this edition of *Useful Knowledge* along with the special feature highlighting the important role Mechanics' Institutes played in the early days of cinema in Australia. Jaffas anyone.

Robert Kingston

President.

Editorial

In my short time in the Editor's chair I have had the opportunity to really see Mechanics' Institutes in action. It has been a real 'mind blowing' experience as I have enjoyed sharing so many varied stories with you.

Robert Kingston on being passed the Presidential baton by Peter Pereyra remarked that he believed that MIV should have many more members and from my position I can but heartily agree.

Besides being the last remaining public building in many Victorian and interstate towns today, Institutes have played a pivotal historic community role and still do. In addition to being the pioneering libraries and meeting places they were also the early schools and Council offices, as well as church, Lodge, Red Cross, Country Women's Association, Primary Producers' Union, Bush Nursing and Young Farmers' Club meeting places. A number of Institutes were even taken over in 1919, as makeshift hospitals, for treatment of Spanish influenza patients.

Institutes cover so much. You could imagine copies of this magazine being in: libraries, both municipal and academic; Government agencies and Councils; Historical and Genealogical Societies; heritage consultants and architectural practices; and personal libraries of a whole range of niche collectors and historians.

The greater the reading public, will mean the greater the feedback to add to our universal knowledge of how Institutes operated and what they actually did. Put your recruiting cap on and solicit some new members for us. They will thank you.

I would like to also sincerely thank all the MIV Plaque recipients who completed the missing information we had about their Plaque. There is still some outstanding information we are missing from our records. Have a look at vicnet.net.au/~mivic/plaques to see if there is any information you know about those that we are missing. More information can be found on the Plaques page of this issue.

Bron Lowden

E-KNOWLEDGE - SEE IT ALL IN FULL COLOUR

If you would like to receive *Useful Knowledge* by email in addition to your regular hard copy, please send me an email at bronlowden@hotmail.com and I will add you to our mailing list.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members:

- Gary Moorfield
- Janet O'Hehir
- Jean Buist
- Merton History Group
- Peter Jones
- Seaview Mechanics' Institute
- W.J.W. (Bill) McAuley
- Wandong Public Hall

YOUR OWN LITTLE SPOT ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Many of our Institute Members already have their own website, council profile, Facebook page or other social media account for which people can contact them or find out information. We would also like to offer that service to our Institute Members, whether you were already on the 'tech savvy' route or not. MIV is collecting information about it's Institute Members to create a profile for each one on its website. We are seeking information about facilities, capabilities, hire charges, collections, a snippet of history and contact information so that each of our Institute Members can have their own little spot on the web for people to find them. Currently we are just listing our Institute Members, and hyperlinking to their own site (if they have one). We would like to be able to offer all our members an extra promotion source through MIV, so please complete the form found in this issue of *Useful Knowledge*, or contact the Editor if you would like one sent to you.

NEWSLETTER ROUND

Tick after reading and pass it on

- President
- Vice-President.....
- Treasurer.....
- Secretary.....
- Committee (*Insert your name*)
-
-
-
-

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE FOR 2014/2015. PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BY 30 JUNE.

KALLISTA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE CENTENARY



A procession led by the **Kalukus**, Kallista Ukele Group and the **VoKallista** choir came into the hall performing the last verse of *Waltzing Matilda*, an authentic and stirring Australian introduction. All seats were taken and it was standing room only with all space taken up and guests eagerly awaiting the special function. After having a look at the historic photo display by the **Kallista Historical Society** including a photo of the building in course of construction and the replica of a poster drawn for the Hall by **Tom Roberts** who built a house, Talisman, in Kallista in 1927. This is part of the **Aeneas Gunn** collection held at the Monbulk RSL then the speeches and reenactment began. Performers were not only dressed in costume but read out speeches appropriate to the early committee members. The reenactment was superbly devised, researched and written by **Yvonne DeLacy**.

John Benton - (Roger Gleghorn) "As President of the South Sassafras Progress Association I've been asked to welcome you all to this most important event in the life of our little settlement - the opening of our magnificent Mechanics' Hall".

Frank Roberts - (Jordan Scotney) "Den, that's the writer CJ Dennis, is looking forward to meeting my bush mates...he hopes to finish

"The song of a sentimental bloke' next year. My parents believe so much in the potential of this work that they're prepared to give him support".



Mr William Terry (John McQueen) "The objects of this Association shall be to promote the welfare of the district, but political matters shall be excluded".

Mrs Aeneas (Jeannie) Gunn (Viv Benton) "What an honour it is to be with you today, to share with you my thoughts on the great cultural value a Mechanics' Institute can bring to a little Australian settlement such as yours".

Mrs Roberta Roberts (Gwendolen DeLacy) "In 1913 we were very optimistic about our newly federated Australian society. Canberra was started, *Waltzing Matilda* was written and our Hall was built that year. People from all over the world were very interested in this new antipodean paradise developing at the end of the earth.

The wonderful VoKallista choir was followed by the unveiling of the KMI Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria plaque by **Gwendolen DeLacy** and **Viv Benton**. A presentation of a framed Certificate stating his Service to the Community was made to **John Lloyd**, President of the KMI for 47 years, nearly half the life of the Hall, who was given thunderous applause, not only for his inspiring leadership and the successful afternoon of centenary celebrations but also his exemplary years of service.

The presentation was made by **Sue Clisby**, representing Dandenong Ranges Music Council, Centenary Committee and Sunnyside Committee.

The afternoon tea of delicious cucumber sandwiches, scones and raspberry jam and raspberries was a nostalgic reminder that South Sassafras was always famous for its raspberries. All this was followed by personal reminiscences at the Hall.

The program was enjoyed to the maximum by all concerned under the atmospheric and splendid decor of eucalyptus leaf branches, just as it would have been 100 years before and with the same good intentions.

And to make the event even more memorable, a lapel Centenary Medal featuring the Kallista Mechanics' Institute 1913 - 2013 was handed around to the delight of those present.

Pam Baragwanath

Top: Residents gathered in the Institute for the Centenary Celebrations (Photo: Pam Baragwanath); Left: Kallista Mechanics Institute Centenary Medal 1913-2013 (Photo: Alvaro Munoz-Joy).

THE MENTONE LIBRARY WRITTEN UP

Our attention was drawn to an article in the press in 2013 about the **Mentone Public Subscription Library Inc.**, based at the rear of 36 Florence Street, Mentone. The following draft is but a start to unearth the story of early Mentone libraries.

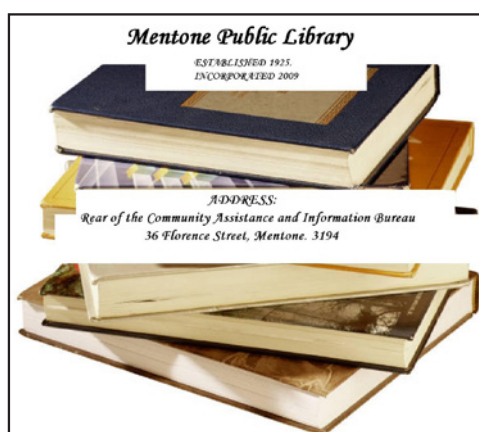
Mentone was named for the French Italian resort town of Menton on the French Riviera, and most of its streets carry the names of Italian cities. The Post Office opened in 1884. The township developed in the late 1880s, with it being popularised by series of paintings: Tom Roberts' 'Slumbering Sea, Mentone' in 1887, Charles Condor's painting 'A Holiday at Mentone' of 1888 and Frederick McCubbin's 'Ti Tree, Mentone'.

The first mention of the Mentone Athenaeum Hall is made in October 1887 in connection with a concert in aid of the Church of England Mentone Church building fund. In March 1888 the Church conducted 'A grand sale of gifts and cake fair in aid of the building fund' in the Athenaeum Hall. The Athenaeum Hall was also listed as a polling place in 1890.

A meeting was held in the Mentone Coffee Palace (later Kildreda College) on 3 October 1890 and it was 'resolved to revive the movement for the formation of a Public Library in Mentone' and a Committee of twelve was appointed. Favourable arrangements, with the Mentone Recreation Company enabled the Institute to occupy three rooms at the Skating Rink for five shillings per week, and the rooms were respectively fitted up as Library, Reading and Amusement rooms.

The rooms were opened on 1 December 1890 by the Chief Secretary George D Langridge, and John Keys MLA acted as chair. Shortly after Thomas Obbinson was appointed Librarian. 'The leading newspapers were placed on the tables and about 300 books were purchased for the Library. To enable it to do this a sum of £16 which had been collected by the old committee, was used, but as part of that sum was subscribed for a building fund, it will be necessary to replace it at some future time.'

Full support was not forthcoming and the books were transferred to Mrs Martha Lannan's shop during the winter and she issued them. A



successful fundraising concert in aid of the Institute was held in June.

The Mentone Athenaeum and Free Library held its 1891 AGM at the Mentone Coffee Palace and the Presbyterian Rev. Robert Morrison Fergus MA took the chair. It was noted the library then had four hundred books and the year finished with £3/11/- credit balance... The rest is silence.

In 1925 it was reported that 'For some years the assets of the previous library, which was closed owing to lack of support, have been held by trustees, and the sum in hand now amounts to £165.'

Early in 1925 the Mentone Progress Association explored the possibility of re-establishing the library 'with the result that the trustees, at a meeting held on March 16 decided to make the funds available in hand to a foundation committee of twelve members, who are now actively engaged in arrangements for opening the library next month'.

The Library opened in May 'in temporary premises at the rooms of the rifle range'. Donations of books were sought and were forthcoming, including one hundred volumes, from a single donor, meant it opened with about 400 books. It was noted 'A well known book reviewer has offered a large number of volumes of recent fiction at a very low price, and the committee has decided to accept the offer.' Foundation Committee Secretary Herbert Lawson Dickinson sought interest from potential subscribers and/or helpers.

At the Annual General Meeting held in November 1926 George Molony was elected President, HL Dickinson was Librarian and Secretary and one seat on the Committee was to be filled by a nominee from the Mordialloc-Mentone City Council.

The AGM of 1929 noted some 23,072 borrowings from the library, an increase of 3640 on the previous year. Membership had risen from 222 to 233. The 'extra' books loaned had generated a further £105.19s. During the year 750 new books had been added at a cost £164 and as at September 30 there were 2,988 volumes, compared to 2,611 volumes in the previous year.

MENTONE LIBRARY CONT...

The year resulted in a trading profit of £33. New office-bearers elected included 'book selectors' and 'book reviewers'.

At the monthly meeting in August 1930 it was noted that 1883 books had been issued in July to the 219 subscribers, more than fifty books had been purchased each month since January, and that the Committee held a credit balance of 'more than £100'.

In 1936 under the heading 'Library's Free Offer of Discarded Novels' we read 'The Mentone Public Library offers free distribution of a number of discarded novels in fair condition. For some years it has been the custom of the library to give discarded books to non-municipal libraries and to individual distributors in remote districts. The only stipulation made is that someone must accept responsibility for the custody and circulation of the books. The secretary of the library (Mr HL Dickinson) will receive applications for books.'

The Library reached its peak post-World War II, when it had hundreds of subscribers

who queued to return and change their books. Membership then began to decline but the Library still continued to operate with volunteers.

In the early 2000s a small group of Mentonians decided to revive the Library and held book related events. The Library was Incorporated in 2009 and since then membership has slowly climbed with their motto being 'Where print becomes personable'.

The current 4500 book stock comprises the solid genres of general and crime fiction and a heavy lean to biography. Some forty families belong and pay a \$10 annual membership, with a fee ranging from 10 cents-50 cents depending on the type of book borrowed. The regular author events organised by **Julia Reichstein** are well patronised and publicised.

The Library is staffed totally by volunteers and is open on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, 1-4 and on Friday and Saturday mornings 10-Midday.

(Photo: Mentone Public Library website)

KOONDROOK MEMORIAL HALL TO BE DEMOLISHED

The fate of the iconic Koondrook Memorial Hall has been hanging in the balance for a couple of years. However a recent meeting which resolved in to pass the site to Gannawarra Council has handpassed the dilemma. It is rumoured that the building will cost around \$1 million to restore.



The Memorial Hall was built in 1924-25 by the slipform method, with a reported one shovelful of cement to twenty shovelfuls of sand.

It was opened on 20 February 1925. Two plaques were erected on the front to World War I and World War II service

This Memorial Hall is the last of a successive line of Halls in Koondrook: Singleton's (1880s), Moyes' (1890s); and Federal (early 1900s). The Koondrook Mechanics' Institute (1904-28) was built on Crown Land adjacent to the State School. It was weatherboard with a corrugated iron roof and was constructed by Alfred Gaskin Adams at a cost of £274. Following the opening of the Memorial Hall in 1924, use declined and on 18 May 1928 the building and contents, including the library books, were sold by auction, a sale which realised £210.

personnel respectively.

Structurally, there has been no substantial fixing of the roof to upright walls to keep them apart, so the walls have leaned over the years. Its last remaining use is for karate lessons.

A History of the Hall was produced in the 1990s when it was extensively photographed.

It was scheduled for pulling down early in 2013, but has had reprieves. A meeting of the community was held in June 2014 to pass the building site to Council. Watch this space. *(Photo: witchwaeonthemove.blogspot.com.au)*

BALLAARAT'S BIG DAY - CELEBRATING A DREAM THAT CAME TRUE

Few who were assembled at an evening in 2000 at the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute could have imagined that thirteen years on 'the dream' would have come true. To celebrate the fulfilment of that dream and 'the getting of wisdom' a good gathering of widely disparate folk assembled in Sturt Street, Ballarat on 8 November, 2013.



A newly restored **Minerva**, spear in hand and now fully recovered from an earlier lightning strike, surely would have been proud, gazing down from the lofty parapet as the veteran car bearing her name and her image pulled up in front of the Institute. The splendidly restored 1926 Minerva car was carrying the **Hon. Simon Ramsay MLC** who had come to officiate at the Institute's re-opening.

Fittingly a new generation of Ballaratians, from the **Ballarat and Clarendon College** Jazz Band, struck up with *Pretty Woman* in fine tune in the Titanic Bandstand opposite the Institute's entrance. Then Ballarat Town Crier **Brian Whykes** sounded his bell and in booming voice proclaimed Ballarat's grand occasion and invited us to move inside the Institute to the Minerva Space. As we walked along the main entrance hall into the Institute we noticed the Minerva mosaic, a striking likeness to that of the badge on the front of the Minerva car, cleverly



incorporated into the tile floor surface.

It was then upstairs to the Minerva Space. You should have seen the amazement on the visitors' faces on entering this lavishly redecorated theatre. Some of us last saw it in a 'demolished' state before Master Plasterer **Theo Flapper** and Master Painters the **Hishon Brothers** worked their magic spell over the space.

Comfortably seated, the Master of Ceremonies and local WIN Television presenter **Bruce Roberts** introduced **Graham Gooding**, Ballarat Mechanics' Institute's ninety-first President, who welcomed all. Then centre stage the plush velvet curtains parted from centre to reveal a wide screen and a clever doco, complete with grainy film clips, rolled. Produced by **Erin McCuskey**, it depicted the thirteen year walk to victory to 'Continue the Magic'.

President Graham then took us through the parable of 'The Wordsmith and The Engineer' and introduced us first to The Wordsmith, **Dr Frank Hurley OAM**. Frank, who has thirty-one years of Institute membership, with seven terms variously as President and Secretary, detailed the staged process that had led to today.

It had been a team effort from the dream of framing the vision with architects **Wendy Jacobs**, **Alan Horton** and **Laurie Grant**, to charting the course and looking for solutions along the way assisted by **Peter Brien**, **John McQuilton** and **Dianna Barry**, with Heritage Victoria architects **Robert Green** and **Megan McDougall** providing advice and encouragement when needed.

The all-important funding sources were not forgotten. Beside the Federal and State Governments, there was the **Ian Potter (1902-94) Foundation**, for whom the Sir Ian Potter Heritage Library and Mezzanine is now named. Philanthropist and banker **Hugh Dean Thomas Williamson CBE (1901-85)** reminded his trustees 'It is my wish that projects in Ballarat receive some priority from the Foundation...'.
.



Hugh's direction was duly observed with a generous donation to the project and the Hugh Williamson Room on the Mezzanine is named for him. **The Rotary Club of Ballarat East** also saw this as a worthy project and donated some \$35,000 to the works schedule.

Following The Wordsmith came The Engineer, **Rex Bridges**, a former Institute President, Life Member and longtime Committee member, who with his wife **Wilma**, also a former President, have seen and endured much during the restoration. Rex recounted the third floor roof fall in and the structural problems to overcome that. These works finally led to the waterproofing of the building; the joining of the Institute and the Mining Exchange buildings was addressed; and finally the moving of people through the building by way of a lift.

The **Hon. Simon Ramsay**, representing the Minister for Regional Development, **Peter Ryan**, followed with his memories of the building and Victorian Governments' – both Labor and Liberal - support of the project. He then proceeded to unveil the plaque recognising the various financial donors to the restoration project.

President Graham Gooding, in resuming the microphone, outlined some of the features of the restored building and its various spaces and referred to current and future uses from art house films, to exhibitions, cabarets and lectures.

With official Proceedings concluded, a light luncheon was served in the Humffray Room where no doubt a beaming **John Basson Humffray** (1824-91) looked down approvingly over the proceedings, for the Institute was his dream.

Those who took the informative Building Tour with

volunteer Guide **Roger Burrows** were further enthralled with the minutiae of the building and its significant heritage collections which are still undergoing placement in their future long-term resting spaces. We learnt of Ballarat historian **Nathan Spielvogel** (1874-1956) and his involvement with the long-running Ballarat Chess Club. We also became acquainted with the massive collection of international serials, including early three-colour women's magazines. After all Minerva was the goddess of wisdom.



So ended another great chapter in the renaissance of the Mechanics' Institute Movement in Victoria and we can but say 'Well done to The Wordsmith and The Engineer and all who have travelled the journey with them!' It proves yet again that dreams do come true!

And looking forward, as has been observed, such a lady [Minerva] needs a lot of rouge for 'touch ups' [maintenance], so the Ballarat folk are putting a Foundation in place. This will mean that monies given will be recorded in perpetuity, and not just given as a one off to fix the building, but donations will be invested long-term and the interest gained will be used to maintain the building. If you are interested in making a contribution to the BMI Foundation contact the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute, 117-119



Sturt Street, Ballarat or email bmilibrary@ncable.net.au and they will mail you a brochure in due course. *Clockwise from left: Minerva mosaic found in the foyer; Ballarat and Clarendon College Jazz Band and Town Cryer, Brian Whykes in the rotunda across the road from the Institute; the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute; unveiling the major donors board; displays in the Humffray Room.*

MIV'S Historical Plaques Program

UNVEILINGS - BOTH NEW AND OLD UPDATES!

NO. 34 - NARRE WARREN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE - Unveiled 24 November 2013



Russell Owen, NWMI President, and Judith Graley, MLA, at the Unveiling of the Plaque.

Photo: Casey Connect website.

MIV Plaque No. 34 was unveiled during **Home is Where the Hall is** month in November 2013. It was unveiled by **Judith Graley, MLA**, State Member for Narre Warren South. The unveiling was held in conjunction with the dedication of a memorial garden to the late **Judith Allen**, who was on the Committee of Management of NWMI for over 30 years. This Plaque can be found in the foyer of the Institute, beside the front door.

NO. 36 - FOOTSCRAY MECHANICS' INSTITUTE - Unveiled 29 November 2013

The Footscray Mechanics' Institute Plaque was unveiled on 29 November 2013 to commemorate 100 years at 209 Nicholson Street. This Plaque can be found out the front of the Institute,

NO. 37 - KALLISTA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE Unveiled 20 December 2013



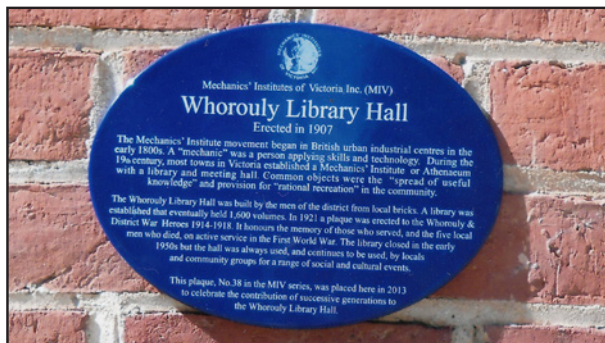
The Kallista Mechanics' Institute MIV Plaque.

Photo: Pam Baragwanath.

The Kallista Mechanics' Institute Plaque was unveiled at the Centenary Celebrations for the Kallista Mechanics' Institute. It was unveiled as part of a re-enactment by Gwendolen DeLacy

(portraying Mrs Roberta Roberts, mother of Frank Roberts, the first Kallista MI Secretary) and Viv Benton (portraying Mrs Aeneas (Jeannie) Gunn, author, and regular visitor to the Roberts' property, "Sunnyside"). The Plaque is mounted to a piece of Blackwood which came from the property where the South Sassafras Post Office was located.

NO. 38 - WHOROULY LIBRARY HALL



This Plaque was erected on the front of the Whorouly Library Hall building on 30 December 2013. The formal unveiling will take place in the coming months once renovations are completed.

NO. 40 - LARDNER MECHANICS' INSTITUTE Unveiled 27 April 2014

MIV Plaque No. 40 was unveiled by Cr Peter Kostas, local councillor for Baw Baw Shire. The Plaque is located on the north wall of the Hall, to the left of the front door.

NO. 42 - ACHERON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

This Plaque is due to be unveiled at the Centenary Celebrations in June. See the next issue of *Useful Knowledge* for the full story.

Filling in the blanks...

Some of the details for MIV's Plaques have passed us by, and a recent call for information missing from our archive has brought to light some details about some MIV's Plaques which were never published for our members to read about. Here is the information we have received so far:

NO. 6 - BERWICK MECHANICS' INSTITUTE & FREE LIBRARY - Unveiled 17 March 200.

This Plaque was unveiled by Jim Lowden, then-Secretary of MIV and Joyce Hayes, then-President of the Berwick Mechanics' Institute and Free Library. The plaque can be found on the front of the building, to the right of the front door.

**NO. 12 - DIGBY MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Unveiled 11 November 2005.**

Members of the the Digby Hall Committee gathered on Remembrance Day to commemorate the erection of the Plaque at Digby in recognition of the efforts of the community in restoring the Hall in 2005. It can be found on the Digby Mechanics' Institute sign.

**NO. 18 - OAKLEIGH MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Unveiled 27 September 2006.**

This Plaque was unveiled by then-Mayor of the City of Monash, Cr Joy Banerji, to celebrate the centenary of the current Mechanics' Institute building in Oakleigh. The first Oakleigh Mechanics' Institute was built in 1886, but this building burnt down in 1905. The new building was constructed from local bricks and opened in July 1906. This Plaque can be found on the front of the Oakleigh Mechanics' Institute building, 142-144 Drummond Street, Oakleigh.

**NO. 19 - NEWHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Erected 2007.**

As far as can be recalled, the Plaque issued to Newham Mechanics' Institute was not unveiled in any formal ceremony, but erected in the main hall to celebrate the Newham community in 2007.

**NO. 20 - NAGAMBIE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Erected October 2007.**

The Plaque at the Nagambie Mechanics' Institute can be found by the front door. It was erected without ceremony in October 2007.

**NO. 22 - MORTLAKE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Erected 2008.**



The Mortlake Mechanics' Institute MIV Plaque.

Photo: Craig Proctor.

Some people in Mortlake are still trying to track down the missing details for us. Stay tuned!

NO. 24 - LITTLE RIVER MECHANICS' INSTITUTE - Erected 1 August 2010.

This Plaque was erected without ceremony by the Institute Caretaker, Ivan Fairchild on 1 August 2010. This Plaque is found inside the Institute, above the front door of the main hall.

**NO. 26 - ELMORE ATHENAEUM
Erected 14 June 2012.**

This Plaque was erected without ceremony on 14 June 2012. The Elmore Athenaeum Committee liked the idea of the Plaque so much they ordered another super-sized one which displayed floor plans and a more detailed history. This one can be found outside the Memorial Hall (which backs the Athenaeum) in its own custom-make shelter.

**NO. 28 - LAEN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Unveiled 18 November 2012.**

This Plaque has been placed at the site of the former Laen Mechanics' Institute.

To see where all MIV's plaques can be found visit: vicnet.net.au/~mivc/plaques for the full list, where to find them at each site, who unveiled them, map, and links to more details and photos.

To order a plaque (They will cost \$195 each from the 1 January 2014, including delivery, and require your installation.) or for more information, contact: Judith Dwyer, Box 482, Berwick, V 3806 or jad134@hotmail.com.

CAN YOU HELP?

Some details of the unveiling and installation of MIV's Plaques have passed us by. If you have any information which is not included on our website, please email Bron Lowden (bronlowden@hotmail.com) and a Missing Information form will be sent to you highlighting the areas we are missing. We would like to have all the details for each Plaque for our own records and for any MIV Plaque hunters out there.

We are missing information about:

- No. 2 - Ballan Mechanics' Institute
- No. 4 - Taradale Mechanics' Institute
- No. 7 - Minyip Mechanics' Institute
- No. 8 - Frankston Mechanics' Institute
- No. 9 - Mt Eccles Mechanics' Institute
- No. 14 - Benalla Mechanics' Institute
- No. 15 - Jindivick Mechanics' Institute
- No. 16 - Emerald Mechanics' Institute
- No. 17 - Dean Mechanics' Institute
- No. 22 - Mortlake Mechanics' Institute
- No. 23 - Kinglake West Mechanics' Institute

Featured Institute

OLINDA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE



The village of Olinda nestles at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges which fringe Melbourne to the east. In 1907 the fledgling Olinda Mechanics' Institute received a £50 Government 'Beauty Spots Fund' grant and a site was gazetted in the same year and trustees appointed. However it was not until 13 April 1912 that a meeting elected a working Committee.

Institute Secretary Sarah Lyons then wrote to the Shire of Lillydale. She suggested the 30ft x 60ft building should include two ante rooms and it could be erected on the same terms as those halls recently built at Ringwood and Croydon, at a cost not to exceed £400. In August 1912 it was reported that 'Council will supply hall on the provision that no less than twelve guarantors sign the guarantee bond.' Subsequently the required guarantors vouched for the £600 loan to be paid back over the next thirty years.

The single storey weatherboard clad hall was designed by Melbourne architect Alfred Ernest

Henry Carelton and it comprised: a large hall of 50ft x 30ft, with a platform; a Tasmanian blue gum floor for dancing; and the building was timber lined. Two ante rooms of 15ft x 16ft each were constructed at the front to provide a library and the other a kitchen. A staircase led to the bioscope room, which was lined with galvanised iron.

The Hall was duly built and was officially opened on 20 December 1913 with a dinner for fifty people and utilised 'a high grade piano by Lipp & Sohn' which was purchased and later used for concerts, dances and other War-related and community fundraising.

Of the sixty-two servicemen and women who enlisted from the Olinda district for World War I only fifty returned to be welcomed home. These are listed on the Honour Board.

The building was extended in 1925 to include a new platform, stage curtain and dressing room to which Mr and Mrs Thomas Kennon of 'Kenloch', Olinda contributed. A commemorative tablet was placed in the Hall recognising this contribution.

In the 1920s the Olinda and District Horticultural Society started the annual Olinda Flower Show and Exhibition in the Hall. This event grew to attract large crowds and was being conducted over a five day period when it was stopped, due to World War II.

The Hall, with its high ceiling, promoted physical fitness during the 1930s, by way of a gymnasium, with a vaulting horse and Roman





rings to be used by the men on Tuesday nights and dumb-bells for the ladies on Thursday evenings. A public gymnastic exhibition was given at the end of each year. The climbing rope is still in situ in the Hall.

The district welcomed home eighty-eight service personnel of the ninety-four who had enlisted for World War II. One such Welcome Home Dinner was staged in the Hall on 9 March 1946. However the World War II Honour Board was not installed until 1995.

Over the years, dances had been held at the Olinda Mechanics' Institute from time to time but were particularly popular in the late 1940s through into the 1960s. People remember they were attended by all age groups from toddlers, who slept in their prams, to grandparents. Great preparation was made by the Ladies Committee of whatever group was running the dance that night. Flowers, ferns and gum tips decorated the Hall and the occasions were famous for their excellent suppers. It has been said that that much of the dances' popularity was the music provided by The Arcadians, a four piece band comprising saxophone, piano, drums and banjo.

Very much part of this social scene was the teenage membership of the Olinda & District Youth Association formed after World War II. This group also ran their own programs of physical fitness, badminton, socials, theatre, film, social outings and picnics to favourite local tourism sites and beyond. The group existed into the mid-1950s.

Film had been part of community life since the Hall was built in 1913. In 1952 the first Melbourne (Olinda) Film Festival was staged over the Australia Day weekend. The Festival Committee arranged for the estimated 70 to 80 visitors to be comfortably quartered at Bella Vista guest house, Olinda. However over one thousand people booked, which required the taking over of regional halls and guest houses.

On the Saturday night there was an open-air film show, followed by a barbecue. 'Even ASIO came' to view a 'subversive' film.

Badminton is believed to have started in the late 1940s and still continues today with a Ladies group playing regularly. Basketball and netball have also been played periodically.

The early 1960s bushfires saw the Hall used during and after the fires. A post-fire landmark meeting was called in the Hall which adopted a three point plan to combat future fires. This resulted in a strategic equipping and reinforcing of firefighting facilities.

Toileting is usually a problem at local halls and eventually a ladies' was installed in the Hall. The men still had to resort to outdoors, with the hedge on the west side being the usual refuge. When Council suggested that the hedge be grubbed to allow for greater visibility at the road junction, the question was raised as to where the men would 'go'? This subsequently resulted in an audit and upgrade of toilet facilities at all district halls.

A timber skillion was erected at the rear of the Hall in 1976 and this allowed for stage change rooms and improved kitchen facilities, which have been periodically upgraded since then. The Hall was passed to Council management in 2004 and bookings and maintenance are now handled through the Olinda Community House.

Current Hall users include: the Whitehorse Chevaliers Fencing Club; Zumba Dance Fitness Class; two Badminton clubs; Sing, Rattle and Groove music for preschoolers; Olinda Hall Play Group; Mountain Top Toy Library; and Olinda Hall Play Group.

The Mount Dandenong and District Historical Society organised a memorable day to celebrate The Hall's centenary on 20 October 2013 and issued a detailed, well-illustrated booklet *Olinda Mechanics' Institute Hall: 1913-2013*. MIV Plaque No. 37 was also unveiled on the day.



Case Study - LANIER THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

From time to time we will review specialist collections, restorations or events which have potential for application to the wider Mechanics' community.

In October 2010 Houston attorney **Mark Lanier** opened the **Lanier Theological Library** in Houston, Texas for the free use of the community, particularly the academic community. Modelled on Oxford University library architecture, it was built to his personal design on his family's thirty-five acre estate.

It is adjacent to a Stone Chapel based on a plan of the ruins of a Byzantine 500AD church in Cappadocia, photographed by Gertrude Bell in 1909. The Chapel seats ninety on



wooden pews and has specially commissioned paintings on the ceiling which 'tell much of the story of the Bible', and are by Texan artist **Richard McCluskey**. The Chapel is open daily for prayer and meditation.

Mark Lanier established the Lanier Law Firm in 1990 and it presently has a staff of fifty-eight attorneys spread between three offices - Houston, New York and Los Angeles. *The National Law Review Journal* describes Mark Lanier as 'One of the decade's most influential lawyers'.

Mark Lanier's personal interest in Church history dates from college days when he studied Biblical languages. This has continued with the teaching of Sunday School classes in Biblical literacy, which include handouts footnoted to primary references and 'To do that required an even better library than I had', he is reported as saying. So after his wife **Becky** agreed 'Great, let's do it.' So they built a better library.

The library's collection is not just limited to contemporary monographs and journals both in hard copy and on web subscription, it also houses historical documents and museum quality artifacts, including a replica of the Isaiah Scroll, from the Dead Sea Scroll collection.

The Lanier has already acquired specialist collections assembled by leading theologians, archaeologists and Bible historians. The libraries of: Synoptic Gospels specialist and think tank convenor **David Bivin**; Australian **Alan**

Crown OAM (1932-2010), whose specialisation was Samaritan studies; Philistine Biblical archaeologist **Trude Dothan**; Biblical linguist **Moshe Goshen-Gottstein**; Assyriologist and archaeologist **William W Hallow**; Dead Sea Scrolls scholar **Florentino Garcia-Martinez**; Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East historian **Abraham Malamat**; and ancient Judaism and early Christianity scholar **Alan Segal**, to name but a few. Each collection is housed separately to maintain its integrity and the particular interests of its former owner.

Needless to say that security is an issue and potential users do not just walk in off the street, and must book ahead. Books cannot be

borrowed, but scanning facilities enable material to be copied and printed out in limited numbers, otherwise an unlimited quantity may be taken on a flashdrive or emailed to your address. The library building is equipped with wi-fi. Internet access is possible with limitation on social media and mobile phones must be switched off.

Children are welcome to take tours of the library and must be accompanied by an adult.

A kitchen and courtyard means you can take your own lunch to eat on site. They maintain an email contact list for notification of lectures, events or significant additions to the collection.

Lanier lectures attract presenters of world interest and their presentations are later put onto You-tube for dissemination on the internet. Recent Lanier lecturers have included: **Father Justin**, Librarian, St Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai (Established in the sixth century and reputed to be the longest continuous running library in the world, with a library second only to that of the Vatican.); **Peter Williams**, Warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge University; **James Hoffmeier** (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School); and **Simon Conway Morris** (Cambridge University).

There's much to be learned from looking at the Lanier website about establishing, building and managing specialist collections.

Website: laniertheologicalibrary.org

Photo: <http://www.thebibleseminary.org/>

Opinion

HERE'S THE CHALLENGE BY JIM LOWDEN

Hall managers across Victoria are faced with hurdles on all sides and the challenge is can you jump them? In several regions megadollar community centres have been or are being built. These are going to cost big dollars to run, let alone maintain and ultimately there will be some cost recovery and significant hire charges. The temptation to offset these charges, with liquor sales, is not always compatible with family use of a venue.



In reality this could be the opportunity for your Hall to hold its own. First and foremost you must put a sign on your Hall – ‘Haven Mechanics’ Hall – Est. 1882’. You will also need another sign ‘Hall for Hire – (03) 1234 5678’ and to complete the suite add ‘A Coming Events’ blackboard in the porch or in a prominent window.

In the past I have raised the necessity to have a resourced ‘cosy’ meeting room. Your room will need to be comfortable and one in which you will not freeze at winter meetings. Carpet or a carpet square on the floor and a door that will close tightly to keep out the draught makes for added comfort. A strip heater or bar heater would add to amenity and a complete paint job will brighten things up. Put copies of a few historical pictures or documents around the wall with appropriate captions. A well LED lit room will help the eyesight and arrest the power bill. Complement it all with a set of freshly painted toilets.

The next task is to produce a flier to promote your Hall, an A4, A5 doublefold or trifold leaflet is fine. You have to start somewhere. Put the Hall name, full address, and postcode on the front, along with contact details name, telephone and email if available. A Post Office Box will ensure a constant ongoing contact point for inquirers.

Add some history: land source with donor’s name or Government grant; date of building Hall and opening; any replacements, additions, etc.; historic uses – library, dance, film, drama, school, church, etc; major events – electricity switch on, visit of Governor, etc. If you have had a history

published give details, and if available, the cost including postage.

Include a technical section: Meeting Room, with seating capacity; Hall dimensions, with seating capacity for meetings, and dinner configurations; include Stage size, power availability, piano, pull down screen and any other features. In the Kitchen, list cooking equipment, freezer capacity and crockery and cutlery capability.

Prepare a separate page with hire charges, including one-offs or blocks of six hirings. Remember ‘Small fish are sweet.’ Mention a discretionary bond of say \$300-\$1000. Involve local schools in the leaflet production. Youth must be involved in all projects.

With signs up, ‘Thomasina P Cat’ Meeting Room and toilets refreshed, and new leaflets complete, it is time for an official re-opening and launch, a late afternoon may be best. Ask the local MP or Mayor to do the honours in conjunction some school students. Have the schools display some Hall-themed artwork. Invite all potential Hall users: schools, churches, stock and station agents, funeral directors, caterers, artists and artisans, dance and judo teachers, movers and shakers, and Councillors and staff. Make sure you have a memorable afternoon tea to have people linger for a look and a chat. Good Luck and stand by!



THE FLICKS - FILM IN THE MECHANICS'

Ever since light could be shone through a lens images have been shown in Institutes. Slide shows started in the 1880s, and were a few stills from glass based slides accompanied by oratory and piano, with occasional attempts at some 'animation'. Eadweard Muybridge developed a projector the zoopraxoscope which utilised discs in 1878. Other devices followed. Some made it to Australia and were utilised by travelling showmen.



Joseph Perry. (Photo: Salvation Army website)

In 1890 Ballarat-based Salvation Army Officer Captain Joseph Perry saw the impact of slides on his preaching and he started producing these in his own photographic studio and darkroom. In November 1891 Captain Perry was invited to Melbourne to produce a set of slides to advertise the forthcoming visit of General William Booth, and so the Army's Limelight Department was established in 1892. During the years 1893-95 Captain Perry travelled extensively throughout Australia enthraling hall audiences with his 'illuminated shows'.

(Interestingly the glass slide format still continued well into the 1960s as a medium to show hand coloured adverts in local theatres. These were produced by Val Morgan from 1914 and also later by Gunn [successor to theatre impresarios Clyde Meynell and John Gunn]. Morgan also moved into using motion picture for advertising in 1921.)

Thomas Edison's Kinetoscope, developed in 1891, was soon to be travelled around the world, including to large Victorian centres. This device enabled individuals to peep through a hole to see moving images.

The first projected motion picture took place at the Melbourne Opera House on 17 August 1896 using a British Robert W Paul Theatrograph and

his films. In late 1896 this projector travelled to regional Victorian centres.

A further public screening took place at Melbourne Athenaeum in October 1896 using a Lumiere brothers Cinematographe and their films. The Lumieres had developed improved equipment for motion picture filming and projection in 1895, and had travelled their equipment around the world. Their representative in Australia Marius Sestier filmed the Melbourne Cup carnival in 1896 and produced several titles such as *Weighing in for the Melbourne Cup* of ninety seconds duration.

The arrival in Melbourne of Commandant Herbert Booth in 1897 saw the Salvation Army establish Australia's first film studio at 69 Bourke Street in 1898. Early productions included a mix of moving film, glass slides, oratory as well as recorded and live music.

Between 1892-1909 the Salvation Army produced some 300 films including: *Social Salvation*, 1998-99; *Soldiers of the Cross*, 1900; *Inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth*, 1901, a documentary of Australia's Federation celebrations; *Under Southern Skies*, 1902; *Bushranging in North Queensland*, 1902; and *Heroes of the Cross*, 1909.

Entrepreneurs, Charles, John and Nevin Tait, are credited with the production of the world's first full length feature film in 1906. Titled *The Story of the Kelly Gang*, it is believed to have been partially filmed at the Melbourne Athenaeum. It is stated that 'after a week of trial screenings in country towns in late 1906' during which the movie recouped its £1000 budget from these screenings alone. Exactly which theatres we cannot determine. The film then premiered at the Melbourne Athenaeum on 26 December 1906. On the grounds that the film was glorifying criminals it was banned in 1907 for screening in Benalla and Wangaratta, and again in Victoria in 1912.

The demand for film and the availability of films provided travelling entrepreneurs with an opportunity to travel from hall to hall with their own generators and equipment. Initially this was done by way of horse and wagon as was depicted in *The Picture Show Man* (1977) which starred John Meillon and Rod Taylor.

There was one real problem filmstock was highly flammable particularly when exposed directly onto arc light. More than one hall burned

THE FLICKS CONT...

down before legislation required separate tin lined projection boxes with separate entrances/escape routes. Examples of fires include Boort in 1928 and Birchip in 1929. In many cases bio-boxes were built on to the front of halls or above entrance ways.



Clarkefield Hall with its bio-box out the front. This building was demolished in 2006

Some promoters chose to screen film outdoors and areas were developed alongside Institutes for outdoor evening screenings. In more than one case a roof only was constructed, with curtain walls, to keep out the cold if required. These were termed tropical theatres.

All halls had pianos of varying quality and these were pressed into service to accompany the silent films. The coming of sound saw the Melbourne Athenaeum screen the first talkie *The Jazz Singer* on 2 February 1929.

Newsreels became an early feature with the *Australasian Gazette* running from 1913-32. *Movietone News* Australasian version started in 1929, with its laughing kookaburra introduction. These were voiced over by Jack Davey from 1935-57. Then came Australian owned Union Theatre's Cinesound Productions *Cinesound Review* in 1931. *Cinesound* continued to feature a red kangaroo introduction which had previously been used by the *Australasian Gazette*. Both *Cinesound* and *Movietone* newsreels ran until 1970, when they merged to run for a further five years.

An interesting phenomena was the creation of a range of confectionery for sale before during and after screenings.

Sydney-based James Steadman - Henderson's Sweets Ltd (Sweetacres) released Minties in 1926, Fantales in 1930 and Jaffas in 1931. Melbourne-based MacRobertson also provided a range of chocolate products: Cherry Ripe in 1924, Freddo Frogs in 1930, Columbines, Milk Kisses, boxed Old Gold chocolates and block Snack chocolate moulded in the shape of the six various flavours.

The high profit popcorn line was also popular and became available in theatres from the 1930s, either in bags or freshly popped on site.

Whilst some entrepreneurs had a number of theatres on their circuit, such as the: O'Hallorans and the Nultys in north-western Victoria; the Scotts in north central Victoria; the Lawrence brothers in Gippsland; the Glovers in East Gippsland. Other promoters only had one Hall and it was largely a hand to mouth existence. Films came in steel hexagonal containers to the local railway station, initially with their separate sound track discs. In some cases they were cash on delivery. Some showmen got the door take first, and ran a couple of stock 'shorts' whilst they went to the railway station to pay for and collect the night's films.

The availability of electricity was problematic. Some halls had their own generators, others sourced a special supply from the neighbouring hotel. In more than one instance a special electric cable from the town's powerhouse was run over rooftops to the town's hall.

Australia's films were also first class and a steady output from directors Ken G Hall of *The Exploits of the Emden* (1928) and *Dad and Dave* (1930s) fame and Charles Chauvel of *In the Wake of the Bounty* (1933), *Forty Thousand Horseman* (1946), and *Jedda* (1955) added local interest. Overseas producers also entered the local scene with films such as *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935), *The Overlanders* (1946), *Bush Christmas* (1948), *The Shiralee* (1957), *Robbery Under Arms* (1957), *On the Beach* (1959), *The Sundowners* (1960) and *They're a Weird Mob* (1966).

The coming of television in 1956 had an impact on cinema sites in the Melbourne, but it took another decade for regional TV stations to be established across Victoria. By the late 1960s most halls ceased picture



THE FLICKS CONT...

screening and it was left to the mainstream cinemas to carry on.

However from the launch of the Melbourne Film Festival at Olinda in 1952 there has been a steady and growing interest in film and a number of Societies have started across Victoria with several screening films in local halls. Hire of film can be an expensive matter but through established societies it is now clearly the best and most viable option.



A new screening of the 1929 issue of 'Micky's Follies' shows at the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute's Minerva Space. (Photo: flickr)

The following is a list of Mechanics' Institute film venues and we would appreciate any updates or comments.

Acheron; Alexandra; Allambee South; Ampitheatre; Anglesea; Apollo Bay; Arthurs Creek; Ashburton, Bacchus Marsh; Bairnsdale; Ballan, Ballaraat; Balmoral; Baringhup; Barkly; Barwon Heads; Beaconsfield; Beaufort; Beeac; Beech Forest; Beechworth; Belfast; Belgrave South; Benalla; Berriwillock; Beulah; Binginwarri; Birchip; Birregurra; Bogong; Boisdale; Bolinda Vale; Boolarra; Boort; Boronia; Box Hill; Briagolong; Bridgewater; Brim; Broadford; Bruthen; Buchan; Buffalo; Bulla; Bullarto; Bunyip; Burwood; Burwood East; Byaduk; Campbells Forest; Camperdown; Canterbury; Carlton; Carnegie; Carrum; Carwarp; Casterton; Cavendish; Charlton; Cheltenham; Cheshunt; Clarkefield; Clyde; Clyde North; Cobden; Cobram; Cockatoo; Cohuna; Coleraine; Corryong; Cowangie; Cowes; Cowwarr; Cranbourne; Crib Point; Croydon; Culgoa; Cunninghame; Dadswells Bridge; Dandenong; Darlington; Darnum; Denison; Derrinallum; Diamond Creek; Dimboola; Dingee; Dixie; Donald; Doncaster; Dooen; Drouin; Drouin South; Drouin West; Drysdale; Dumbalk; Dunkeld; Ecklin North; Edenhope;

Elmore; Emerald; Emerald Hill; Epping; Erica; Eskdale; Euroa; Evansford; Ferntree Gully; Fish Creek; Flemington; Flinders; Flynn; Forrest; Foster; Frankston; Freeburgh; Fryerstown; Gaffneys Creek; Geelong; Gembrook; Genoa; Gisborne; Glen Waverley; Glengarry; Golden Square; Gormandale; Guildford; Gunbower; Hamilton; Hampton; Hastings; Hawkesdale; Healesville; Heathcote; Hedley; Heyfield; Heywood; Hopetoun; Horsham; Inglewood; Inverloch; Jeparit; Katamatite; Kerang; Kilmore; Koondrook; Koroit; Korong Vale; Korumburra; Krambruk; Kyabram; Kyneton; Lake Boga; Lakes Entrance; Lalbert; Lang Lang; Lara; Leitchville; Leongatha; Leopold; Lethbridge; Lillimur; Lilydale; Lindenow South, Lismore; Litchfield; Loch; Lockington; Longwarry; Lorne; Macedon; Manangatang; Mansfield; Marysville; Meeniyah; Melbourne Athenaeum; Melton; Mentone; Meredith; Meringur; Merino; Mernda; Metung; Minyip; Mirboo on Tarwin; Mitiamo; Moe; Molesworth; Monbulk; Mooroopna; Mortlake; Morwell; Murtoa; Nagambie; Narrawong; Narre Warren; Nathalia; Natimuk; Neerim Junction; Neerim South; Newry; Newstead; Nhill; Nillumbik; Noble Park; North Melbourne; Noorat; Numurkah; Nyah; Oakleigh; Ocean Grove; Olinda; Omeo; Orbest; Ouyen; Pakenham; Pakenham Upper; Paynesville; Peshurst; Piangil; Point Lonsdale; Poowong; Port Campbell; Port Melbourne; Port Fairy; Powelltown; Pyramid Hill; Princetown; Rainbow; Raywood; Red Hill; Redesdale; Riddells Creek; Ringwood; Robinvale; Romsey; Rosedale; Rupunyp; Rye; Sale; Sassafras; Scotts Creek; Sea Lake; Seville; Shepparton; Somerville; Sorrento; South Melbourne; St Albans; St Andrews; St Arnaud; St Leonards; Stanhope; Stratford; Sunbury; Sunshine; Surrey Hills; Swan Hill; Swan Reach; Swanpool; Swifts Creek; Talbot; Tallangatta; Tallygaroopna; Tambo Upper; Tarnagulla; Tatura; Templestowe; Terang; Thomastown; Thorpdale; Toora; Tooradin; Trafalgar; Traralgon; Trentham; Tynong; Tyntynder; Ultima; Underbool; Walhalla; Walpeup; Walwa; Wandin; Wandiligong; Warburton; Warrandyte; Watchem; Waubra; Wedderburn; Welshpool; Werribee; Werrimull; Whittlesea; Wickliffe; Willaura; Williamstown; Winiam; Winnap; Woodend; Woolsthorpe; Woomelang; Woorak; Wycheproof; Wyndham; Yackandandah; Yarra Junction; Yarragon; Yarram; Yarrowonga; Yinnar.

DANCE ON

KOONWARRA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1891)



Photo: koonwarra.vic.au

Old Time and New Vogue Dancing is held on the third Saturday and fifth Saturday of the month with a live band. There is a dance every Monday with recorded music. Line Dancing is staged every Tuesday, except January. Contact Vera on (03) 5664 3252 or by email vmdowel@bigpond.net.au.

SAILORS GULLY HALL (est. 1870s?)

Sailors Gully Road, Sailors Gully, V



We're still trying to resolve whether this is a second, third or perhaps even new incarnation of Sailors Gully Hall. In any case the **Outlaw Bootscooters** (Line Dancers) hold Socials here on the second Sunday of each month, between 1-5pm. They also conduct a range of beginners to advanced 'tutorials' at various other times. This is a fun way to keep fit. Contact: Rhonda 5447 8233; Bob 5448 4886. (Photo: Roslyn Lowden)

TO MARKET

Markets are big business with some ninety Farmers' Markets operating, of which twenty-five are accredited with the Victorian Farmers' Market Association.

MOLESWORTH HALL (est. 1901)

4355 Goulburn Valley Highway, Molesworth, V 3718

Molesworth has been running an annual Easter Bazaar Craft and Clearing Sale and Auction since 1978. It sells donated goods or has stallholders who sell on their own behalf. It is a major daylong regional event. Since the event started in has raised nearly \$250,000 for local charities and organisations which include the Hall. Inquiries for next year's event: Molesworth Easter Bazaar, Box 4, Molesworth, V 3718. Tel: (03) 5797 6252; Mobile: 0427 310 213; Email: lesridd@mcmedia.com.au. Website: www.molesworth.info

DUNROBIN HALL (est. 1914)

789 Apsley- Naracoorte Road, Dunrobin, V 3311
Produce swaps are gathering momentum around the country and we learned of one at the **Minhamite Soldiers' Memorial Hall** last year.

Dunrobin's Produce Swaps are held bi-monthly. Information: Judi Rees. Tel: (03) 5581 1187; jjrees@skymesh.com.au

YARCK HALL (est. 1892)

Maroondah Highway, Yarck, V 3719

The Yarck Country Market has been active on the market circuit for several years with a regular third Saturday of the month event 9am-1.30pm. It sells a whole range of produce from plants, preserves, crafts and wines. Information (03) 5773 4304. Email: johnandrobyn@aussiebrodband.com.au

NEERIM JUNCTION HALL (est 1873)

2957 Main Road, Neerim Junction, V 3832

Another market type of activity is the Book Swap or Sale. Neerim have been running these for a time on the last Wednesday of each month (excluding Public Holidays) and can offer 'enough books to fill an entire Hall'. They also trade in CDs and DVDs. Contact: Maria Zappulla. (03) 5628 4295; Email: maria@yahoo.com.au

WHERE THEY STOOD

Following on the unveiling and plaquing of a wheel on the site of the Laen Mechanics' Institute, a project put in play by Ivan Landwehr, and which was unveiled on 18 November 2012, we recently received a picture via Pam Baragwanath in connection with the Jeffcot Public Hall.

It would seem an opportune time to take stock of other Institute sites and how they are commemorated.

JEFFCOTT NORTH & JEFFCOTT MECHANICS' HALLS (Est. 1891)



The Jeffcott North Hall was built in 1891 on a road junction and the site contained a dam and a community sheep dip and a 'caretaker's' cottage built for a destitute family. The Hall blew down in 1926 and was rebuilt on a new site. It too suffered severe wind damage in 1979 and was restored with an internal ladies' toilet. It reopened with a 'Dunny Dance' in 1980. The Hall was finally demolished in 2011. A sign with an illustration of the Hall was erected on the site in 2013 by the Donald History and Research Group (photo above by Pam Baragwanath). The sign artwork was executed by Jamie Cashin Signs of Charlton.

KILMORE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE & FREE LIBRARY (Est. 1854)



The Kilmore Institute was established in 1854 and went through three homes before its

purpose-built Hall was built from 1863 when the foundation stone was laid by John Pascoe Fawkner until it was officially opened in 1865. Council had the building demolished in 1978 for the materials. Portion of the land was sold in 1980 and the remainder in 1996. In 2004 to celebrate the Institute's 150th anniversary the Institute had a brass plaque installed in the adjacent footpath outside No. 3 Powlett Street, Kilmore.



Just as the Freemasons processed to the site to plumb the original stone with a silver trowel, in 1863 they also processed in full regalia, led by the Grandmaster for Victoria, to attend and use that same historic trowel to symbolically plumb and unveil the plaque on 15 October 2005.

LOWER NORTON CREEK FREE LIBRARY & HALL (Est. 1887)



In Western Victoria the Lower Norton Creek Free Library started on the School. The Hall was finally built in 1906. The demolition and/or removal date is presently unknown. However the Hall site is commemorated with a bronze plaque on a stone cairn which is believed to have been unveiled about 1956. It carries the wording 'Dedicated to the Memory of the Pioneers of the Lower Norton District. This stone marks the site of the Norton Hall.' (Photo: Bonzle/MNugent)

CASTERTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1873)

After a series of 'fiery meetings' in 1873 a site was donated in Henty Street. The foundation stone was laid on 6 April 1876 and the building was opened on 29 July 1876. In August it was noted

WHERE THEY STOOD CONT...



'Casterton has been 'going in a perisher' after the opening of the local Mechanics' Institute. Bruce auctions, concerts and plays have been the order of the day'. A second storey, added in 1891, housed an art gallery and museum. It was occupied from 1899

as part of Casterton State School No. 2058 until at least 1916 when new classrooms were built on the school site. The Hall was a major centre for dance and later film. The building became the RSL Club rooms in 1920. The trustees offered the site and building to the Glenelg Council in 1933. In 1937 Council demolished it and erected the present Town Hall.

RAINBOW MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1902)



The Rainbow Town Mural featuring the Rainbow Mechanics' Institute in the foreground.

In May 1904 it was intimated that a public hall was about to be erected and Mr J Hart had donated a site. Tenders were called in June 1904 and the Hall was duly built.

It was reported that: a piano was purchased in 1905; a dance was held after sports in 1905; the School Concert for 1905 drew a 'bumper house'; a Boxing Tournament took place in Hall in July 1909; and the Caledonian Society was formed from a meeting in the Hall in February 1911.

On 1 January 1912 fire broke and the Hall was 'reduced to ashes within half an hour'. The Committee took immediate steps to replace the

Hall, but it was not be erected on the old site, but in a more central location in King Street.' Architect Lewis Stansfield Smith of Horsham was commissioned to design a new Mechanics' Institute and reading rooms. The successful tenderer, Herbert Nicholson Ismay, for £1062 was announced on 30 January 1912 and it was completed in May 1912. One of the unique features was its kitchen which was housed in an underground section beneath the stage.

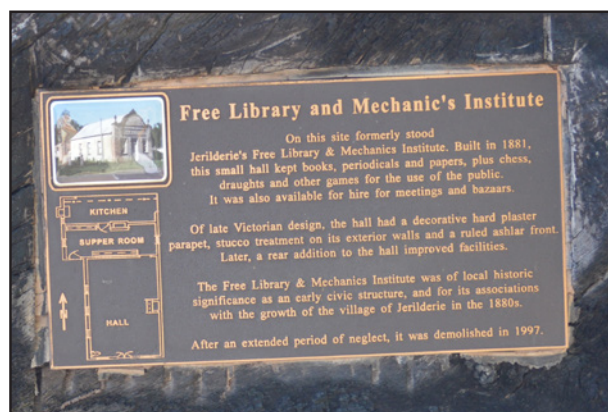
The Mechanics' Institute was used by local churches for film and lantern slide screenings and for a time was used for classes from the Higher Elementary School. It also housed billiard tables.

In 1966 the Dimboola Council purchased the Mecca Theatre and renamed it the Civic Centre. The Mechanics' Institute library was shifted from the Mechanics' Institute to the Civic Centre in 1969. In the same year the Mechanics' Institute, now owned by the Council, was opened as a Pre-School Centre until their new centre was erected.

In 2003 the Rainbow Art Group arranged a mural to commemorate the Rainbow Mechanics' Institute role as the centre for community activities over a period of almost seventy years.

NEW SOUTH WALES

JERILDERIE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE & FREE LIBRARY (Est. 1881)



This was established and built in 1881 with later additions. It held a library and had regular use for draughts and chess as well as a range of community events, but notable for its bazaars and dances. It was demolished in 1997 'after an extended period of neglect'. A notable feature of the plaque is a photo and a ground plan of the building.

VICTORIAN LOCAL HISTORY GRANTS

The Public Record Office of Victoria recently announced the distribution of some \$350,000 by way of grants to Victorian community organisations. Eight Mechanics' Institute and Hall related projects featured in the list.

The Melbourne Athenaeum Library (est. 1839) featured with partial funding (\$15,000) of the second and very much updated edition of *If the Walls Could Speak: A Social History of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria* by Pam Baragwanath and Ken James.



Dunrobin Hall

(Photo: Dunrobin Community facebook)

Some \$2000 was granted for funding the centenary celebrations of the Dunrobin Hall (est. 1914) located in Western Victoria.

Wonwondah Hall (est. 1885) Volunteer Group, also in Western Victoria, received \$564 to restore 'District Tennis Club Premiership photos'.



Leongatha Mechanics' Institute

The worthy occupier of the distinctive Leongatha Mechanics' Institute (est. 1891), the Leongatha and District Historical Society (est. 1964) received \$5,345 for their proposed 'Leongatha historic plaque project'.

Mornington Peninsula Family History Society (est. 1979), former long-term tenants of the Frankston Mechanics' Institute (est. 1873) and still occasional users, received \$3000 to fund the

publication of Anne Ringer's *The Hall on the Hill: A History of the Frankston Mechanics' Hall and Free Library 1873-2013*.



Seymour Pioneer Library

The Seymour and District Historical Society (est. 1965), longtime tenants of the Seymour Pioneer Library building (est. 1875), received \$7000 for their 'Seymour and District Historical Society 50th anniversary project'.



Woodvale's Avenue of Honour outside the Woodvale Hall

Woodvale Progress Association, managers of the Woodvale Hall (former Nerring State School No. 1531, est. 1875), can continue with their community work with a grant of \$8,335 to develop the 'Woodvale Historical Trail.'

Finally the entrepreneurial Tallarook Mechanics' Institute (est. 1891) continue their role in community building with the proposal to create a digital history timeline 'There's nothing crook in Tallarook' for which \$10,000 was received.

STAGE CURTAINS - *KYNETON GUARDIAN* SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1877

THE KYNETON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

An announcement which is made in another column of this day's journal, (an advertisement for the opening night Amateur Concert) will be read with interest and satisfaction. It is now eight months since, upon the night of the 1st of January, the hall, library, and reading room of the Mechanics' Institute was destroyed by fire. Following upon that disaster came what might almost be deemed a worse one, in the divided state of feeling which was evoked in regard to the Institute itself, which received an opposition in some quarters which is even perfectly unaccountable. It will be remembered that following upon the fire there were held meetings upon meetings of the subscribers, culminating in that of last Easter, when the question as to rebuilding was finally settled, and shortly afterwards the structure which will be opened on Wednesday, the 12th inst., was begun. In the report of the Committee of last January occurs a passage almost prophetic of what has taken place, within is expressed the hope that "an Institute might be built better than the former, and a calamitous misfortune made into a permanent good." Those who desire to know how far this prediction has been realised should inspect the new building which is about to leave the hands of the contractor. Outside there is all the cement work left to finish, but inside, with the exception of flooring and seating a very handsome and spacious balcony on the eastern end, the Hall itself has been vastly improved, and is not unworthy of the town. Very great regret cannot help being expressed that the balcony must remain for the time unseated, but the Committee had hoped to have been able to have opened the buildings with a debt of only £500, but it appears that unless they can secure at least £100 more subscriptions there will be £600 of debt, and as the flooring of the balcony will cost £70 or £80 additional, they have reluctantly had to forego it for the present. It is to be hoped the townspeople and wealthy farmers will assist the Committee in this matter, as it is a public object as deserving as it is of utility. The hall is now 65ft. in length by 27ft. in width, with a balcony of 20ft. by 27ft. The stage is 22ft. by 27ft. and looks very handsome. The hall is lit by two eighteen light sunburners, and the stage is being fitted up with footlights and also jets in the flies. The painting of the scenery has been entrusted to Mr Charles

Massey, the well-known scenic artist of the Opera House and Princess' Theatre in Melbourne. He has already finished the back drop, and the Age reporter, who has seen it in the painting room of the Princess' Theatre, speaks of it in the following terms:- "The drop is a picture of the village of Argenio, on Lake Como, Italy, showing the head of the lake and the river on which the village is situated, with the mountains and rocky peaks fading away to hazy purple hills in the distance. The picture is excellently painted, and the Italian sky reflected in the calm waters of the lake is a masterpiece of artistic effect."

from Mal Closter, Kyneton Historical Society.



1863 Chromo Lithograph *The Village of Argenio, Lake Como, Italy.* (Photo: ebay.co.uk)

The artist **Charles Hamlet Massey** (1832?-81) was born in Ireland about 1832, reported to be the son of a baronet. He arrived in Adelaide in late 1852 where he became a Mounted Trooper in the South Australian Police Force. He crossed to Victoria and worked on the goldfields at Eaglehawk, Bendigo in the early-1850s with little success. Moving to Melbourne he was involved with George Coppin in his new 'Iron Pot' theatre in Lonsdale Streets in 1855. He next turns up in Sydney where he was in partnership with Robert Percy Whitworth, where actor JJ Welsh was employed in a theatre in Pitt Street. He was lured to Gabriel's Gully, Otago, New Zealand goldfields and was engaged by theatre promoters Holt and Woolf to do scenic backdrops for the Theatre Royal, Dunedin. He was in partnership with Thomas Samuel Kemp as Massey and Kemp, painters and decorators, when they filed for bankruptcy in the New Zealand Supreme Court, Wellington, on 22 March 1873. He returned to Victoria in 1876 and started working on major scenic productions, in particular for the Bijou Theatre and Princess Theatre. In August 1877 he painted the Kyneton Mechanics' Institute backdrop. He moved to Adelaide in 1879 to work for the Theatre Royal until 1881. He died at his residence, College Road, Kent Town (SA), 15 December 1881, aged 49, result of accident at Theatre Royal, Adelaide, when he had an apoplectic fit and fell from the paint loft. He was married with a son Gerald who assisted him.

Around the 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.

BENJEROOP PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1888)

The Benjeroop community has bounced back from the 2011 floods. The locals provided a round the clock vigil at the Hall to ensure the sandbag wall was not breached and that the pumps kept working. Consequently their much loved Hall received only minor flood damage. The Hall Committee has very recently received a **Salute Australia's Veterans'** grant to update their Hall Honour Roll and correct the misspelling of names. These grants provide an opportunity to conserve and update these valuable community records. The community celebrated the centenary of its two Halls 1912-58 and 1958-2012 in April 2012.

CASTLEMAINE LIBRARY (Est. 1855)

Another great idea. Castlemaine's series **Philosophy in the Library** is intended to get people thinking. In March their latest presenter was **Damon Young**, from the **School of Life** on 'How to Think about Exercise'. He challenged the idea that existence is split in two: body and mind, moving and thinking, revealing how fitness can develop our bodies and minds together. He explored the concepts of fitness and sport with the help of ancient and modern philosophy and uncovered the pleasures, virtues and big ideas of fitness.

Stimulating lectures *really work* as Institutes around the world have found.

DANDENONG MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1863)

It has been reported that the plaque identifying the Dandenong Town Hall as the former home of the Institute has recently been removed from the front of that building. The Institute's 1863 and 1882 buildings, on its freehold site, were demolished in 1890 to allow the construction of present Town Hall. In return for the Institute's transferring title of the land to the Shire, the Institute was given perpetual use of the first floor.

DINGEE MEMORIAL HALL (Est. 1912)



From left: Frank Winzer, Sandra Hocking, Marilyn Hocking, Jacinta Allan MLA and Yvonne Whitlock on the steps of the Dingee Memorial Hall

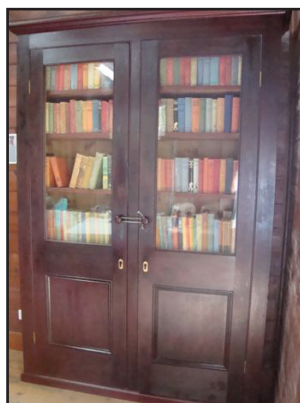
Hall managers, the **Dingee Progress Association** recently invited local MP **Jacinta Allan** to morning tea to discuss local issues. High on the agenda was funding for a hall upgrade and ongoing operation of the Bush Nursing Centre. The next project is an upgrade of the Hall front and entrance. The Hall has recently had a commercial kitchen installed and internal toilets have recently been placed in the south wing.

GISBORNE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1856)

In February-March the Institute hosted the Annual **Gisborne Artists Society Show**. The show was opened by valuer and auctioneer **Steve Graham**. Local art was supplemented by a range of porcelain and an exhibition of work from students at the Gisborne Secondary College. It was a most successful event with proceeds going to The Oaks Aged Care Centre.

GOBUR LIBRARY (Est. c1887)

A new home for Gobur's Library... down the road at Fawcett Hall!



Sometime around April 2012 **Mervyn Shaw**, Trustee of the Gobur Mechanics' Institute, contacted Prahran MI seeking advice about a new home for Gobur's remnant library collection. Merv was looking for a similar organisation and two existing members of

MIV were possibilities, **Bonnie Doon** and **Fawcett**. Gobur's hall had been demolished in the 1980's and all that remained was the kitchen/supper room addition which was in poor condition. The books were stored in this room in a bookcase. Discussions took place and it was ultimately agreed that the books and bookcase would go to Fawcett.

On 21 November 2012 **Judith Dwyer** and her husband **Denis** drove to Gobur to start cleaning, cataloguing and packing the remnant collection. **Corinne Brewis** travelled from Bonnie Doon to meet them at Gobur. The kitchen/supper room contained the original fire, a large food/storage cupboard and benches as well as various odds and ends. There were holes in the walls and birds had obviously used the room as a home. It was a hot windy day with plenty of dust in the air. The entrance to the room was via steps and the back of Merv's ute.

As the task was not completed on the day, Judith and Corinne made a return trip to Gobur on 13 December 2012 to complete cataloguing and boxing of the books. There were discussions between Judith, Corinne and Merv about the renovation of the bookcase as it was a particularly fine one. It was later decided that the bookcase would be renovated by the Men's Shed in Alexandra and as organising transport and then renovation would take some time, there was a delay in the project's completion. In the interim a volunteer typed the handwritten lists created during cataloguing.

During the latter part of 2013 the renovated bookcase was delivered from Alexandra to Fawcett and Merv organised delivery of the boxes of books. On 13 December 2013 Judith, Corinne and her husband **Tony** travelled to Fawcett to unpack, clean and shelve the books in the resplendent bookcase. Fawcett has its own small remnant library and a bookcase of a similar design to Gobur's. They propose to have their bookcase renovated and also catalogue their remaining books. Both bookcases will ultimately be together in the original Fawcett library reading room.

Corinne, Judith and Tony were invited to afternoon tea at Fawcett President, **Sam Hicks'** farm, opposite Fawcett Hall. She mentioned that when the current extensions to Fawcett Hall were complete, the Committee proposed to install a stained glass window between the rear of the main room and the alfresco eating area in the design of the Fawcett library stamp.

A framed certificate will be hung next to Gobur's bookcase at Fawcett, together with

a list of the books contained in the collection - approximately 450.

All those involved in this project felt it was a very worthwhile exercise which I am sure has promoted the objectives of the MIV in a very positive way. It must have seemed a professional operation as during afternoon tea Sam asked how many times the MIV had done it. I hope she was surprised to discover this was the first time.

Corinne Brewis

MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM (Est. 1839)



Tunnel Books by Kyoko Imazu

The Melbourne Athenaeum will be participating in Melbourne's **Rare Book Week** from 17-27 July. The Ath will be hosting **Richard Overell** who will be giving a lecture titled 'You can judge a book by its cover' on 22 July at 6pm.

Richard will begin by talking on the history of the dustjacket from the 19th century to the present. But the main emphasis will be on the design from the 1930s to the 1960s and what makes these books so collectible.

During Rare Book Week **Kyoko Imazu** will undertake a week long residency at The Ath from 21-27 July. Over this time she will create a series of tunnel books that will illuminate around The Ath Library like festival lanterns.

Her work will present little windows into imagined worlds of animals and plants inspired by memories and stories from childhood. It is through Kyoko's tunnel books that she will convey open and strange narratives to encourage viewers to bring their own memories and associations.

Kyoko will give a talk on 23 July at 6pm as part of the **Nite Art Program**. During the talk she will show how her tunnel books and other artists books are made and explore the relationship between her printmaking and other bookbinding practice.

The residency will culminate during **Open House Melbourne** on 26-27 July. This will be a good time to visit the library.

MOLESWORTH PUBLIC HALL (Est. 1902)

Local MP **Cindy McLeish** recently announced that Molesworth was to be a recipient of a \$299,00 Government grant to enable a complete

makeover of the Hall. In the meantime the Annual Easter Bazaar and Auction has again been successfully held. This major Hall fundraiser was started in the early 1980s. Recently two of the founding Bazaar Organising Committee members stepped down: **Jean Mahoney**, who was noted for her cakes and produce; and **Muriel Perry** who was renowned for her quality plants, were accorded a 'Thank you! afternoon tea' for their long and valued service. It is hoped that the recent grant will enable the restoration of Molesworth's unique stage backdrop which was painted in 1994 by Muriel Perry and the late **Joan Williamson**.

MOYSTON HALL (Est. 1868)

The Moyston Mechanics' Institute opened in 1868. That hall had outlived its usefulness and a new Hall was built and opened in January 1914 and 400 people attended the event. They danced to dawn. The Hall's centenary celebrations, held in March, centered around the launch of **Anne Marshall's** history which covered the Hall history and that of ninety-five Moyston pioneers. A ball was held on the Saturday night at which many people dressed up in period costume. Sunday saw a tour of the Moyston Cemetery led by **Neil Wilde**. The winner of **Madeleine Townsend's** painting of the Hall was **Harry Wheeler**. The weekend concluded with an afternoon of impromptu music and dance led by **Carmel Phelan** in the Hall. Anne noted that since the weekend other families had come forward with their stories and said 'We need to now round up a few of these stories and keep them somewhere safe.'

MURTOA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1881)



The grand two-storey Murtoa Institute stands in Murtoa's main Duncan Street. The large auditorium provided the idea venue for the recent **Annual Lions Club Murtoa College Debutante Ball**. The run up to the big evening requires around ten rehearsals, so the youth of the area

become acquainted with their inheritance, which will be theirs to look after in the future.

NAGAMBIE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1873)

Following some concern about the stability of the front rendering on the Hall, **Greg Owen** of Period Building Conservation when traveling through to another project called. Greg alleviated their concerns and they went ahead with the minor patchups for the full scale paint. With their memorial gates, with 'NMI' and 1873, at the heads and a new verandah on the north the Hall is looking in great condition. Well done all.

NEERIM JUNCTION HALL (Est. 1873)



Now in its fourth reincarnation, twice burnt in bushfires, the last time in mysterious circumstances, the Hall holds a book, magazine, DVD or CD swap or buy on the last Wednesday of each month, except public holidays. It runs from 10am-12.30pm during which time a cuppa is also available. It was also recently used for the funeral service of local identity **Graeme John 'Tambo' Fawcett** on 23 December 2013. The Hall also hosts Landcare, a weekly craft group, and a long-running squash group.

NEWHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1902)

The Newham Institute hosted the **O, Pig 'A community arts project with grunt'** on the evening of 21 March, and it ran until 23 March. **O, Pig** also celebrated the 125th anniversary of the establishment of the Newham Bacon Factory by Thomas Harvey Newnham in 1869. This became an important local industry which lasted in to the early 1900s.

O, Pig was very much a community event with various activities and displays spread across the village. Eleven life-sized pigs, which had been decorated by a local community group or artist, were strategically located around the village, a



couple of other larger than life specimens flew above the Newham General Store.

Saturday's **Grand Parade of Pigs** was led by the Newham Primary Drum Corps and Wesley Park beside the Hall became a hub for food and festivities. Meanwhile the Hall became an exhibition and sale area for local artists. Newham Primary School also featured 'pig related' art from district schools.

It looks like Newham, by way of their **Sculptural Pig Project**, have found their unique niche. (Photo: newham.squarespace.com/events)

PRAHRAN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1854)

In 2004 the silver trowel that was used by Sir **Alexander Peacock** to lay the foundation stone of the High Street building in 1915 just turned up. Very recently another unique item pertaining to the Prahran Institute's history has also been forwarded and this time from New Zealand. It is a program for the official opening of the Chapel Street building by the Governor of Victoria, **Sir Henry Barkly** on 26 January 1857. Printed on a piece of silk, 24cm x 14cm, it gives the details of the two part musical program which accompanied the event. Participants

included: Mrs Batten; Mr Chron; Mr John Gregg; Mrs Quaine; Mr White; and Mrs Testar. Exactly how this very rare type of memorabilia reached New Zealand is unknown but it was found in papers from a former architect's office.

Given the above, PMI still hold out hope that that their first Minute Book 1854-56 'might one day be found'. In the meantime they are preparing for their 160th celebratory opening in their new home later in the year.

SEAVIEW MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1905)



The weatherboard Hall was built in 1905 and has stained pine lining boards. It too contains an honour board from World War I containing the names of sixty local volunteers, of which ten paid the supreme sacrifice. (Photo: Flickr/[phunnyfotos](https://www.flickr.com/photos/phunnyfotos/))

STANLEY ATHENAEUM & PUBLIC ROOM (Est. 1863)

The **Friends of Stanley Atheneum's** latest exhibition **Armchair Travelling in the C19th and Now** was opened by Terri McNally – a Stanley traveller – on 22 March. Stanley, like most Institutes purchased numerous travel books and histories of various countries in the nineteenth century and that trend continues today.

The flyer promoting the exhibition shows a plate titled 'Travelling in Lapland' from Paul Du Chaillu (1831-1903), *The Land of the Midnight Sun* first published in London by John Murray in 1881.

The exhibition featured six travel books from Stanley's collection, one representing each continent and the Friends then invited the community to loan objects collected in their own work or travels across the world in recent decades. Intriguing objects were loaned by **Terri McNally, Richard Maskiell, Maggy Tyrie, Chris Chambeyron, Sally McKay, Tracy McVea, Helen McIntyre, Chris Dormer, Janet Sutherland, Jenny India and Steve Routledge.**

Also highlighted in the exhibition was Stanley's 1890 edition of *Philips' Imperial Atlas of the World*. A massive tome, comprising eighty

maps of 56cm x 39.5cm, it weighs in at twelve kilograms. Not to miss on an opportunity a competition to fund its restoration was held with the prize being a \$100 voucher from IGA Beechworth. Whilst the competition is now over, if you would like to donate to the cause contact Chris with details as below.

The exhibition was curated by **Maggy Tyrie** and **Patricia Williams**. **Leigh Privett** replaced the display case locks for the occasion.

Janet Sutherland photographed and scanned book images and **Chris Dormer** and **Patricia Williams** made cards and bookmarks which will be on sale for the duration of the exhibition and beyond.

Armchair Travelling is open until 30 June, on 2nd Wednesdays and 4th Saturdays 10am-12pm, or by appointment. Tel: Chris (03) 5728 6594.

With the interior of the building now well restored, it is now time to again take another look at the exterior, and the work is currently in hand.

The Friends' Janet Sutherland and Helen McIntyre recently hosted a group for an evening at the Athenaeum from the **Wang Book Club**. They were amazed to learn that the elm tree planted in front of the building was done to commemorate the end of Crimean War a subject again in the news.

In a follow up thank you note the Wang group wrote 'A big thank you! Our group really went away amazed that such a little gem still remains in tact and that there is such a caring community looking after the building and its collection.' Hear! Hear!

TALLAROOK MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1891)

The Tallarook Institute have done it again with another variation on their entertainment program with mastery from Robin Laurie's **Controlled Falling Project**. **Robert Laurie's** work with Circus Oz is well known and the crowded house at Tallarook on 5 May were certainly not disappointed.

TATURA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE & VICTORY HALL (Est. 1887)

Tatura's Halls are aging and with rising damp the RSL has recently moved out after being in Victory



Hall for about sixty-five years. Some \$30,000, serious money, will be required to remedy the problem so the RSL can move back in. **The Friends of Victory**, a fundraising Committee has been formed with **Ian Grant** as Secretary. Local musical director **Shirley Ferguson** was enlisted and she has assembled a bevy of young local talent. Their first performance was **An Afternoon of Musical Delights** staged on 16 February. It was an entertainment extravaganza which featured music, poetry, singing and choral items. Performers included: **Donald Campbell, Jill Clapperton, Ben Eaton, Shirley Ferguson, Kylie Hoskins, Emma Law, Anthony Lucas, Joseph Moorhouse, Bill Mouser, Monga Mukasa, Denice Robertson, Tina and Cathy Sibio, Turaton Music Company** and **Gary White**, with more than a fair share of a youth representation. Well done all. With such enthusiasm we hope the press headline 'Start of a long haul to save hall', will be 'a quick revamp to decamp the damp for an RSL re-entry tramp'. It would be good to think this could happen by 14 September, the anniversary of Senator Brigadier-General HE 'Pompey' Elliott's laying of the foundation stone. In the meantime the **Shepparton Brass Band** performed in the Hall on 1 June as a further fundraiser. (Photo: *mmg.com.au*)

TRENTHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1881)

The Trentham Institute came alive once again for the **Trentham Easter Art and Craft Show**. The show opened on Thursday night with the awards being announced. Items went on sale from 7.30pm and the evening concluded with supper and drinks. It was a long weekend with many sales prior to its closing on Monday afternoon.

The Wonderful World of Mechanics' Institutes

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES

BINALONG MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1909)

The Binalong township has a population of around 250. In the early 1900s entertainments were had in the Binalong Convent Schoolroom or the Eubindal woolshed.

The Institute was first mooted in 1909 and it obtained a Government land grant. Seven local citizens agreed to be guarantors and a 28ft x 78ft stone hall was built and it was opened in February 1911.

It had early use for theatre (1912), church (1914) and billiards. The library activity was notable and by 1924 there were 756 books in hand.

Another regular Hall user was the **Red Cross** with World War I and II fundraising. Post World War II they also staged a 'themed' Annual Dinner Dance with patrons costumed to suit the themes – Tyrolean, Chinese, Roman and Halloween to name a few

After World War I the **Binalong Mechanics' Institute Race Club** was formed and it staged one meeting a year with a Ball in the Hall in the evening and these appear to have gone into the 1930s.

The **Binalong CWA** was formed at a meeting on 20 June 1928 in the Mechanics'. The CWA were regular users of the Hall with Bush Nurse, and later Infant Welfare Centre fundraising, during which time they had over forty members.

In the early 1930s the billiard room was then made over to RSL use. They staged their Annual Diggers' Ball from 1935 into the 1950s. Since then the room has been used by the long-running **Binalong Players** which have staged a number of Australian plays and musicals over the years.

Movies were screened in the Hall intermittently from the 1930s-50s. The Red Cross also mounted: Fashion Parades; and exhibitions of China, Silver, Tapestry and Dolls. To fit the theme large monthly auctions of antiques were



held in the Hall, but these have now been held at the **Royal Tara Motel** for some years.

The Hall was the venue for: 'many wedding receptions; 50th wedding anniversaries; Birthday parties; various Balls; Debutante Balls; huge New Year's Eve Ball, for many years; several Shearers and Squatters Balls; Children's Concerts and Prize Givings; and Children's Fancy Dress Balls'.

One event still talked about was the Binalong Mechanics' Hall Queen Competition staged during 1953-54 to raise money for the building of the Supper Room and Kitchen adjacent to the Hall. In all some £1773 was raised from the Queen Competition, plus the proceeds of the Ball.

In recent times, besides dance being staged in the Hall, classes have been held in: Yoga; Tai chi; and Boxercise. A Youth Club operated for about ten years and a Youth Recreation Club for a few years.

The replacement of the 1939 Golf Club House, in 1967, and the more recent Royal Tara Motel, built in 1986, have taken away many of the traditional uses for the Hall, but it is still used as an election Polling Booth and for occasional Shire Council meetings. **Landcare** and the **Binalong Progress Association** still meet there, as does the weekly Handcraft Group.

The inaugural **Binalong Banjo Paterson Bush Poetry Festival**, held on 14 September 2013, was staged at the Institute. Readings were held on the Saturday, with a dinner in the evening and a Bush Poet's Breakfast on the Sunday.

Binalong Public School children staged 'Alice in Wonderland: The Musical' - during October 2013.

The Hall holds Honour Rolls from World Wars I and II and adjacent to the Hall is the Memorial Tree planted by the RSL in 1952. (*Photo: Wikimedia Commons*)

QUEENSLAND

FOREST HILL SCHOOL OF ARTS (Est. 1910)

Forest Hill is located midway between Gatton and Laidley on the Ipswich to Toowoomba

SOUTH AUSTRALIA**WIRRABARA INSTITUTE (Est. 1884)**

Located in the Southern Flinders Ranges and nestled against the Rocky River, Wirrabara is 235km north of Adelaide.

It takes its name from the Kaurna tribe's 'wirra' gum trees and 'birra' running water. The township was established in 1874 and district is noted for its forestry and farming heritage

A public meeting was called at the Wirrabara Hotel on 26 March 1884 for the purposes of establishing an Institute 'under the rules and regulations of the South Australian Institute'. The meeting elected a Committee which comprised: **James Milne**, President; **CE Cranston**, Vice-President; **Rev. GJ Sampson**, Treasurer; and J Rintoul, Secretary. Plans and specifications were prepared, tenders let and building got under way.

The Institute was officially opened on 27 January 1885 by WJ Milne, Institute President, which was followed by a concert and comedy drama. 'The hall was densely packed, and large numbers were unable to obtain entrance. Total proceeds amounted to £22.' The building and fittings cost £530, of which portion was met by a Government grant of £235.

The First Annual General Meeting was held in July 1885 and the whole paid-up membership of ten were present. It was felt more members would join when the library was established and £25.10s9d was voted for Mrs Davey the librarian to purchase books to establish a library.

After it closed it became a shop and is now owned by the Anglican Church.

In 1912 a new Institute was erected from stone quarried from Marner's quarry in the Wirrabara Forest. The library which had started in the old Institute was moved into the new hall when it was built.

In 1961 the Wirrabara Memorial Committee donated funds to the Institute to build separate rooms with memorial windows to commemorate district service personnel.

In 1974 the Senior Citizens built another hall and new kitchen and this was attached to the Institute.



railway line. The area was first settled in 1840. Today the town has a population of 340 people.

The Forest Creek Farmers' Progress Association first floated the idea for a Hall. In September 1910 a meeting of the trustees of the projected School of Arts met to consider the plans for the proposed Hall prepared by **Henry Edward Wyman**. It was resolved that the Hall would be of brick and the cost estimate was 'about £110' and that tenders be called.

The 85ft x 35ft building was erected in 1911 by W French and opened by **Cr James Christian August Nielsen** on 3 June. It was financed by way local funding and a Queensland National Bank loan.

The Hall started out with a library. The main hall was 55ft x 35ft, with a stage of 18ft x 35ft, and the floor was of cow's ash 'specially laid for dancing purposes'. It was noted 'A splendid acetylene gas plant has been installed, there being no fewer than 21 jets in the main hall and stage, including six headlights, two side lights, two wing lights, and five footlights on the stage, the latter being so arranged that they can be obscured when not required.'

A Queen Carnival in 1915 liquidated the remaining £500 debt. Over the years the Hall has been extensively used for: Church; community; Red Cross; Country Women's Association; and political meetings.

In 2010 the Hall received \$150,000 in funding from the **Australian Government Jobs Fund** to restore and upgrade the Hall. The Hall was used extensively during the flood in the Lockyer Valley in 2011.

Forest Hill was a participant in the inaugural 2013 **Festival of Small Halls** which was an adjunct to the **Woodford Folk Music Festival**. It is also a site for the **Handmade Expo Markets - Excellence in Making, Baking, Growing**.
(Photo: Lockyer Valley Regional Council website)



Australia Day is celebrated in traditional style, but with addition of a Yabby Competition.

Today the library is owned by the Institute and is run by volunteers. A small subscription fee is charged. The library also has community computers and can assist with their use.

The Wirrabara Memorial Library is one of a very few independent libraries left in South Australia.

The Hall celebrated its centenary on 25 August 2013 with a 100th Wattle Ball. *(Photo: wirrabara.com.au)*

TASMANIA

FRIENDS OF THE LAUNCESTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 2014)



The Friends of Launceston Mechanics' Institute Inc. recently held their first Annual General Meeting. Few organisations largely achieve their main goal in the first year and FOLMI can be justly proud of doing just that. They have saved the remnant collection of the former Launceston Mechanics' Institute library from dispersal and have had it turned over to their custody.

FOLMI have found a 'temporary' home at the University of Tasmania's Launceston Campus and are now in the process of assembling the collection from various stores for assessment, conservation and eventual cataloguing.

With some 19,000 items this is no small task and with many of those dating back to the 1800s there is a huge task of appropriate conservation, either by the short-term housing in sleeves, folders or boxes, or the immediate repair of the bindings.

To see how this was undertaken at Ballarat Mechanics' Institute, three members travelled over to Ballarat to make a site visit and consult with major participants in their heritage library's conservation.

Whilst many items from the original collection may be missing, FOLMI has inherited

a run of library catalogues dating back to the 1840s, and these will enable the reassembly of what will prove to be one of Australia's nationally significant heritage reference collections, showcasing not only the books, but also elements of their production, printing and binding.

No doubt funding will ultimately be forthcoming for restoration and the ultimate and appropriate stand alone housing of this unique collection.

Major philanthropists this your chance to have your name above the main door or on a room of a stand alone heritage library, or in a bookplate recognising your contribution to purchasing replacements for significant missing items or the conservation and repair of major items. You can register your initial interest with Mike McCausland – mmccausl@yahoo.com. *(Photo: Marion Sargent via launcestonmechanicsinstitute.blogspot.com.au)*

WARATAH ATHENAEUM (Est. 1886)



Waratah is 64km south of Burnie. In 1871 James 'Philosopher' Smith found tin at Mt Bischoff. The second Mechanics' Institute, the Waratah Athenaeum was 'formally opened' on 14 June 1887 with a production of 'Lancashire Lass' by the Waratah Excelsior Dramatic Club.

At the time the press noted 'Some fine scenery was introduced, the work of Messrs [H & C] Scudamore, who have executed a very creditable portrait of the Hon. James Smith over the [25ft wide by 18ft high] proscenium opening.' Scudamore supplied 'different sets of scenery'.

The Hall was built on stone foundations. It consisted of the: main hall of 50ft x 35ft; a stage of 50ft x 22ft6in; and at the rear were three dressing rooms 'with lavatories and other conveniences including fireplaces'. 'At the sides of the Hall are entrance porches which could be used as smoking rooms. A handsome verandah 50[ft] x 9[ft] extends.'

The Anglican and Cambridge University graduate the Rev. Charles Frederick L'Oste, President of the Institute 'made a few remarks in reference to the building of the hall, and the opposition shown to it, and to consequent disadvantages under which the Committee has laboured.'

The Hall was seized by the Bailiff in August 1890 on behalf of the mortgagee Building Society which was owed about £800. A public meeting was hastily convened and at that meeting it was resolved: 'That a company be formed to purchase the Athenaeum on behalf of the public.' The press noted 'It is now confidently expected that the Athenaeum and Library will be restored to the flourishing state it was in years ago.'

The Hall was used for various community activities: Methodist Church; Independent Order of Odd Fellows; School; Red Cross; election meetings; and indoor woodchopping competitions.

Today in a beautifully restored condition the Hall hosts **The Tarkine Interpretation Centre and Gallery** and houses the **John Henry 'Jackie' Robinson** (1887-1950) historical collection of photos, which showcases the birthplace of tin mining in Tasmania. The exhibited collection is based on 1000 glass negatives

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

TORBAY AGRICULTURAL HALL (Est. 1910)



Early sawmilling took place in the area and a railway was constructed in 1899 with Torbay Station as an important karri timber loading siding. It was also an important vegetable – tomato and potato growing area, with the produce also being sent by train. In 1900 a site nearby was set aside for a town and this was gazetted in 1910.

The Institute was established 1910 and the Hall built in 1912 and officially opened on 25 September by the Mayor of Abany HC Sims, who was accompanied by Mrs Sims. It was a 'gloriously fine moonlight night' with 'nearly

everyone in the district, upwards of 150 persons, present'. Dancing then took place, 'interspersed with songs, recitations, etc.' The Hall opened debt free with a credit balance of £13 on hand 'towards future extensions'.

The 22ft x 35ft Hall was constructed of jarrah 'on a spot which was once the centre of a large timber milling industry and now has quite a park like appearance'. Indeed it still exists as a cleared area surrounded by stands of trees.

In November 1912 a lecture, auspiced by the Eastwood-Torbay Progress Association, was given in the Hall. John Dennison Bratby, Government Potato Expert, delivered the afternoon discourse on 'Seed Selection and Sprouting' and exhibited a number of seed potatoes.

The Bush Pole Shelter was erected at the rear of the Hall in the 1930s. This was an undercover area for the display of livestock, particularly pigs, during the Agricultural Shows. A flagpole and paved apron are at the front of the Hall. The Hall interior displays district memorabilia. It is painted mission brown, with green and white trims. A blackboard is fixed to the front wall of the Hall which carries forthcoming or past events like 'Luke Loves Crystal' remained for a time after their wedding breakfast in the Hall.

Besides life events, the Hall is used for a weekly play group and for belly dancing fitness classes. The twice yearly Farmers' Market, in May and November, attracts upwards of fifty craft, food, produce and bric-a-brac stalls.

The Hall site hosts: the Bush Fire Brigade; and equestrian related activities which start from the Reserve, with a float parking area and manure bin. A Signage Shelter comprises panels on: Hall history; School history; and bird species.

A circular nature trail and a walking track are based on the Hall Reserve. These have been established with the assistance of the Green Corps. The Albany-Perth Munda Bindi Trail Foundation Bike Path passes through the Hall Reserve. The Bibbulmun Track, which leads south to the coast, can also be accessed from the Reserve.

UK

ENGLAND

DENHOLME MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1879)

The centrally located Denholme Institute, in West Yorkshire, serves its community well as a place of fitness, as a landmark and as a place



of entertainment. A pilates group meets there every Monday night. The Denholme village walking group meets outside the Institute every Thursday morning 'for slow steady exercise around the area'. And recently the St Paul's wives met there and heard Marilyn Foster talk on 'Holiday Travels'.

The bluestone Denholme Institute, in Main Street 'right at the heart of town', was built in 1880 and comprises four main areas: the Main Hall 15m x 10m with a stage has a seating capacity of 300; the Blue room 5m x 4m has a seating capacity of 100; the Reading Room 4.5m x 5.5m has meeting space for 25; then there is the all important kitchen.

MARSDEN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1844)

Marsden's **Tom Lonsdale**, who attended **MW 2004** in Melbourne, has recently stepped down as chair of Marsden MI. However prior to his 'retirement' Marsden commissioned a study by **Icarus** to take a review of the Institute's activities and operations. The result is an interesting document '**Review to Renew**' which can be accessed at [www: marsdenmechanics.co.uk](http://www.marsdenmechanics.co.uk). This is an interesting example for action for any Institute.

In the meantime Marsden MI is presently involved with Kirklees Council to discuss a 'buy back' which will require the Institute to generate considerable revenue into the future to maintain its aging building and support its community outreach.

NAILSWORTH SUBSCRIPTION ROOMS (Est. 1851)

Nailsworth is about 10 miles south of Stroud in Gloucestershire. The Institute was erected in



1852 following an appeal for subscriptions in £5 shares and donations. A total of £785 was raised and the building named the Subscription Rooms.

The ground floor housed the Mechanics' Institute with its library, whilst lectures (some delivered by lecturers of high repute), concerts, dramatic performances and social functions took place on the first floor in the main hall. By 1870 a coffee room had opened where chess and draughts were played. By that time 1000 books were available in the library and newspapers could be read. At the time twice-monthly lectures, debates and 'Penny Readings' also took place.

From about 1915 the Subscription Rooms became used as a cinema. In the meantime shares had been bought and sold and those extant were now sold to Mr Geoffrey Pavey-Smith. The premises remained in public use. In 1954 Mr. Pavey-Smith died and the distribution of his estate shows the building as being used mainly as a cinema with seating on the top floor for 336 with a ladies and gentlemen's hairdresser let to a Mr. Beach for £100.

In 1960 the building was sold and became the premises of the Boys Club affiliated to both the National Association of Boys Clubs and the Gloucestershire Association of Boys Clubs. Sports activities took place on the land at the rear of the building and there were hard surfaces for football and grass courts for lawn tennis.

At this time (1960) the ground floor room remained a reading room and Mechanics' Institute library. It subsequently became the Nailsworth Branch of the County Library. The library remained in the building until it moved to a purpose-built library/Police Station/Mortimer Rooms complex in 1973. A gentleman's barber shop was opened in the mid-1970s in the room vacated by the library.

The Nailsworth Boys Old Members Social Club (a licenced club) was founded in 1973 and took over occupancy of the rear room on the

ground floor behind the barber's shop. The Social Club remained there until 2000 when it closed due to occupational health and safety reasons. Nailsworth Tennis Club took out a 21 year lease with the Boys Club to use the land at the rear of the premises. They created two all weather surface tennis courts under floodlights, served by a small wooden pavilion.

Today the building is looked after by the registered charity, Nailsworth Youth and Community Enterprise, a committee of volunteer members and the space is made available for community use such as music, exhibitions, sport, films, plays and private parties. (Photo: Gloucester Rural Community Council website)

SCOTLAND

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART (Est. 1845)

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART STANDS DEFIANT IN FIRE



We all watched in real time on the television and internet pictures of the iconic **Glasgow School of Art** burning fiercely on 23 May. Fortunately they were able to isolate the part of the basement where records and many artworks were stored. Further the heroic savings by personnel from the **Scottish Rescue and Fire Service** and others saved an estimated 70% of the contents of the buildings, including some student course work, according to BBC sources. However they lost their distinctive heritage library, one of the world's finest reference collections for art and architecture.

The building was designed by **Charles Rennie Mackintosh** (1868-1928) in 1897 and it took until 1909 to complete the whole project. An engineering post-fire survey of the building structure has rendered it '90%' viable. We wish the School's **Muriel Gray** and her fellow Governors well with fundraising for a speedy restoration.

We'll let Scotland's Deputy First Minister **Nicola Sturgeon** tweet the final line 'Thoughts

with everyone @GSofA. The Mackintosh Building is not just part of Glasgow's heritage it is a national treasure.' Indeed we might add 'world treasure'. (Photo: tripadvisor.co.uk)

WALES

CWMAMAN PUBLIC HALL & INSTITUTE (Est. 1867)



The economic downturn has hit the community badly and consequently the Institute which was redeveloped in 1992-93, to also include a 286-seat theatre. The Institute costs around £110,000 a year to run including significant interest and repayments and there is a need reduce this amount.

The Committee of Management have launched a Program involving members and users titled '**Planning to Succeed**'. They have started with a series of fundraisers: '**Swing to Classics**'; Frank Vickery's hysterical comedy '**Family Planning**'; **Cwambach (sixty member) Male Choir's 'Voices of the Valleys'**'; and '**Lest We Forget: A World War I Remembrance Concert**'.

Goodluck to you all and strength to your resolve!

OAKDALE WORKMEN'S INSTITUTE (Est. c1916)



The museum extends over 104 acres and is something like a Welsh version of Sovereign Hill with a stately home attached. St. Fagans Castle, a late 16th century manor house, was donated with the attached land by the Earl of Plymouth

in 1946 to the people of Wales. Since then over forty original buildings have been moved from various parts of Wales and re-erected at St. Fagans to show how people lived through the past centuries. One of these buildings is the Workmen's Institute, originally built in Oakdale, Caerphilly in 1916 and re-erected at St. Fagans National History Museum in 1995.

Miners' Institutes and Workmen's Halls were once common features in the industrialised areas of south and north-east Wales at the end of the 19th century. They provided a focus for social, educational and cultural activities.

In 1907 the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company started work on a new coal mine and 'model village' at Oakdale. Ten years later a purpose-built Library and Institute was opened in the village centre. It was funded by a loan from the Company which the miners repaid over the following years. The building included a Library, Reading Room and Committee Room on the ground floor and two small offices for the Institute's secretary and manager. A concert hall, seating up to 300 people, occupied the whole of the first floor. A separate, but linked, billiards room was housed in a flat-roofed building behind the Institute, on top of which was later built a larger public hall which was, in turn, adapted for use as a cinema. The Institute buildings were used for concerts, eisteddfodau, political meetings, lectures, pigeon and poultry shows, dances and miners' lodge meetings, as well as providing venues for local clubs and societies ranging from the Women's Institute to the Silver Band.

The Institute closed in 1987 and in 1989 the building was dismantled stone by stone and transported to St. Fagans. The 286 seat theatre was too large for the site and was not moved. The very imposing entrance floor was not able to be moved so an identical floor was constructed with the letters W and I prominently displayed. Whilst the books in the library room are not the original collection, the Museum already had a large collection of books and was able to shelve those looking most suitable. Entry to the room is gated.

Photo and Text: Corinne Brewis

USA

WORCESTER MECHANICS' HALL (Est. 1841)

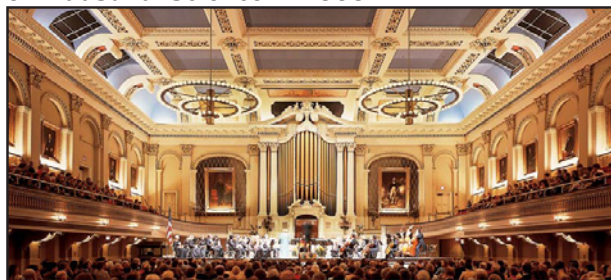
One of the first Institutes to come up in any Google search of "Mechanics' Hall" is that of Worcester in the US State of Massachusetts. The 1857 Hall still exists with vastly updated visitor services to facilitate its use largely as a theatre.



*The exterior of the Mechanics' Hall in Worcester.
Photo: Wikipedia*

The Institute was formed from a meeting held on 27 November 1841 called by **Anthony Chase** and by February 1842 the Worcester County Mechanics' Association was launched. Lectures were commenced, a library was assembled and classes started.

In 1854 **Ichabod Washburn**, a self-made wire manufacturer and millionaire, offered to buy a site and donate \$10,000 to build a Hall on it. Work started on the Hall in July 1855 and the Hall was finally opened in March 1857 at a cost of around an embarrassing £160,000. A scheme of arrangement was finally settled with the creditors in 1860. In the meantime the Hall was well-used and Washburn gave an organ in 1863. Classes were taken away from the Hall with the opening of the Worcester County Free Institute of Industrial Science in 1868.



*An acoustical masterpiece.
Photo: Worcester Mechanics' Hall website*

The building fell into the doldrums of the 1930s and 1940s and was unsuccessfully offered for sale in 1948. The saviour was the solid revival of lectures, which attracted such numbers that two sessions were required. Added were wrestling, roller skating and musical competitions which saved the Hall was saved for posterity. Today Worcester Mechanics' Hall is one of the finest heritage theatres and performing arts spaces in the US, indeed an acoustical masterpiece.

The History Page

These pages are a clearing house of ideas and trivia that people come across. Let us have your snippets or queries and who knows? Send your items in to the Editor.

TRAVELS ON THE AMAZON...FROM THE LIBRARY AT SHEEP HILLS

Sheep Hills is located on the railway line south of Warracknabeal. The **Sheep Hills Mechanics' Institute** was established in 1887 and the Hall was built in 1888 on a site donated by **Samuel Moreton**. In 1889 it was noted there were 142 volumes in the library and it had received 'a grant for £10-14-5 to purchase [a further] 60 volumes'. The Hall was replaced in 1910 which provided for a reading room. In 1944 it was noted 'A few books from the Library were donated to the Red Cross Ladies for their book appeal.'

The following ex-libris book has been brought to our attention:

Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro, / With an Account of The Native Tribes, / and Observations on the Climate, Geology, and Natural History of the Amazon Valley / by / Alfred Russel Wallace, LLD, / author of the Malay Archipelago, Darwinism, etc, etc. / with portrait, full page illustrations, / and biographical introduction. / London: / Ward, Lock & Co., Limited, / New York and Melbourne [1889]. Hardback. vxi, 363, 12p plates, 2p advert. 125x195mm.

Book includes: Biographical Introduction, by the editor, GTB [George Thomas Bettany]; Author Preface to 1853 edition; and New Edition 1889; detailed Contents of seventeen chapters; List of Illustrations; Map of the Amazon River and the

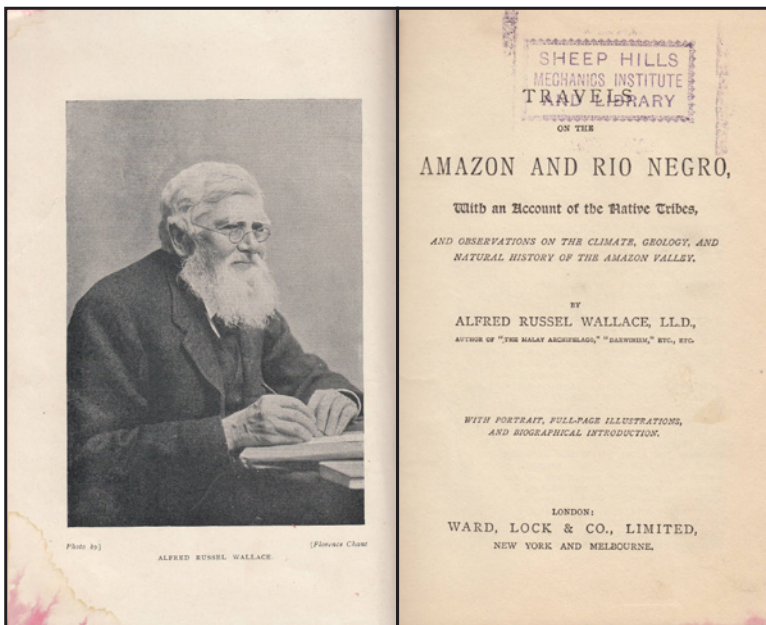
Northern Part of South America; Text; and two page advertisement for the 'The Minerva Library: New Series'. Bound in maroon cloth, gold blocked on spine and cover, cover blind embossed. Front endpaper in white; rear endpaper in black.

Marginalia includes: Front endpaper: pastedown, handwritten in pencil '1/6'; fly handwritten in ink 'R Lenhog? 95', in pencil 'J/A', handwritten in crayon '457'; page i, oval stamp in purple ink in capital letters 'Mechanics Institute Sheep Hills' encircling handwritten in crayon '524'; titlepage, rectangular stamp in purple ink in capital letters 'Sheep Hills/ Mechanics Institute/ and Library'; and page xvii, rectangular stamp repeated.

The author, the editor claims was 'the co-discoverer with Mr [Charles] Darwin of the principle of natural selection as the main agent of the evolution of species, has in his published works travelled over a much more diversified range of subjects than Mr Darwin'.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), Naturalist, Explorer, Geographer, Anthropologist and Biologist was born in Usk, Monmouthshire, Wales in 1823. He was educated at Hertford Grammar School and apprenticed to his brother William as a surveyor. Later he attended London Mechanics' Institute. He went into partnership with and his other brother, John in an architectural civil engineering firm 1841-48 in Neath and designed the Neath Mechanics' Institute, founded in 1843. He lectured at the Institute in science and engineering during that time. Interested in the travels of naturalists Alexander von Humboldt and Charles Darwin,

he left for South America on 1848 and returned in 1852. He then travelled to the Malay Archipelago from 1854-62 where he noted the zoogeographical boundary on the 'Wallace Line' in Indonesia which 'divides' fauna to Asia or Australasia. He wrote several books. Charles Darwin succeeded in having Wallace granted a £200 pension in 1881.. He 'retired' to live in Dorset in 1902, and died there in 1913. He was married with three children. The *New York Times* in its obituary called him 'the last of the giants belonging to that wonderful group of intellectuals that included among others, Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, Lyell, and Owen, whose daring



The History Page cont...

investigations revolutionised and evolutionised the thought of the century'. Significant events are being held around the world in 2013-14 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his death. A bronze statue of him looking up at Wallace's golden birdwing butterfly (*Ornithoptera Croesus*) was unveiled by Sir David Attenborough at the British Natural History Museum on 7 November 2013.

CROCKERY MADE TO LAST... AND LAST



At the Kilmore Regional Halls Forum **Margaret Moore** from **Hotel Agencies** told us to invest in good crockery... 'it will last for ages'. The attached images prove it. When the **Nangus (NSW) Hall** was built in 1914, **Mrs Ada Beveridge**, ordered a monogrammed suite of crockery from Stoke-on-Trent in England. It duly arrived in 1915, with its distinctive Victoria blue 'Nangus Hall' monogram, and it has been in use in the Hall ever since. The vast amount remains, but sadly some has been souvenired in the intervening century.

THE LEGION OF THE SPANNER, LATHE AND FORGE

It is now twenty-five years since the publication of the late **Trevor Cockbill's** (1930-99) *Finest Thing Out – A Chronicle of Swindon's Torchlit Days: The Story of the Mechanics' Institute at New Swindon: Part One – 1843-1873*. We recently sighted a copy and you can understand why the folks of Swindon are 'battling' for their Institute. However what did catch our eye was the slogan on the front of the book 'From All the Corners of the Kingdom... They Came and Brought their Skills, This Legion of the Spanner, Lathe and Forge.'

JUNIOR ORDER OF THE UNITED AMERICAN MECHANICS (JOUAM), WHATCOM

Our attention was drawn to a picture of this building querying the background of the JOUAM.



Known as the TG Richards building, built in 1858, it has been variously used as a warehouse, courthouse, gaol, and from 1895-1955 by fraternal organisations.

The building was purchased by road contractor Jasper Marion Riddle in 1922 and he gifted it to the Junior Order of the United American Mechanics, Whatcom Council No. 1 which had occupied the building since 1918. They used it until 1945 when it was sold to the Jehovah's Witness Church.

Today the TG Richards building is regarded as the oldest remaining brick building in the State of Washington and has been owned by the Whatcom County Historical Society since 2004.

Background

The Junior Order of the United American Mechanics began in 1853 as a youth affiliate of the Order of United American Mechanics established in 1848. In 1885 it became its own organisation and eventually took over its parent Order. It was originally an all male native US-born anti-Catholic organisation, which supported free education through a public school system. Today is open to all people aged 16-50 regardless of sex, race and creed. The Daughters of America is its female auxiliary.

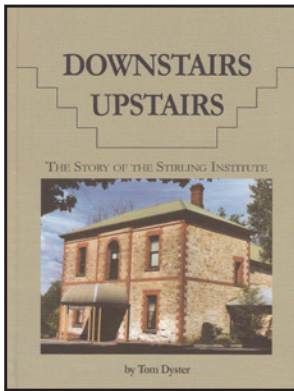
By 1923 it had 253,399 Funeral Benefit Department members and 22,519 Beneficiary Degree members, and was headquartered in Chicago, but with Councils in almost every American State. It also had a home for orphans of deceased members in Tiffin, Ohio which housed 800-900 children.

By 1979 membership had dwindled to 8500 spread over 400 branches. It was headquartered in Willow Grove, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It published as bi-monthly newspaper *Junior American*. The JOUAM insignia is a bent arm clasp a hammer above the shoulder, with overarching compasses, above a set-square.

(Photo: whatcomhistory.net)

Book Reviews

Downstairs, Upstairs: The Story of the Stirling Institute



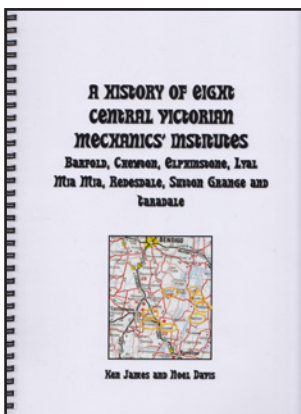
Tom Dyster. Stirling (SA): Stirling Institute, 2000. Paperback, facsim, illus, plans, ports, bibliog, index. 1 6 0 x 2 0 0 m m . 0646394878.

Tom Dyster's succinct chapter heads, 'celeb' quotes and an engaging text tells of 'the ghosts' real and

imagined, of an iconic Institute, that have risen within and around the site since 1882. It starts with the excavation of the largely donated site by the Big Dig of the Spades and Quills urged on by the Perseverance Band. Thereon arose a two-storey building used for lively debates, a library, theatre, film and much more. Then in 1970 the spectre of Mr Woolworth in the form of a shopping centre, changed life in Stirling forever. A youthful scientist **Peter Lee** led the charge to turn the Institute into one of the top theatrical and dance centres in the State, with youth solidly included. The apt cartoons of **Denis Noble**, with many pictures makes this a model Mechanics' story, not only for its text, but its example.

Available from: Ms Carole Dunstan, 94 Piccadilly Road, Crafers, SA 5152. \$20.00 Posted

A History of Eight Central Victorian Mechanics' Institutes



by Ken James and Noel Davis. Self Published, 2012. Paperback, 190p, illus, 210x300mm.

This is the first in-depth study of a regional group of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria and it will prove a valuable addition to available literature. Mechanics' Institutes, as this

study shows, were pivotal to their communities. The history of an individual Institute was in effect the partial history of many community organisations, as they met and fundraised

there. Schools used them, or in Barfold's case it inherited the school. Churches used them as did Councils, in addition to a plethora of cultural and sporting organisations.

Central to Institute life was a library and in this region's case there was **Sir William Zeal** who supported the library activities of Institutes by donating books and/or periodical subscriptions. In addition they received State and in the case of the studied Institutes some also received Council funding.

Dance was also another universal feature of Institute life and there was a range of musicians and bands that played on the circuit of Mechanics' Halls.

Film also appears to have been part of a number of the study Institutes and the visiting picture show man was a looked forward to aspect of rural life.

This is very much a model for future work, it is well referenced and illustrated with contemporary pictures and documents. This volume, with plans of the various Halls, Government documents and reports, lists of uses, lists of accounts, office-bearers and other minutiae is finished with a surname index. There are also the various movers and shakers and we see photos or word portraits of a number of these.

For anyone contemplating the writing of an Institute, or even an Association history, this is a good volume to work through, to see just what could be available by way of the source material that may be sourced in your area.

Available from: Ken James, 18 Lofty Avenue, Camberwell, V 3124. \$34.00 Posted.

History of the Burrawang School of Arts 1883-2009



by Sally Darling. Burrawang: Burrawang School of Arts, 2009. Paperback. 66p, illus, plans, ports, lists of members. 160x220mm. This is the tale of a composite of three halls: The Oddfellows Hall (1883); Library (1906); and Dance Hall (1915). All

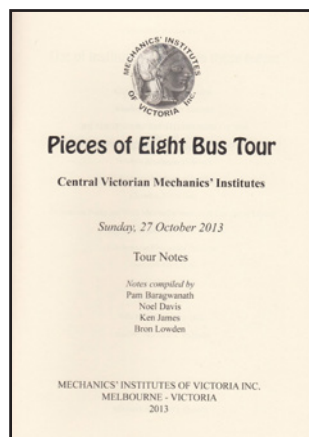
Book Reviews cont...

are now joined together. The author ably takes us through the various phases and how the then extant Committees have managed. The 'Significant Dates' documents 'Library', 'Dance' and 'Electricity Connection'.

The impending centenary proved to be the turning point for what then seemed to be the doomed Institute and was the spur to its solid re-birth. Community working bees enabled a massive makeover of the buildings in time for the centenary celebrations. Since then the long-running Easter Market Day, film and craft activities have sustained the Institute. The story finishes with the eventual landscaping of the whole site. This well compiled book provides an inspiration for all Institutes and communities, detailing events like the Village Garage Sale and the Bushmen's Signfest.

Available from: Mrs Simone Joseph, 35 Hoddle Street, Burrawang, NSW 2577. \$20 posted.

MIV Bus Tour Notes



by various authors. 2006-2013. Paperback, number of pages vary, illus, 148x210mm.

Tour Notes booklets from some of MIV's bus tours are available for purchase.

- **Goldfields** (2006)
- **Alps and Athenaeums** (2008)
- **Heading for the Hills** (2012)

- Pieces of Eight (2013)

Available from: Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria. \$5.00 per copy. Postage: \$2 per copy, discount postage for bulk orders.

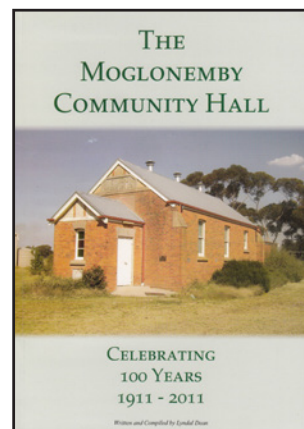
The Moglonemby Community Hall: Celebrating 100 Years 1911-2011

by Lyndal Dean. Moglonemby: Moglonemby Community Hall Committee, 2011. Paperback. 94p, b&w illus, index. 210x300mm.

A well researched and illustrated history of a hall-based community. It tells the inspirational story of how a district faced up to losing its identity – its hall in 2001. The key was the resolve to reinstate the Hall and use it for several regular annual events and it has worked. This is

a blueprint for ongoing Hall success with 'a will, working bees and planning what's on?' We compliment the author in recording this most valuable story.

Available from: Moglonemby Community Hall Committee, C/- Mrs Lyndal Dean, 3772 Murchison-Violet Town Road, Violet Town, V 3669. \$25.00 posted.



Moyston Hall: Centenary 1914-2014



by Anne Marshall and Neil Wilde. Moyston: Moyston Hall Committee, 2014. Paperback. 80p, b&w illus, bibliog. 160x210mm.

The Moyston Mechanics' Institute acquired the Moyston Hotel in 1868. By the early 1900s a replacement building

was needed and the present Moyston Hall was built in 1914. The 1948 decision to accept the photographic collection of Cr Alex McDonald depicting district pioneers was momentous and the book utilises many of these with the story of the various families. The photographic montage 'In Honour of the Noble Response of the Manhood of Moyston and District to the National Call for Men 1914-18' is a lasting tribute to those fifty-three men. The Minute Book summary is as an admirable overview. This well produced book is a great and lasting tribute to all concerned in organising the current Moyston Hall's centenary over the past century.

Available from: Moyston Hall Committee, Mrs Anne Marshall, 435 Wallaces Road, Moyston, V 3377. \$20.00 Posted.

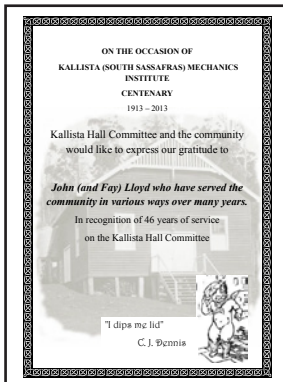
If your Institute has written a history which is available for sale and has not been reviewed, please let us know.

Our People



Prahran Mechanics' Institute President **Cr John Chandler** received a Medal of the Order of Australia in the January 2014 Australia Day Honours. The award was for services to Local Government and to the City of Stonnington. Cr Chandler was first elected to Prahran City

Council in 1982, and became Council representative on Prahran's Committee in 1982-83. John first served as Mayor in 1988 and Institute President at the same time. Elected to Prahran's Committee in 1995, he served as Vice-President on 2007 and President since 2010. When John first joined the Prahran Committee the landmark decision had just been taken to establish the Victorian Local History Collection. Now he is tasked with overseeing a new era in a new home. Congratulations John. *(Photo: www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/)*



Kallista presented Hall stalwart and office-bearer **John Lloyd** with a Life Membership at their centenary celebration in March. John, with his wife **Fay**, has also had long-term involvement with the Monbulk and District Historical Society.

The indomitable **Ivar Nelsen**, set aside valuable time to come and ably support the Kilmore Regional Halls Forum. Ivar's message has always been 'If you don't use it you'll lose it!' and 'Make your Hall relevant!' In between his private heritage consultancy work Ivar serves as Heritage Advisor in three Shires - Alpine, Macedon Ranges and Mansfield.



Picola's **Michelle Ryan** is most certainly devoted to her local Hall and the Institute Movement in general, not to mention the Victorian Young Farmers. Following her very recent marriage, she hurried back from

her honeymoon to attend the Regional Halls Forum at Kilmore. That afternoon she hurried home to attend her own house warming. Now there is commitment. *(Photo VYF facebook)*



Former Director of Heritage Victoria **Ray Tonkin** has certainly not been idle in his retirement. (The annual Ray Tonkin Heritage Volunteer Award celebrates his contribution to Heritage Conservation and

Planning in Victoria.) Ray is noted for his inciteful Report looking at the future and use of the Kyneton Mechanics' Institute which has impacted greatly on community life and use of that building, particularly by youth. Ray was recently in conversazione with **Professor Gerard Vaughan** at the first of a trio of events on urban heritage: **Balancing development and urban heritage in Melbourne: Have we got it right? Where to now?** looking at Melbourne and its heritage into the future. *(Photo: Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure website)*



William Geoffrey 'Bill' Falkenberg, a prominent beekeeper and member of the Balmoral community was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the Australia Day Honours. The award was 'For service to primary industry through executive roles with apiculture associations'. Bill has also served the community well and is involved in many community organisations including the Balmoral Mechanics' Institute of which he has been a Committee member since 1980. He has been ably supported in his many community endeavours by his wife **Heather** and their family. *(Photo: Abby Hamilton via thespec.com.au)*

Insurance specialist **Bill Hogg** has recently 'retired' from full-time management with Jardine Lloyd Thompson in Melbourne. Bill addressed the Workshop session at **Mechanics' Worldwide** (Melbourne) Conference in 2004

Our People cont...



and recently came out of retirement to address the Regional Halls Forum at Kilmore. We sincerely thank Bill for his assistance on insurance matters over the years and we wish him and his wife well in their retirement and continued safe travels to

Scotland and beyond. *(Photo: www.imc.org.au)*

Leonards Hill entrepreneur **Dot Rae** must have chalked up some sort of record for the organising her 41st annual Baby Show recently held at the Leonards Hill Hall. Dot Liversidge, as she was then known entered the Daylesford Spa Princess competition in 1970 as Miss Agriculture honing her fundraising skills. The first Baby Show in 1973 was used to fundraise for the swimming pool, but subsequent shows have been a major fundraiser for the Hall. Well done Dot. Roy Liversidge, Dot's father, chalked up some fifty years on the Hall Committee prior to his death in 1989.



We've recently heard that Wanganella Hall's **Sonja Lefebure** has sold the Wanganella General Store. This means that she will no longer be available make her mouthwatering cakes for the Hall's catering or

drive 'Goliath' the Hall's formidable scrubber polisher. We wish Sonja and her husband all the best in their retirement and we are sure they will be missed on their mail round. *(Photo: Roslyn Lowden)*



Hardworking local Bendigo East MP **Jacinta Allan** recently attended a morning tea in the Dinglee Memorial Hall to gain elector feedback. She was accompanied by her recently born son Cormack, her mother

Peggy and and her Office Manager Sue McKenzie. *(Photo: Roslyn Lowden)*



Toodyay (WA) Library volunteer reader, **Mrs Alison Jones**, was short-listed for the recent Volunteering WA 'Volunteer of the Year' Award. For a decade stalwart

Alison has been reading to the town's babies and toddlers with Baby Rhyme Time and Toddlers Story Time on her effervescent energetic style. Her weekly readings have been a resounding hit for her charges. *(Photo: Toodyay Public Library facebook)*

Vale



Football legend **Thomas Stanley Raymond 'Tom' Hafey's** passing on 12 May 2014 will bring back memories to many Hall managers and communities across Victoria. Stories are aplenty, as were his 'pep talks' to country school

children advocating his roadmap for life, the **Four Ds – Desire, Dedication, Discipline** and

Determination. These stirring renditions will have had impact, and continue to resonate, on the destinies of those present. Truly an inspiration for his humanity, personal example and physical fitness, Tom Hafey deserved his legendary status. We mourn his loss as will his wife **Maureen**, daughters **Rhonda, Karen** and **Joanne**, and the many communities he touched.

Go make a 'cuppa', sit down and think of Tom Hafey as an all-round good bloke, one of nature's true gentlemen.

We are sure that is the way he would have wished to be toasted and remembered. *(Photo: theage.com.au)*

Community Page

RECIPE

Australian farmers and manufacturers, many of which are Institute volunteers and contributors, deserve our support. Hopefully the purchase of these Australian grown or made products will help reward them.

BEETROOT SALAD

You will need for two servings

1 medium beetroot
 Half a small red onion, sliced thinly
 50g baby spinach leaves, destalked
 Quarter of a cup of lightly roasted walnuts
 75g crumbled fetta cheese
 Half a teaspoon of Dijon mustard
 1 tablespoon of olive oil
 2 tablespoons of orange juice

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Take a washed and dried beetroot and wrap it in foil. Place on a baking tray and roast it for an hour. Let it cool for fifteen minutes.
2. Combine spinach, onion, fetta and walnuts with sliced beetroot.
3. Pour olive oil and orange juice into a screw top jar, add Dijon mustard. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Screw on lid to tight. Shake jar vigorously. Sprinkle over salad and toss.

Enjoy your roasted beetroot and fetta salad.

SPOT THE 'BAKER'S DOZEN' REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE No. 34

1. Which organisation contributed financially to sponsor the Kilmore Forum?
2. In which month is History Week?
3. What is the title of the most recent Stanley Athenaeum Exhibition?
4. Which Hall celebrates its centenary in June?
5. Which Institute recently had MIV Plaque No. 34 unveiled?
6. Where is the Gobur Hall Library presently housed?
7. Who led the group to save the Stirling Institute?
8. Which Hall is in serious consideration for demolition?
9. What historic item was recently gifted to Prahran Mechanics' Institute?

10. What Institute library purchased *Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro*?
11. Which Institutes burned down from film screening fires?
12. Who loved Crystal on the Torbay Agricultural Hall blackboard?
13. What dance group operates out of the Sailors Gully Hall?
(How did you go? Answers in the next issue, if we can find them!)

SPOT THE 'BAKER'S DOZEN' REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE NO. 33 - ANSWERS

1. Pieces of Eight; 2. Amanda Millar, MLC; 3. Ballarat; 4. Meenyan; 5. Prahran; 6. Chewton Domain Society; 7. Johnsonville; 8. Alf Wesson; 9. Warrandyte Mechanics' Institute Arts Association; 10. Olinda; 11. Popanyinning; 12. Foster Community Bendigo Bank; 13. Agricultural Hall

WHERE'S BOBBY?



Can you identify which Mechanics' Institute in Victoria MIV's President is standing in front of? The winning Member or Institute will be announced in the next issue (if it is guessed correctly)! Send through your guesses to the Editor by 1 August 2014 for your entry to count. There will be a surprise for the winner!

Ideas & Opportunities

YOUNG FARMERS TO COMMUNITY LEADERS

We must involve youth in our Halls. There is a strong move in progress to re-establish the Young Farmers movement across Victoria. There was once some 200 Young Farmers Clubs in Victoria but two years ago that had dwindled to around five. Since then that number has doubled to ten, with a number of new clubs planned.

Venues besides Hotels can be costly. This is where Hall Committees can show real leadership and be proactive. They can offer a room rent-free to fledgling local Young Farmers groups and ask for a representative to sit on the Hall Committee. In return the Club could offer an annual fundraiser.

Looking back over the years Councils and Community Groups used to be led by people who were skilled with debating and organising skills honed in the Young Farmers and it can be so again. Why not sponsor a Club?

TEAMING UP FOR MAJOR EVENTS

Staging events in your Hall can attract financial risk and consequently many community-enriching events simply do not proceed. Lloyds insurance starting insuring shipping in 1688 by spreading the risk through a number of members. So the idea is not new, so why not invite other community organisations to be partners in various arts ventures. They can not only share the risk but also the profits. Furthermore there is a greater potential for more bottles on seats, the more the organisations and/or people involved.

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS EACH YEAR

One of the things found in trying to make contact with the various Central Victorian Halls for the Forum was the lack of contact information with respective Shires, on the web or even through the local Post Office where mail was sent 'care of' as last resort and was returned. Ways to overcome this is to advise your Council each year of contact details after the AGM. Similarly the Post Office. One way for constant reliable and ongoing contact is via a Post Office Box Number. The number remains unchanged and succeeding officers are provided with a key.

A COOK'S TOUR

In the past we have read about the interchange of visits between the York and Leeds Mechanics' Institutes in the 1840s. These tours influenced the business plan of Thomas Cook. Let us then take tours back to their grass roots. Could an

Institute or Institutes not be invited with plenty of lead time to visit for a major event at your Institute. They could then hire a bus and perhaps stay over for the weekend. Institutes could 'twin' up across the State, interstate or even overseas. Dunrobin, for example, has opportunities in Canada, New Zealand and of course Scotland.

DIRECTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES

If you are a member of MIV and run a library service, you are entitled to apply to have your details included on the MIV page of the Victorian Directory of Public Library Services. www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/localgovernment/find-a-public-library

HOME IS WHERE THE HALL IS! REGISTRATIONS ARE OPEN NOW!

Home Is Where The Hall Is celebrates the creativity in our Community Halls.

At the heart of a town, the Community Hall provides a focal point, always ready for any gathering. Today it's an art gallery, tomorrow it's a theatre, next week it's home to a live art creative development. In times of joy, the Community Hall houses weddings and celebrations; in difficult times, it's where people gather quickly to face emergencies together.

All across Victoria, Community Halls are central to the ongoing project of making place. Their flexible form and their locally-driven uses continue to offer valuable insights for creative practice all across our regions as well as our cities. Each November, **Regional Arts Victoria** invites you to shine the spotlight on your Community Hall.

HIWTHI events do not have to be new, you can register your regular events which take place throughout November on their website: homeiswherethehallis.com

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND PAYOUTS

The Fund's **Putting Locals First Program** recently saw the following Halls share in the latest distribution: Bethanga, Brimpaen, Chewton Town Hall, Corner Inlet, Cudegwa, Elaine, Fawcett, Gapstead, Jeetho, Leitchville, Lyonville, Majorca, Meeniyan, Molesworth, Mollonghip, Pomonal, Port Albert, Rupanyup, St James, St Leonards, Trafalgar East, Yackandandah and Yarck. Well done all in getting your applications prepared and submitted.

There also appears to blanket money for Hall updates in the Moyne and West Wimmera Shires.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTES FILM DIRECTORY

This Directory is a guide only and it is suggested that you ring or email ahead for confirmation of dates and times. If contacts or phone numbers have changed please let us know. Equally let us know if we have missed out on regular Mechanics' film venues.

BALLAARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

117 Sturt Street, Ballarat, V 3350

BALLARAT FILM SOCIETY (Est. 1992)

Second Thursday of the month, except December
Buninyong Film Festival annually in May

Contact: Suzanne Nunn. Tel: 5341 2266; Meg Tasker. Tel: 0431 297 932

Website: www.buninyong.vic.au/filmfestival/index

BANNOCKBURN CULTURAL CENTRE

27 High St, Bannockburn, V 3331

BANNOCKBURN MOVIES FILM SOCIETY (Est. 2012)

Six to eight films annually with some external community screenings

Contact: Robert Timms (03) 5281 1468

BARWON HEADS COMMUNITY HALL

79 Hitchcock Avenue, Barwon Heads, V 3227

BARWON HEADS FILM SOCIETY (Est. 2000)

Last Thursday of the month
Biennial Film Festival

Contact: Alex Kuebler 0417 505 463
Email: barwonheadsfilmsociety@hotmail.com

CAMPERDOWN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

210-212 Manifold Street, Camperdown, V 3260

CORANGAMITE FILM SOCIETY (est. 2011)

First Thursday of each month
Contact: Simon Buccheri. Tel: 0412 943 799

Box 89, Camperdown, V 3260

FAWCETT HALL & FREE LIBRARY

655 Spring Creek Road, Fawcett, V 3714

Occasional screenings.

Contact: Ian Newman. Tel: (03) 5772 3227

FISH CREEK HALL

12 Falls Road, Fish Creek, V 3959

PROM COAST FILM SOCIETY (Est. 2011)

First Friday of the month, excepting January

Contact: Andrew Oldroyd. Tel: 0439 884 311

Website: famda.org.au

KALORAMA - FARNDONS HALL

42 Falls Road, at Farndons Road, Kalorama, V 3766

FARNDONS HALL MOVIE CLUB

Fridays, 1.30-3.30pm

Contact: Ian or Jean. Tel: (03) 9728 4431

KINGLAKE WEST MECHANICS' HALL

1055 Kinglake Road, Kinglake West, V 3757

KINGLAKE RANGES FILM SOCIETY (Est. 2007)

Occasional screenings.

Contact: Rowan Sharp. Tel: 0435 414 110

MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM LIBRARY

188 Collins St, Melbourne, V 3000

SCREEN CLUB (Est. 2011)

First Wednesday of the Month
6-9pm

Contact: (03) 9650 3100

NATIMUK & DISTRICT SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HALL

Wimmera Highway (Main Street), Natimuk, V 3409

ARAPILES MOTION PICTURE SOCIETY - PALAIS DE PIXEL (Est. 2008)

Second Tuesday of each month, except December-February

Contact: Mark or Elaine Uebergang. Tel: (03) 5387 1223

SWANPOOL & DISTRICT MEMORIAL HALL

2386 Midland Highway, Swanpool, V 3673

SWANPOOL CINEMA INC. (Est. 2012)

Screenings most Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays.

Annual Environmental Film Festival in June

Contact: (03) 5768 2415; 0498 007 988

Box 640, Benalla, V 3672

Website: www.swanpoolcinema.com.au

ST ANDREWS HALL

Cnr Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews and Heidelberg-Kinglake Roads, St Andrews, V 3761

ST ANDREWS FILM SOCIETY

Third Friday of the month

Contact: John Brenan. Tel: 0409 197 707

Box 48, St Andrews, V 3761

WARBURTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

3409 Warburton Hwy, Warburton, V 3799

YARRA RANGES FILM SOCIETY

Second Tuesday of the Month and Annual Film Festival

Contact: Joanna Guthrie. Tel: 5966 2987

Website: yarrarangesfilmsociety.org.au

YARROWEYAH MEMORIAL HALL

Cnr Murray Valley Highway/Gooley Street, Yarroweyah, V 3644

MOIRA FILM GROUP

Third Wednesday of the month

Contact: Maureen McKinnon (03) 5872 2414

FEDERATION OF VICTORIA FILM SOCIETIES (Est. 1949)-

Secretary: Susan Davidson, Box 125, Mitcham, V 3132. Tel: (03) 9873 1369

**NEXT ISSUE:
THE CENTENARY OF
ANZAC**
See survey form in this issue.
Please return by 1 August 2014.