



Useful Knowledge

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
MECHANICS' INSTITUTES OF VICTORIA INC.

NO. 38 – SPRING 2015

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MIV'S INAUGURAL WESSON LECTURE 14 NOVEMBER 2015

At the most recent Committee meeting of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria it was resolved to establish an annual lecture in conjunction with the Association's Annual General Meeting. The name of **Alf Wesson** was advanced as a person who did much early valuable work to document and photograph



Left: Alf Wesson (Photo: Wesson family); Right: Professor Weston Bate OAM (Photo: scotch.vic.edu.au)

Victoria's Institutes during his decade with the Council of Adult Education from 1962-72. This idea was submitted to the Wesson family and we are delighted in their agreement to have the lecture so named.

MIV is now nearing its second decade and I am reminded of the sentiments of **Professor John Bishop** of the University of Adelaide's Department of Music in words he wrote at the conclusion of the first Adelaide Festival in 1960.

"Something has been born that will live... this thing will go on..."

But it is important to keep up the standards. It is important too, to stir people up.'

Professor Bishop was the inaugural Festival Artistic Director. He was no wilting violet and neither was Alf Wesson. Neckties were not his forte and he spoke freely on issues connected with non-formal adult education. Alf also categorised Mechanics' Institutes into three categories: Chapel Cheapies, Goldfields Glorious

or Bush Classics. Alf was a polymath and the sort of person who would frequent an Institute.

We have been very humbled to have been honoured by **Professor Weston Bate OAM** who has accepted the role in delivering the inaugural Wesson Lecture. Professor Bate has given long public service to

the State of Victoria firstly by wartime service with the Royal Air Force as a Lancaster pilot in Britain, and then in education. Since 'retirement' he has worked tirelessly to lift the profile of local history in the Victorian community and also to Government. Professor Bate authored the local history 'model' *History of Brighton* in 1963, and the two volume Ballarat history *Lucky City and Life after Gold*. Known widely for his research craft he also wrote the highly entertaining *Essential but Unplanned: the story of Melbourne's lanes* (1994). Professor Bate can and will 'stir people up'. **Be at the AGM at 10am and then stay on for the Wesson Lecture at 11am on 14 November 2015. Please RSVP to the MIV Secretary for catering purposes.**

NOTICE OF MIV'S ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING IS
ENCLOSED IN THIS ISSUE.
14 NOVEMBER 2015,
PRAHRAN MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,
39 ST EDMONDS ROAD, PRAHRAN, 10AM

Coming Events - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- 16-18 Christmas Hills Inaugural Art and Craft Show
- 18-25 History Week
- 21 Marcus Clarke Lecture: Deborah Cheetham AO - "Time to sing a new song. Can Australians be "young and free" forever?" - Melbourne Athenaeum Library, 6pm
- 28 Marcus Clarke Lecture: Peter Williams - "After the Flowerdale bushfires" - Melbourne Athenaeum Library, 6pm
- 31 Friends of Castlemaine Library Book Sale, Castlemaine Library Foyer 9.30am - 3pm. Enquiries: focalcas@gmail.com

NOVEMBER

- 1-30 Home is Where the Hall Is!
- 4 Marcus Clarke Lecture: Gilbert Rochecouste - "Melbourne's cultural and social glue" - Melbourne Athenaeum Library, 6pm
- 11 Marcus Clarke Lecture: Andrew Lemon - "And they're racing! Melbourne's sporting passion" - Melbourne Athenaeum Library, 6pm

- 14 MIV Annual General Meeting, Prahran Mechanics' Institute, 39 St Edmonds Road, Prahran, 10am.
- 14 MIV Inaugural Wesson Lecture, Prahran Mechanics' Institute, 39 St Edmonds Road, Prahran, 11am. Please RSVP to the MIV Secretary for catering purposes.
- 15 Arthurs Creek Mechanics' Institute Garden Ramble
- 22 Bundalaguah-Myrtlebank Hall - 60th Anniversary Ball

2016

JANUARY

- 22-24 Fryerstown Burke and Wills Mechanics' Institute 41st Antique Fair

FEBRUARY

- 7 Ruffy Gymkhana and Sports Day
- 13 130th Tolmie Sports. Enquiries to tolmie.sports@hotmail.com

MARCH

- 12-21 Cultural Diversity Week. Start planning your event now!
- 19-20 Romsey Mechanics' Institute Antiques Fair

MIV'S EVENTS CALENDAR IS NOW ONLINE!

vicnet.net.au/~mivic/events

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

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

MIV Contacts

President: Robert Kingston
rjk.kapl@bigpond.net.au
 Vice-President: Luke Mitchell
 Secretary: Judith Dwyer jad134@hotmail.com
 Treasurer: Position Vacant
 MIRC/E-News mivenquiry@live.com.au

Archives Scanning Project; Plaques; Travelling
 Exhibition: Judith Dwyer jad134@hotmail.com
 Research: Pam Baragwanath
pgbarag@alphalink.com.au
 Magazine/Website: Bron Lowden
bronlowden@hotmail.com

Letter From The President



Victoria's Mechanics' Institutes are hardy beasts. Many, having evolved into proud cultural icons, continue to make their presence felt whether it be at International Conferences or within their own communities. Others continue to serve their communities through the halls and other assets they have left behind.

Either way, wherever you find them, our Mechanics' Institutes are tangible and authentic witnesses to the histories of their respective districts. Victoria's, and indeed Australia's, initial and authentic take on what we would now call a "social enterprise" dedicated to ***"the diffusion of scientific and literary information, useful knowledge and rational recreation"***

So how does the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria (MIV) fit into this picture?

Founded in 1998, the MIV was formed to address a concern that without effective representation the awareness of Mechanics' Institutes and their history would only diminish further. As a body representing our Member Institutes, our job is to arrest this trend.

MIV also admits Individual Members, many, but by no means all of whom have a connection with one or more of our Member Institutes. Our Individual Members bring the energy and commitment required for MIV to effectively represent and support our Member Institutes.

MIV has aspired to provide opportunities for our Individual Members to pursue their passions and what a diverse range of passions they have proven to be.

We have social and library historians, authors, publishers and bibliophiles. Those interested in conserving historic reserves, buildings and other artefacts. Those who relish the challenge of fundraising on behalf of our Member Institutes or just bringing their significance to a wider audience. Yet others see the potential for reviving the tradition of touring public speakers and events around a circuit of historic Mechanics' Institute halls.

Nor have we forgotten "useful knowledge" or "rational recreation". Self help is as valuable today as it was in the 19th century, only the subject matter has changed. In an era of ubiquitous information what better way to acknowledge Victoria's Mechanics' Institutes' significance than to make them relevant for the 21st century.

Developing these themes, seeking out potential collaborators and trialling initiatives in conjunction with our Member Institutes will challenge even the most ambitious and imaginative individuals.

If MIV sounds like the kind of organisation you would like to be part of please get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

Robert Kingston

President.

Editorial

The Christmas cakes and shortbreads are starting to appear in the supermarkets, and the tinsel and Santa hats are popping up in shop windows... we're officially on the countdown to Christmas! This will be the last issue of *Useful Knowledge* for 2015 and we would like to wish our Members and readers a (very early) safe and joyous festive season and a Happy New Year.

This time of year really builds into the 'silly season', but have you thought about any events your community could have at your Institute over Christmas/New Year/Australia Day for everyone to kick back and relax with their friends and family? How about teaming up with your local CFA or MFB brigade and have Santa arrive at the Institute on the fire truck with a sack of gifts for the kids (both big and small); arrange a community Kris Kringle; have a New Year's Eve party and have the fireworks up on a big screen in the Hall (or projected onto the side of the Hall); or have an Australia Day BBQ.

It is the time of year to spend with family and loved ones. We hope you have a safe and joyous one.

Bron Lowden

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND DONATIONS

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to these members who gave a financial donation in addition to their annual membership renewal:

- Heather Arnold
- Louise Box
- Jenny Dalrymple
- Jim Lowden
- Linda Notley
- Tessa Raath
- Bruce Stubbs
- Basil Walby
- Peter Wolfenden

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Institute and Individual Membership is \$25 per year, with overseas members being \$30.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership fees for the 2015-2016 year **were due on 30 June 2015**. If you have not yet paid your membership for the coming year, please renew ASAP so you will not miss out on any news

BUNDLES OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE FOR SALE TO YOUR MEMBERS

Bundles of 5 copies of this issue of *Useful Knowledge* are available for purchase for \$20 (RRP \$6 per copy), excluding postage. Please contact the Newsletter Editor to order your bundle of *Knowledge*.

NEWSLETTER ROUND

Tick after reading and pass it on

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

QUOTABLE QUOTE

“The work and activity that goes on around country halls, is symbolic of the strength of rural communities – locals pulling together to showcase their remarkable community pride. From working bees, to weekly cleaning, to toiling in the kitchen, or indeed some showing off their talent on the stage, the yearly calendar for a local hall has always told much about a community

Toowoomba Regional Council believes it is important that we preserve our regional halls, firstly that they continue to offer a meeting point for the community to gather, and secondly as testament to the remarkable historical role these, mostly simple, buildings have played in making our region what it is today. Some great decisions have been made in country Halls!”

Paul Antonio

Mayor – Toowoomba Regional Council
in his Foreword to *Frocks, Country Halls and Deb Balls* by Nicki Laws and Ann Alcock

THANK YOU TO OUR PRINTER

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

MECHANICS' WORLDWIDE 2016

The Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco, California will be hosting the fourth *Independent Libraries and Mechanics' Institutes Worldwide Conference* at their historic building in downtown San Francisco from Thursday 3 November to Sunday 6 November 2016. The theme of the event is *Reinvention – Thriving in the 21st Century*.



• **Megan Prelinger**, Cultural Historian, author, and co-founder of the Prelinger Library
We are currently recruiting additional Conference Advisory Board members from the UK and other countries.

The Conference will be coordinated by San Francisco's Library Director **Deborah Hunt** and Librarian **Taryn Edwards**.

The Conference will be held in conjunction with the annual *American Membership Libraries Group Meeting* on Monday 7 November 2016.

A Conference Advisory Board has been formed with the following members:

- **Lizzie Barker**, Stanford Calderwood Director, Boston Athenaeum
- **Gray Brechin**, UC Berkeley/Historical Geographer & Author
- **Lindsey Crittenden**, Writer & Writing Instructor at UC Berkeley Extension and The Grotto, and San Francisco MI Board Member
- **Susan Hildreth**, Executive Director, (San Francisco) Peninsula Library System, Pacific Library Partnership, NorthNet Library System and Califa Group
- **Jim Lowden**, Committee, Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria, Australia

They look forward to your ideas, cooperation and promotion to make IL&MI Worldwide 2016 a notable worldwide event that includes a full range of sessions, keynote lectures, social events and field trips within San Francisco.

Each participant will have the opportunity to connect with like minded people, share experiences, and gain *useful knowledge* applicable to the management of their institutions.

A call for papers and session topics will be issued in October 2015. The deadline for receipt of proposals is January 30, 2016.

A draft program of activities will be published on the Conference's website (www.milibrary.org/reinvention) by February 15, 2016.

To register your interest in the Conference, make suggestions or submit proposals, please contact Deborah Hunt, dhunt@milibrary.org

NATIONAL MECHANICS' INSTITUTES COLLECTION

This is an update on *UK37's* article where it was mentioned that MIV wrote to the National Library of Australia about hosting a National Mechanics' Collection. The National Library has advised that space constraints prevents the National Library from establishing further niche collections. However their charter requires that they collect printed material and the recently legislated digital material that has been published in Australia. A list of MI related books has been supplied to the National Library for follow-up or subsequent purchase to complete gaps in their collection.

One thing that did come out of a meeting with the National Library was the definition of Mechanics' Institute. If you check Trove in its various elements and Mechanics' Institutes in their various guises – School of Arts, Athenaeum, Literary Institute, Agricultural Hall, Institutes

(for South Australia) you come up around 1.5 million hits, not including simply 'Hall'.

As we grapple with future recognition for the Mechanics' Institute in all its guises, including renames or rebuilds, it is safe to say Institutes are Public Halls - a positive catchall definition.

The other matter is that in the short, perhaps even long term we create a National Collection in the ether where a Hall heading would attract submissions from all sectors advising and linking holdings or items. This would require some considerable setup by way of programming.

To coordinate funding for the whole nebulous project we advance the name "History of the Hall in Australia Project (HOTHIA).

In the meantime a list of names of likely collaborators in each State is being assembled and they will be circulated shortly as to a future direction, perhaps a National meeting mid-2016 to drive the matter forward.

LET'S TALK - REGIONAL HALLS FORUM LILYDALE ATHENAEUM, 12 SEPTEMBER 2015



Lilydale, in the Yarra Valley, was the township chosen for the most recent Halls Forum. It is well known for its hinterland of Aboriginal association and horticultural industries.

Our generous host was the **Lilydale Athenaeum Theatre Company** which has occupied the historic Lilydale Athenaeum Mechanics' Institute and Free Library building since 1975. The ATC has, during this time, lovingly restored the building into a first rate performing arts space and has engaged the east of Melbourne in a wide range of productions over the intervening forty years.

John Martin, Office Manager, welcomed us on behalf of our host and later took us on a tour of the amazing theatre complex, including the basement green room where performers dress and 'make up'. Here we saw the large area utilised for storage of a huge range of props and costumes.

Back on stage we noted the stagebuilders' craft and the attention to detail of the set painters and dressers. Then walking past the Wall of Memory we noted those performers, directors and front of house and back of house people who had passed to their eternal reward. In the front of house we were introduced to the Melba Room where a range of memorabilia had been assembled to Lilydale's most notable daughter **Dame Nellie Melba** by the ATC co-founder **Russell Johnson**.

John and fellow Board Member **Emily Carpenter** briefly introduced us to the modus operandi of the Athenaeum Theatre's three resident ghosts, who all seemed to have an impish sense of humour in keeping with the theatre.

MIV President **Robert Kingston** then welcomed all and noted the ongoing relevance of Mechanics' to their respective communities and

how that had adapted over the years through energy and innovation, by way of succeeding committees.

MIV historian **Pam Baragwanath** then responded to the question 'Is Victoria the most recorded region of Mechanics' Institutes in the world?' (See report elsewhere).

The MIV's indefatigable Hon. Secretary **Judith Dwyer** then took us through the various MIV outreach programs: **digitizing** continues, with the records of almost 100 Institutes 'in the can'; more **plaques** brings the total to forty-nine; and the **Travelling Exhibitions** continue to travel.

An overview of ideas and opportunities then followed. After the break there was an explanation of the Association's new website and its various elements, including: a page for members; archived newsletters; a daily calendar of activities for member Institutes; and the valuable opportunity to search back newsletters and magazines, via the button on the top right hand corner. It was noted *Useful Knowledge* was the only magazine serving the international Mechanics' Institute community and that this opportunity was being built upon with an international coverage and network.

Sue Mann of **The Wonderful Women of Warburton** fame then took us through 'The Battle for Warburton' which was a real David and Goliath struggle with various tiers of bureaucracy. The question of if it had been bulldozed, would Council have replaced it is still ponderable. The actions of the WWW were certainly well justified when we saw pictures of the restored Institute filled to overflowing during the 2009 bushfire meetings. The building is now an integral part of the Warburton Arts Complex.

Sam Hicks followed with 'Finding the Farthings for Fawcett' and the journey from a derelict building open to the elements, down the fundraising path, which incidentally will be soon laid thanks to the buy a brick campaign which raised \$5000. Sam mentioned the need to get all on side and to keep filling in the grant application forms and liaising with local politicians, tradesmen and residents to stretch the dollar further. The solar powered lit trees have certainly added to the night life of Fawcett. In all it took six strategic grants to get the restoration and additional works done and now they can mostly relax and reminisce during regular monthly

LET'S TALK CONT...

pizza nights when up to fifty pizzas are taken from the hearth of their outdoor pizza oven. Sam left us with a curly one 'Is Fawcett the only unlined MI remaining in Victoria?'

Ray Spencer of the Emerald Institute was next to take the platform and detailed how Cardinia Council planned to develop a Community Hub around a restored Institute. In all some \$3.5 is to be spent with an expected completion date of 2017.

The Warrandyte Mechanics' Institute and Arts Association's **Pat Anderson** then took us through how strands of a dynamic arts community collaborated to bring a 'condemned' Hall back to life by way of ongoing utilisation and innovative fundraising, including bottled wine and barometers. At the same time it has fostered a continuing and expanded interest in drama, pottery, art and music and has provided a well resourced meeting space for the community.

A good networking took place over lunch which was again coordinated by the very able **Ros Lowden** and catered for and delivered by **Robert Fabre** of Subway Mt Evelyn.

John Thorp then regaled us of the history and countdown to the restoration of the Acheron Institute and production of the district's history in readiness of the Hall's centenary, all coordinated and notified on the Hall's own website. It was very much a collegiate effort with much delegation along the way and which resulted in a very successful celebratory week with a dinner, bus tours and the book launch. Acheron is known for its annual dinner and fundraising auction, its market stall and its quiet country setting, which is proving ideal for weddings.

Molesworth Hall is presently in the midst of a \$250,000 upgrade, but it has not been that easy as **Patricia Zerbe**, Secretary emeritus of more than twenty years, explained. It has been a long haul, but in more recent times fundraising has been underpinned by the Annual Clearing Sale, which sells anything, and has enabled the Hall Committee to contribute a tidy sum to the Hall upkeep and upgrade.

The tortuous route through bureaucracy and fundraising was detailed at Bonnie Doon by **Nola Evans**. The library hall, with the notorious tag of asbestos, thanks to the doggedness of local citizens, finally made its move to the Bonnie Doon Community Centre complex. There, reopened and its history told, it is now again the community, meeting space and dinner site. Another one of

those well fought good news stories redolent throughout the Institute movement.

Jane Russ took us 'hands on' through the demolition of the old Christmas Hills Institute and 'minds on' through its rebuilding, landscaping and reactivation of the neighbouring tennis courts. It has once again become a community focus with the Christmas Hills Orchestra in rehearsal and recital, regular poetry readings, art and craft activities and of course community meetings.

Little River's twenty-third librarian in just over a century is **Peter Jones**. (Peter shares the role with his wife **Sue**, who is number twenty-four on the Librarian's Honour Board.) Peter took us through the investigation of the existing book stock, its record and its contents and how the Institute was repositioning its role in information delivery. The assembly of a Regional Studies History Collection of some two hundred and fifty items and the exhibiting of Council documents augured well for future use.

MIV Vice-President **Luke Mitchell** took us through his role as Secretary-Manager of the Footscray Mechanics' Institute and as Building Manager for their seven tenants. The library which had possibly the largest Mills and Boon collection and runs of crime writer titles was presently being put on a database which would make it more accessible to public use. The click of billiard cues, which once proliferated in the top floor, are again being heard as social billiards is again taking place.

Corinne Brewis, as well as being an unofficial field officer for MIV, is President of the Berwick Mechanics' Institute. There a staff of some thirty volunteers continue to provide a library service from the Institute building to a rapidly growing region. Their library is online through the Casey-Cardinia Library network.

The day concluded with an address by the Director of the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum **Maggi Solly**, who took us through the history of the Museum and its services. (See story elsewhere.) She gave the genesis of the most current and much publicised exhibition **Oil Paint and Ochre: William Barak and the de Purys**. The Forum then adjourned to the Museum.

In all a very full and worthwhile day crammed with 'Useful Knowledge'. Kits of the handouts have been posted to those Halls that indicated their inability to attend on the day.

LILYDALE ATHENAEUM

The township of Lilydale was founded from a survey around 1860, until then the nearest settlement was at Brushy Creek which is now around North Croydon.

By 1861 the town had a post office and blacksmith's shop and in 1862 the Lilydale Hotel was built. In 1888 the Athenaeum Hall was built by the Mechanics' Institute incorporating the Free Library and was officially opened on 18 October 1888. The following year the Council Chambers were built next door which today is the home of the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum.

The Athenaeum building is now included in the Victorian Heritage Overlay Register and is recorded as the oldest and most elaborate civic building in the region. You may have noticed as you arrived that the façade's characteristics include a strong symmetry with pilasters and Corinthian columns supporting a pediment above with a splash of floral motif and balustraded parapet and, for the architects amongst us, this apparently reflects the characteristics of Victorian Free Classical Style.

The building has served a variety of uses over its long history. As well as originally being the Mechanics' Institute Hall and provider of a free library it's been a meeting hall for the township for political rallies, dances and a worship centre. A picture theatre, indoor sports stadium, a roller skating rink, a military drill hall, a lecture hall, concert hall and even a museum. I'm told that when it was used as a drill hall the soldiers used to practice their rifle shooting under the building, shooting from the back into the clay bank at the front of the building.

In the mid 1970s the theatre company which currently occupies the building was established and the founders, **Geoff Page** and **Russell Johnson**, approached the shire to lease the building. After some objections and procrastinations the Shire council agreed to provide a long term lease which is still running today. Other founding members included the recently departed **Dr Bill Hardy** and his late wife **Gwen**, a former Councillor of the Shire, and the late **Patricia Lyall** whose daughter **Catherine** now serves on the Board of Management.



The theatre company runs four productions each year and this provides the local and wider community with quality entertainment and much enjoyment, indeed great value for money by today's standards. Some details of our coming shows and ticketing are available in the entryway and on our website.

Recently with the extension and redevelopment of the Museum next door the connection between the two buildings was established with a link way and shared toilet facilities. Coupled with the Museum the Athenaeum now forms part of what the Council might now consider to be its Arts and Cultural precinct.

Proudly, the building boasts a strong connection with **Dame Nellie Melba**, born Helen Porter Mitchell she was the daughter of **David** and **Isabella Mitchell**. Her father David owned the Steele's Flats cattle Station by the Yarra River and in 1878 he established the Cave Hill Marble and Limestone Quarry sited south west of the township which became the town's largest employer.

Dame Nellie was founding President of the Lilydale branch of the Red Cross founded in this very building on 14 August 1914 the same day as the national Red Cross was founded, and we have a 100th anniversary plaque in the foyer to commemorate that event. One month later on 14 September 1914 she gave a concert in the hall and raised the grand sum of £241/18/6 that's around \$483. It is reported that with the aid of her concerts performed here the Lilydale Red Cross was the largest fundraising branch in the country during the four years of the War and it was her work with the Red Cross that earned her her Knighthood.

Dame Nellie sang in this very hall at least four times and part of the old library at the front of the building is dedicated to her memory.

It is probably worth mentioning also that if any of you remember **Diana Trask** from the 1960's, her first public performance also took place in this very hall in 1951 when she sang "Daddy's Sweetheart" in a school eisteddfod and won. Diana will also be on tour locally in the coming weeks.

John Martin

YARRA RANGES REGIONAL MUSEUM



The **Shire of Yarra Ranges** comprises some 2500 square kilometres, with some fifty-five individual communities.

It mostly occupies the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation, of which the **Coranderrk Aboriginal settlement** at Healesville is the most widely identified and its association with Aboriginal elder and artist **William Barak**.

Since European settlement the district has had a vast range of utilitarian uses, ranging from: broadacre raising and grazing of sheep and cattle; sawmilling; quarrying; and intensive horticulture, growing fruit, particularly grapes and strawberries, vegetables and cut flowers and bulbs; and a large reservoir and water catchment.

Horsebreeding has also been of ongoing significance for farm use and recreational riding, or racing, hunting and showing at various district venues or courses.

The flat, undulating to mountainous terrain, intersected by creeks and rivers, and resultant picturesque landscapes, admirably lends itself to tourism, reinforced by the **Sir Colin Mackenzie Wildlife Sanctuary** which opened to the public in 1934.

Artists such as **William Barak**, **Tom Roberts**, **John Rowell** and **Ernest Buckmaster** and photographers **Antoine Fauchery**, **Richard Daintree** and **EFG 'Alphabet' Hodges** have recorded these over more than 130 years.

Against this background Council, in the 1970s, resolved to establish a museum, and this gained considerable momentum when Council vacated its original Council offices and chambers in 1983.

Shire amalgamation in 1994 gave further impetus to develop the Museum as a gateway

to the Shire's some twenty disparate heritage groups which operate across the Shire.

In 2010 the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum was refocused and underwent a massive redevelopment. It reopened in 2011 with the inclusion of the **Museum Harvest Café** overlooking the historic croquet green. Included in the new building were spaces for exhibition, administration, storage, work space and resource library, reception and shop.

The new wing also linked in the abutting Athenaeum Theatre and also comprised a joint toilet complex. At this time the Museum also inherited a large portion of the Athenaeum's **Dame Nellie Melba Collection** which had been assembled by **Russell Johnson**. This collection, which comprises over 800 related items, is nationally significant.

Over the years the Museum has been engaged in active outreach with periodic exhibitions from its own and items borrowed from the community. It has also hosted travelling exhibitions. The collection is ongoing taking in items from 2009 bushfires and more recently a banner used in the McDonald's Tecoma community protest.

The Museum hosts occasional lectures of related regional interest. Earlier this year the Museum participated in the **Big Draw** project which brought youth from across the region and showcased youth art and budding artists. The recent **Yalka Dayan School Holiday Workshop** was a fun time experiencing indigenous culture.

The most recent and current exhibition **Oil Paint and Ochre: The incredible story of William Barak and the de Purys**, curated by **Karlie Hawking** was several years in the planning, and came with an extensive illustrated colour catalogue which will be a valuable reference into the future. Field trips and lectures have also been created around the exhibition focus.

Entry to the Museum and exhibition is free and the current exhibition continues until 15 December.

The Yarra Ranges Regional Museum has been a longtime member of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria and joins other regional Mechanics' museums and collections at **Beechworth**, **Benalla**, **Charlton**, **Chiltern**, **Hamilton**, **Leongatha**, **Nathalia**, **Rushworth**, **Sorrento**, **Stanley**, **Taradale** and **Williamstown**.

GUNNS PLAINS HALL 90TH BIRTHDAY

This was a great celebration held on Saturday September 12th, and, of course, the weather was just perfect.

The Hall was filled to overflowing with people coming from far and wide – even from as far as Perth, WA. There were young and old (**Roy Shephard** was no doubt the oldest there at 96 years young). There were three granddaughters of **Mr Britton**, who actually built the Hall, and a descendent of **Mr Maxwell**, who was also involved in building the Hall. There were three and four generations of people who had lived in Gunns Plains, and all had fond memories of parties, wedding receptions, kitchen teas, balls, dances, children's fancy dress parties, badminton, and lots of other stuff that went on in the Hall over the years.

The day kicked off at 10am with a morning tea of home-made goodies on offer.

There was a big marquee outside, and it contained a selection of greatly talented local artists, all using different mediums. **Colin Vercoe** had an absolutely stunning huge oil painting of Leven Canyon; **Helmut Schwabe** had a couple of examples of his beautiful stone carving work; **Laerke 'Lexie' Hegjaard** had a lovely display of her unique hand made jewellery; **Trish Deer** displayed a selection of her lovely hand made and hand stitched cards; **Fiona McKinney** had a brilliant display of her meticulous and glorious art work (pencil, pen & ink and crayon); **Anthony** and **Emma Smith** had a great display of their beautiful leatherwork, bark weaving, and knitting and crochet; **Faye Poke** was there with her fantastic spinning wheel and a small display of some of the fabulous items she has made; and there was also a display of products available from the **Leven Valley Vineyard**.

Two young Scouts, **Benjamin Deer** from Penguin Scout Group and **Tyler Medwin** from Burnie Scouts held a fundraising sausage sizzle in the gazebo outside with proceeds towards their journey to the Australian Jamboree in Sydney

next year. Lunch was available in the Hall for a mere \$5, which included a big selection of home made soups and toasted or fresh sandwiches.

There was plenty to see and do in the Hall itself with a Timeline of past events, where people were able to add things along the timeline on the day; a series of maps of the valley, where people placed a “red dot” on the map where their home was/is, and other relevant information; an ongoing slideshow of photos of events at the Hall in the distant and not so distant past, and other photos from around the valley (and people brought photos and other memorabilia along to be scanned and added to the collection); **Libby Perkins** and **Rena Henderson** did Interviews with local residents and “old timers” about the history of the Hall, and Gunns Plains.

Everyone was instructed to help themselves to a free afternoon tea which included some savoury items and more delicious home made cakes, slices and sweets. Then the huge 90th birthday Cake was ceremoniously cut by **Mr** and **Mrs Dale** and **Joyce Wing** at 3pm, while we all sang Happy Birthday.

People also had the opportunity to win a fabulous prize in the huge raffle, courtesy of our generous local sponsors. There were eight prizes available in the raffle, plus we had three lucky “name tag” prizes, again thanks to generous local sponsors.

A number of people put a lot of hard work into making this a day to remember, especially **Avalyn Kaine**, who was the driving force behind the whole effort.

There are a lot of other people who should be thanked for the effort they put into the planning and preparations for the day, the donations of goods, products and prizes, and cooking all of that delicious food, and all of those who came along and worked their butt off on the day. If I try to name you all I will miss someone, so please take this as a personal thanks. I would also like to thank **Gena Cantwell** at **Wings Wildlife Park**

for her help and enthusiasm in this project, and for providing the cafe for our planning meetings, and for keeping us supplied with tea and coffee.

Yvonne Downes

Photo: Noel Carter/

Facebook



TATURA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE REJUVENATION: A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF A COMMITTED COMMUNITY



The iconic Tatura Civic Halls Complex started its life with the construction of the Tatura Mechanics' Institute in 1882. For the next 15 years or so the Tatura Mechanics' Institute served as a Church, all denominations were housed in the Institute until they were able to build their own. It was the local library, the local state school, the local public hall where all community groups held their meetings; it was the entertainment hub where the local community socialised.

In 1919 it was decided to build a larger Hall next to the Mechanics' Institute as a Memorial to the fallen in WW1. This Hall was completed and opened in March 1926, and it was named Victory Hall to celebrate the contribution Tatura volunteers made to the victory by the allies in WW1. Victory Hall became the social hub of the community for the next 70 years.

In 1972 the two buildings were joined together by a kitchen which has served both halls admirably over the years.

In recent year's changes in social and entertainment needs of the community led to a decline in the utilisation of the complex. Many organisations that previously used the complex were able to raise funds and build their own clubrooms. The emergence of Pubs and Clubs as entertainment centres caused a further decline in utilisation. This caused a massive reduction in funds available to maintain the complex.

By 2013 the Complex was in a sorry state. The RSL, who had been tenants in the Mechanics' Institute since 1947, were forced to move out when their rooms were closed by council due to the damp mouldy conditions. The roof was

leaking, the exterior was in a sorry state and there was less than \$4,000 in the bank.

In 2013 it was decided by the Tatura Civic Halls Committee to go all out and start a community support group to raise funds to restore the Complex to its former glory. This group has become known as "Friends of Victory Hall" and is busily engaged in ongoing fundraising to achieve this goal. From this group some new committee members have emerged and given new life to the renovation program.

The subsequent media campaign made the Tatura Community aware of the problem and they responded magnificently. Once the community were made aware that their beloved hall complex was under threat they immediately put their hands in their pockets and contributed significantly. This generosity, coupled with some successful grants from organizations like **Goulburn Valley Community Fund, FRRR**, and some matching grants from **Greater Shepparton City Council** made it possible to commence renovations. The State Branch of the **RSL** also contributed funds to the renovation program.

Now two years later, The "**Grand Old Lady of Tatura**" as the complex has become known, is well on the way to returning to its former glory. Utilization has improved and community members are planning events with the Hall in mind. The RSL has returned to its newly renovated and restored rooms and their membership has increased.

The restoration of Tatura's Iconic "**Grand Old Lady of Tatura**" is a great example of a Committed Community in Action.

Ian Grant

JINDIVICK MECHANICS' HALL (EST. 1886)

Little wonder historians become confused. The Drouin Post Office opened on 5 April 1876, and it was renamed Jindivick in 1878 and changed to Drouin West several months later. Jindivick Post Office opened again in March 1880 and was renamed Tarago, after the River, in 1888. The third Jindivick Post Office opened in later in 1888 and finally closed in 1994. In the local Aboriginal dialect Jindivick means 'burst asunder'.

The district was first settled in the 1860s by **Joseph Jackson** after whom Jacksons Track is named. The land was cleared and the timber was milled and the district became noted for its dairying and cheese production. Today's Jindi cheese continues that long tradition.

The Jindivick Mechanics Hall was built in 1886 by **James Whitten** and **Mr Wallace** at a cost of about £200. It was opened on 20 May 1886 by **AC Groom** MLA, followed by a concert and ball which ran until sunrise.

The Hall Secretary's residence was burned down in the bushfires of January 1898 and the Institute records were destroyed when **Charles Sayce's** homestead was also burnt.

A 15ft extension was later undertaken to the Hall by Robert Ireland. There was a further extension around 1923 by **Mr Foster**. Further extensions between 1951 and 1955 were done by **Mr Butterworth** of Drouin and a kitchen and supper room added in 1974 by **K Roberts**.



A library, which had 525 books in the library in 1903, ran through into the 1950s. The Hall Committee became incorporated in 1991.

Over the years the Hall has been well used for Masonic and church purposes.

Today the Hall is a busy place showcasing the district's main themes of country food,

arts and crafts and bush plant nurseries. The Hall hosts the annual **Gippsland Rare and Unusual Plant Fair** in April and this normally attracts some twenty stall holders. On 16 October 2015 the Hall will be hosting a **Landcare Bush Foods Workshop** which will provide information on identifying, growing, harvesting and marketing opportunities for bush foods.

Hall activities are showcased on the website: www.jindivick.org.au proclaiming it 'A beautiful place to be.'

The Jindivicks take custodianship of their Hall very seriously noting their legacy down through the years, firstly with stone Memorial Gates unveiled by **Matthew Bennett** MLA and a fiftieth anniversary plaque: 'A Tribute to the courage, faith,/ and enduring labours/ of the pioneers./ "Nothing in the ages old/ Could braver histories unfold/ Than this bush story yet untold."/ Erected in 1936, the 50th year of this hall.' In 1986 a further plaque was erected '1886-1986/ A century of service/ They strove that we might thrive/ We throve so you derive.' A MIV commemorative plaque, No. 15, was unveiled in 2005.



ADFAS IN ACTION



Australia. It is administered by an Executive, based on policy created by a Council comprising the chairs of each of the Society members and this group meets twice a year.

Their member Societies: run monthly lectures; participate in group overseas travel with ADFAS; provide scholarship and support programs for young artists; share cultural and social opportunities; and share in the conduct of lectures by overseas visitors sponsored by ADFAS through the **Patricia Robertson Scholarship program.**

(Patricia Robertson OAM established the Association in Sydney in 1985 and based it on the UK National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies founded in 1968.) Visiting Lecturers are toured through one of three circuits in Australia.

All that said, a report on the progress of Helen’s idea is well overdue. Today, with the cooperation of member Societies, ADFAS now has detailed studies of thirty-six Institutes up on their website adfass.org.au under the toolbar subject heading ‘ADFAS in the Community’. Reports range from a couple of pages up to sometimes twenty and are well illustrated, and generally have a bibliography for further reading.

Most of the Institutes researched to date are Queensland or New South Wales based, as Victoria was then being canvassed for the update of *If the Walls Could Speak* by **Pam Baragwanath** and **Ken James**.

ADFAS Societies have a range of programs which generally include nine lectures a year which are delivered by experts or skilled practitioners. Membership cost varies. Click on the toolbar at ‘Societies’ for your nearest Society and periodically visit their website to see the list of Institutes that have been covered.

Well done Helen and your eager team, your work has been most worthwhile!

Left: One of the histories produced by the ADFAS crew; Top: Map of ADFAS Member Societies.

Several years ago **Helen Creagh**, then President of the **Association of Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies**, approached MIV with the idea of ADFAS Association members recording in detail some Institute histories. The Association has thirty-four member Societies scattered mostly along the east coast of

ADFAS in the Community

MENDOORAN NSW



Name: Mechanics Institute Hall

Address: Bandulla Street, Mendooran, New South Wales 2842

The Town:
Mendooran is a small town on the Castlereagh River 348 kilometres west of Sydney in the Central West of New South Wales. The population at the 2011 census was 302. The town of Mendooran is located in the Parish of Mendooran in the County of Napier.

The town is located on the Castlereagh Highway and is now part of the Warrumbungle Shire; previously, it was part of the Coolah Shire, and before that Cobbara Shire. Mendooran is situated 71 kilometres south-east of Coonabarabran, the administrative centre of Warrumbungle Shire; the largest adjacent town is Dubbo, 75 kilometres to the south-west.

Mendooran is part of indigenous Wiradjuri territory and surveyor John Evans was the first European visitor to the district in 1815, while surveyor John Oxley passed through in 1817. The name is believed to originate from an Aboriginal tribal leader called “Mundo(o)”; a common early variant of the name of Mendooran is Mundooran, which was in use until about 1918.

A village was established in the 1860s near a crossing on the Castlereagh River where a bridge was built in 1869.

1

RESEARCH OF VICTORIA'S MECHANICS' INSTITUTES

BY PAM BARAGWANATH

Q. Is Victoria the most documented and recorded region for Mechanics' Institute research in the world?

A. I can't say that categorically but we have made a good attempt at that title.

Nevertheless it would be pleasing to issue the challenge!

Brief summary of Mechanics' Institute research in Victoria

1965 The **John Stuart Egan** (1916-1996) unpublished Melbourne University thesis, included a Questionnaire

1965-1975 **Wesson-Badger** Survey conducted and funded by the Council of Adult Education (CAE) through Director **Colin Badger**, they compiled a Register of Mechanics' Institutes, now collated by **Ken James**.

1972 Two articles by **Alf Wesson** were the first comprehensive assessments of the status MI's in Victoria using information available to him at the time.

1984 I purchased and restored the neglected Healesville Mechanics' Institute and wrote the history to celebrate its Centenary in 1992, the experience prompted my continued interest in their history, later that year I began to search out and photograph other MI's in Victoria. It was fun finding them.

1985 (approx) **Alan Tonkin**, CAE Staff and later a MIV committee member, used my photos to have murals of MI's painted in the CAE Foyer to illustrate the MI - adult education connection. Even though the CAE building has been refurbished the murals have been retained.

1988 **John Adams**, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) offered newspaper research and **Graham Dudley** State Library of Victoria (SLV) - Library Branch information.

1988 I started systematically locating, photographing and recording MI's on 25 October 1988 over a 10 year period, this work has now been compiled with individual dates.

A long and valuable collaboration began with the Department of

Conservation, Forests and Lands (now called Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning) when an approach was made from **Jane Lennon** and **Peter Cabena** to combine our efforts on a survey of MI's. All Victorian councils and historical societies were duly contacted, many of them responding.

1998 The 3 volume *Inventory of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria* by **Janette Hodgson** and me was the result.

2000 **Frances Clancy** wrote *The Libraries of Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria* which was published by the Department of Infrastructure

2000 I wrote *If The Walls Could Speak: a social history of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria* which had further information about 400 Institutes in Victoria, all the information I had at the time.

2010 Saw the 3rd edition of **Bronwyn Lowden's** *Mechanics' Institutes, Schools of Arts, Athenaeums etc.: An Australian Checklist*, the first of any such checklist in Australia.

2015 *These Walls Speak Volumes: a history of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria* by **Ken James** and me has brief information about the nearly 1,000 Institutes in Victoria.

But there is much more work to do than can be told in these brief entries, such as the individual history of each Victorian Mechanics' Institute.

The Primary sources of information

All the research is based on identifiable linkage of the Institutes having a library.

With the MI's being recipients of annual government grants, starting with The Melbourne Mechanics' Institute which received a grant in 1845. Lists of annual grants to free non-municipal libraries for books and building were consulted at the Public Record Office and SLV.

b) The records of Mechanics' Institutes themselves:

Mechanics' Hall Minute Books and other historic records such as accession registers, letter books, cash books etc., are held in individual Mechanics' Institute Halls, thankfully many of these have now been scanned by **Judith Dwyer**, MIV Secretary and her team at the **MIRC**, the

Mechanics' Institute Resource Centre with the originals being faithfully returned. This is a very valuable resource for the future enabling more in depth research

Other sources of information included the government Statistical Register of Victoria, 1860-1894; Victorian Parliamentary Papers; Public Record Office Victoria, Public Building Files; Department of Environment and Primary Industries Mechanics' Institute Inventory; Sands and McDougall Melbourne and Victorian Directories, State Library of Victoria; Mechanics' Institute Resource Centre (MIRC); local historical societies; local histories; newspapers; and hall committees. Two relevant databases are:

1. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) **Mechanics' Institutes and Hall Database** (Access database with 1500 records). This is described now as the most accurate and comprehensive database they hold.
2. Heritage Victoria **Hermes Database** with data contributions by 85 plus data custodians including Heritage Victoria and the National Trust.

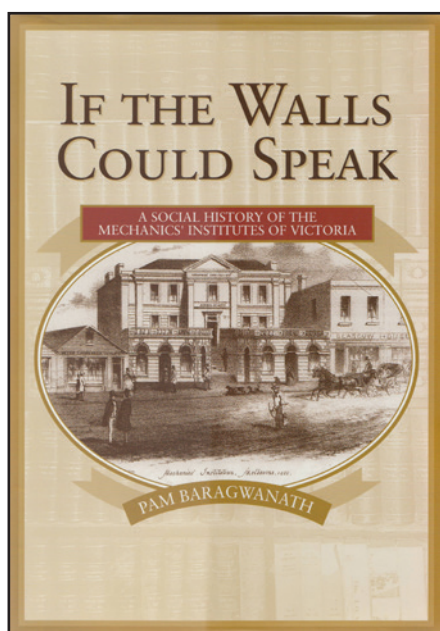
Heritage Studies and Surveys Cultural significance and heritage registration

More than 200 mechanics' institutes or buildings that accommodated them are included in local council planning schemes, two institute sites, Barwidgee Creek Mechanics' Institute and Melbourne Athenaeum have archaeological values.

The Victorian Heritage Register, a significant research reference, has listed 28 institutes as having significant cultural State values. I encourage hall committees to talk to their council to have their building included in a local heritage overlay.

Summary

Quite apart from, but complimentary to, this wider research, has been the most pleasing publication of many individual mechanics' institute histories. It is only in these histories that the complete story can be told. So keep up the good work and let's see all the MI histories recorded, able to be shared and join the expanding



list which makes up the unique and inspiring mechanics' institute story in Victoria. As a self professed MI tragic I'd also like to see the rebadging of many halls back to the original name. This is another way of explaining what they stand for, the aspiration of the original settlers in each settlement and what has been inherited by the present communities. The biggest thrill for me is to see these MI buildings repaired, preserved and used by the local community.

Congratulations to all those hall committee members who have achieved this huge,

seemingly insurmountable and time consuming task. A job well done!

Colin Badger, CAE Chairman who was in the forefront of MI research in Victoria, 53 years ago wrote:

"It is quite extraordinary, that a movement like this, which accomplished so much, does not seem to have been inspired by any one organisation or by any driving force. What strikes one most in reading the history, is that it appears that the need for an institute, the means to organise the necessary resources for it, the type of institution required, seems to have occurred quite spontaneously all over Victoria. Nobody seems to have put out any propaganda literature, nobody seems to have run a campaign, nobody was the driving force, there was no concerted effort."

Reference: Badger, Colin R. (1962) 'Mechanics' Institutes and Adult Education' in *Adult Education*, June, 1962

But like a relentless force, without a head office, without spin doctors or an expenses budget, 1,000 of them happened all over Victoria. Why?

Because the local community needed a mechanics' institute. They needed a hall to reflect and celebrate their local identity and to evolve to serve their individual needs. That's why they are all so individual.

175 years later and half of them, about 500 remain in traditional usage.

This is a success story like no other and we Victorians can be very proud of the achievements by the local communities in preserving and documenting these heritage icons.

Featured Institute

MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM

Today's custodians of the Melbourne Athenaeum, Victoria's first Mechanics Institute, often discuss the need to ensure that the organisation and building remain true to their origins while ensuring a sustainable future.

When it was founded in 1839, the purpose of the Melbourne Athenaeum was "the diffusion of literary, scientific and other useful knowledge to members and the general public".

This was achieved by the first committee members – many of whom were the leaders and developers of the then new colony – establishing and maintaining a library, reading room, museum and offering classes and lectures.

Today, the Melbourne Athenaeum remains a much-loved icon of early Melbourne while also offering an array of contemporary entertainment options, including a welcoming, high quality dining experience at the Bistro D'Orsay and an ever changing program in the 900 seat Athenaeum theatre.

The organisation has enjoyed a year of celebrations around its 175th anniversary. Activities have included morning teas, a speaker's program, music events, art exhibitions and support for a new publication on the history of Victorian Mechanics' Institutions by Pam Baragwanath and Ken James. On a practical level, the Melbourne Athenaeum is getting a coat of paint, has a new logo and website and will culminate with an Open Day marking its founding date of 12 November.

This year with financial support from the City of Melbourne and the Besen Family Foundation the Melbourne Athenaeum commissioned projection artist Dr Lisa Anderson to create a projection for White Night 2015. Film footage exploring the organisation's history was projected onto three giant Athena's that were suspended on the canopy for the entire night! Dr Anderson will also create an installation in the library later this year showing how libraries and reading has changed during the past 175 years.

It is this mix of old and new, traditional and contemporary which very much drives today's Melbourne Athenaeum.. "This approach can



be seen in an ever growing program of events and partnerships that recognise the organisation's ongoing need to nod to both history and future sustainability." says Don Smith, President of the Melbourne Athenaeum. "White Night, the Reader's Walk, Rare Book Week, History Week, Nite Art, Sisters in Crime and Open House Melbourne have partnered with the Melbourne Athenaeum in recent years to promote the activities of the organisation and reach new audiences." And these relationships are set to continue.

2015 Marcus Clarke Lectures – a step forward and back

The Melbourne Athenaeum's 175th celebrations will culminate with a lecture series that very much harks back to its earliest days and purpose, offering topics very much in tune with today's interests and passions.

On Wednesday 21 October, the Melbourne Athenaeum will launch its **Marcus Clarke Lectures**, a series of talks on varying topics which, it is hoped, will become an annual event on Melbourne's cultural calendar.

These will kick off at 6pm when Deborah Cheetham AO presents the topic: *Time to sing a new song. Can Australians be "young and free" forever?*

And be followed by:

6pm, Wednesday 28 October: Peter Williams – *After the Flowerdale bushfires*

6pm, Wednesday 4 November: Gilbert Rochecouste – *Melbourne's cultural and social glue*

6pm, Wednesday 11 November: Dr Andrew Lemon – *And they're racing! Melbourne's sporting passion.*

Bookings for these free events can be made by phoning the library on 9650 3100 or emailing library@melbourneathenaeum.org.au

A modern day meeting place

From its earliest days, the Melbourne Mechanics Institution, and later the Melbourne Athenaeum, has strived to be a place where people can gather to read, learn, meet new and old friends and discuss reading and books.

The historic, warm, inviting Library continues this tradition by providing a space for members to enjoy quiet reading, make use of WiFi and internet access, or join with other like-minded members for book clubs, discussion groups and author and history talks.

Today, the Library hosts a wide range of book clubs to suit different reading tastes. These clubs meet monthly and members decide on which books are read during the year. One group is devoted to crime fiction, while another – the BYO Book Club – doesn't work from a list. Members instead discuss what they have each been reading in the weeks in between gatherings.

There's even now a Screen Club, which enjoys discussing a range of movie titles and, occasionally, watching movies in the library.

Membership to any of the groups is included in the the Melbourne Athenaeum Library's annual subscription.

No longer a gallery space, but still an artistic focus

While so many members and visitors rue the loss of the beautiful art gallery which operated on the second floor from 1910 to 1971 (and many still search for it today, attracted by the enticing reference on the lift buttons), the Melbourne Athenaeum staff have worked hard in recent years to establish new links between the organisation and today's artist community.

The library regularly hosts artists-in-residence, allowing the artist a quiet space to work and members the chance to see the creative process at work. And the finished product! These are our visual arts friends and include book sculptor Nicholas Jones, book and print maker Kyoko Imazu, print maker and artist book maker Bruno Leti, projection artist Dr Lisa Anderson, performer and director Penelope Bartlau from Barking Spider Visual Theatre.

The presence of these artists and their wonderful creations have brought new visitors to the building and new members, something which must always remain on our agenda! For instance an artwork that incorporates the historic "new book lists" from the 1930's was commissioned to celebrate the 175th anniversary. Nicholas Jones has created a beautiful artwork that will forever sit alongside our Arthur Streeton painting *The Ruins of Peronne*. Other work collected

by the Melbourne Athenaeum includes an artist book, limited edition prints by Bruno Leti, with accompanying poetry by Chris Wallace-Crabbe.

Documenting our history – one way or another

The Melbourne Athenaeum is a living history. With the help of our research volunteers, stories about the Melbourne Athenaeum's history have been published in journals produced by the State Library of Victoria and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. The Melbourne Athenaeum has published a journal of its history (to mark the 170th anniversary), and a book on the life of landscapist and Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Secretary George Alexander Gilbert. Soon a book about the men of the first committee (for it was only men), will be published. And Pam Baragwanath and Ken James' landmark book *These Walls Speak Volumes* will soon be published with the support of the Melbourne Athenaeum, the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria and a number of government and philanthropic agencies.

While today's committee members, management and staff will continue to look to the future to ensure that the Melbourne Athenaeum remains a key part of Melbourne's literary and cultural landscape – as it has been for 175 years - we have also recently moved to ensure that our fabulous history is on show for all to see.

Our dedicated history website – www.mahistory.org.au – is a visually attractive documentation of the history of an organisation whose story has been entwined with that of a city from its earliest days and the lives, cultural ideas and dreams of its community.

The story the website tells is about a unique organisation which remains today the custodian of a much-loved heritage building, a recreational library for members, a growing number of cultural events and partnerships and a flourishing archive.

Business Manager and Secretary, Sue Westwood, offers a final word, "We are one part of a remarkably resilient history. It is a truly special place for all of Melbourne to visit and with the support of members, staff and volunteers, we are optimistic about the institution's future, and the committee is looking forward to ensuring the next 175 years are as successful as the first.

Left: An historical photo of the Library; Far Left: The Athenaeum as it appears today. (Photos: Melbourne Athenaeum)



MIV'S Historical Plaques Program

THE TALLY IS UP TO 49. WHO WILL BE NO. 50?

MIV now has three more Plaques to be issued this year, but the question on everyone's mind is: who will be No. 50?

There were over 1200 Mechanics' Institutes established throughout Victoria alone, and more than half of them are no longer in existence. It is important that such organisations not be entirely lost to memory, and a marker put in their place. MIV has so far plaqued one Institute site - the former **Laen Mechanics' Institute**, about an hour's drive north-east of Horsham. It is important that these wonderful Institutions not be forgotten in time, and that the place which was the heart of the community is recognised and marked for future generations to explore the history and culture of yesteryear.

The time to act is NOW. If there was a Mechanics' in your area that was close to your heart, but is no longer standing, consider commemorating it with a MIV Plaque. Contact your local Historical Society to see if they received any finances or assets from the Institute. They may have received some money which has been set aside for an Institute related purpose such as a commemorative plaque.

There may be only around 500 Institutes still in existence in Victoria today, but it is time to show the world that Victoria had far more Institutes than they knew. Each Institute played a vital part in the social fabric of these rural communities; communities, many of which are now just a road sign marking the start and end of a town. Give travellers a place to stop for, where they can stand and consider the history of the place around them and the town that used to be. To imagine the times had at an Institute, both the happy and the sad; to imagine the horse and carts lined up along the road for a Full Moon Ball, or the soldiers farwelled to the war; the christening of a baby; or Sunday's religious services. These Halls have seen them all. As from the title of **Pam Baragwanath's** book *If the walls could speak*: help an Institute tell it's story to the world.

Upcoming Plaques

No. 47 **Ruffy Mechanics' Hall**

No. 48 **Jeffcott North Mechanics' Institute** - to be unveiled 20 November 2015.

No. 49 **Kyneton Mechanics' Institute**

Plaques Wrap-up

NO. 37 - KALLISTA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

The Kallista Mechanics' Institute Plaque was unveiled by Gwendolen DeLacy and Viv Benton, 21 December 2013. The Plaque has been erected inside the Institute.

NO. 39 - ALEXANDRA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

After a lengthy delay, Plaque No. 39 is now out in the world for our Plaque Hunters to find. The Plaque was unveiled by Cr Margaret Ray, Mayor of Murrindindi Shire, 25 March 2015. It is located on the front of the building, to the right of the front door.

NO. 43 - BARFOLD MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

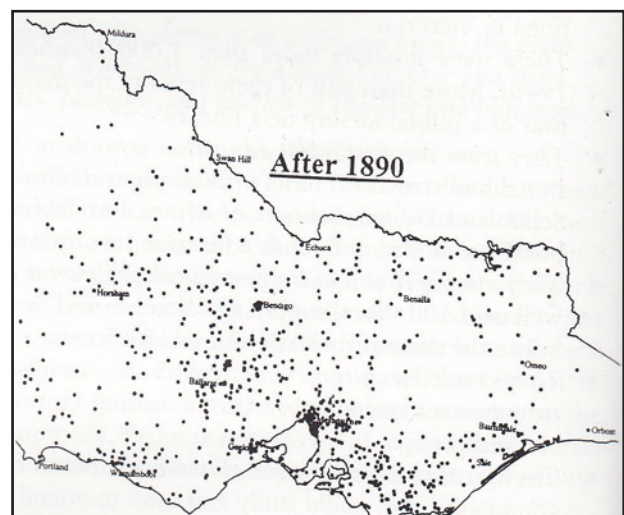
The Barfold Mechanics' Institute Plaque was erected in 2014 to commemorate the opening of Regional Arts Victoria's Home Is Where the Hall Is month by Ms Amanda Millar MLC. The Plaque is situated inside the Institute, on the south wall of the main hall.

NO 44. - CHRISTMAS HILLS MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

This Plaque is located outside the Institute, to the right of the courtyard facing doors.

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

Below: Map showing location of Victoria's MIs after 1890. Source: If the walls could speak



Around Victoria's Institutes

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

ALEXANDRA MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1877)

Plaque Unveiled at Alexandra Library



L-R: Corinne Brewis; Cr Margaret Rae; and Margaret Abbey with MIV Plaque No. 39 on the Alexandra Mechanics' Institute

In 1877 interested residents of the Red Gate (Alexandra's original name) formed a Library Committee and set up a Mechanics' Institute and Library using part of the Protestant Hall while plans were made to build a library. In 1880 the library was in temporary accommodation in the Council chambers and open three nights a week. Items were borrowed using an honour system.

Although there were some in the township who felt the plans were too grand for such a small community, the Grant Street building was opened on 2nd July 1883 with a gala day. Proceedings commenced at 3.00pm following a town parade with the Alexandra Brass Band. After the installation of the library President, Richardson's Grand and World Renowned Theatre opened in the library. There was a special engagement of Professor Bellini and his Wonderful Troupe of Dervishes as well as the original Punch and Judy imported direct from London for the occasion.

The building cost £467 and was built by local contractor (carpenter and undertaker!) **Thomas Carison**. In 1891 a billiard room was opened in a duplicated building adjoining the library.

John Hardy, Alexandra and later Mansfield Lands Officer became President in 1883 and continued in this role until deafness forced his retirement in 1901. Mr. Hardy was born in Northumberland, England about 1830 and was initially employed as a teacher. On arrival in New South Wales in 1856 he became a surveyor, continuing this work for the rest of his life. He had an interest in children's education and wrote the rules for the children's library at Alexandra. Mr. Hardy seems to have had a continuing interest in Mechanics' Institutes as his son, **Charles Hardy**, was the architect for Mansfield's Mechanics' Institute.

In 2003 the community, Shire and a Living Library grant made the concept of another extension to the Alexandra Library a reality. This extension cost \$605,000.00 and 'now houses non-fiction and children's sections. Sinclair Knight Merz were the architects and Landmark Constructions were the builders.

On the 25th March, 2015 about 30 people were present at the plaque unveiling. Both **Margaret Abbey** (CEO Murrindindi Shire) and **Cr Margaret Rae** (Mayor, Murrindindi Shire) spoke and **Corinne Brewis** (MIV) spoke about **John Hardy**, first President. The plaque was unveiled by Cr Margaret Rae after which everyone enjoyed a magnificent country afternoon tea.

Corinne Brewis

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

Talk from the Balcony

Lectures and talks to impart useful knowledge were an integral part of Mechanics' Institutes. They were given in the very early days of the movement in Scotland in the late 1700s and continued to be popular events as MIs spread across Australia in the 19th century. Berwick Mechanics' Institute & Free Library is continuing this tradition in the 21st century with its "Talk from the Balcony".

Speaker for the inaugural event was Mr **Neil Lucas**, PSM, JP. Apart from being a former committee member and long-time supporter of the library, Neil had been CEO of the City of Berwick, Councillor and Mayor of the City of



*Mr Neil Lucas speaking
from the Balcony*

Casey, state member of parliament, and administrator of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands. He entertained more than 50 people as he shared reflections and anecdotes from his early years living and working in the town, and provided interesting insights into the recent history of the Berwick Mechanics Institute and the construction of the current building with its mezzanine floor.

The event was a great success and planning is underway for the next "Talk from the Balcony".

Corinne Brewis

CHRISTMAS HILLS MECHANICS" INSTITUTE (Est. 1873)



From our rebuild, we have had some fantastic community gatherings beginning with a ball and official ribbon cutting by **Harold Muir**. Since that time in September 2013 we now have regular poetry evenings run by local poet and author Sandy Jeffs. This event runs bimonthly and is attended by many from near and far-always with wine, cheese, coffee and cake and even the occasional acrobatics, songs and music. Something for everyone and everyone is welcome to come to our open microphone.

The **Christmas Hills Orchestral Players** (CHOPS) practice on Monday evenings and several masquerade balls have been successfully organised. I believe another event is planned before Christmas.

The **Butterfly Studio** occupies an area for an art room on a permanent arrangement and runs

workshops from here. The outlook across the paddocks and hills is just gorgeous.

We have become a very popular wedding/function venue. Our hall is fully equipped with crockery, cutlery, glassware, oven ware. We can accommodate 150 people and have used the recycled floor boards from the original hall to make some trestle tables and a large kitchen servery bench. Our president (**Veronica Holland**) has hand painted the hand basins that were made by a local potter,

We have installed a beautiful timber cabinet to display local memorabilia to remind us of the history here.

Our garden and landscape area is flourishing. We have two new tennis courts adjacent to the hall and a children's sandpit.

We have a barbecue area with wonderful stone slab tables and many a summer evening is spent playing petanque and tennis.

We have our inaugural Art show coming up between 16-18 October raising funds for the Lovell Foundation caring for people with younger onset dementia.

We are extremely proud of the space and the ambience we have created and love sharing it with many.

Jane Russ

EMERALD HALL MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1894)



The Emerald Institute has been on its second site since 1923. It has recently received an approach from Council with a view to redeveloping the Emerald MI site into the Emerald Community Hub, which in addition to the Institute would house Emerald U3A, Men's Shed and the 3MDR Radio station. The proposed Community Hub will also include: new and existing training courses for accredited Radio Operators and courses based on a new commercial kitchen; art space to promote the local art community; incubator hub for local home businesses; local

tourism promotions; facilities for enhanced mental health and allied services; and accessible community space for local residents and social or recreation groups. The Mechanics' have agreed to the project in principle, but are very keen to ensure their longterm existing site tenure is secure. So far some \$3.25 million is available to fund the project, which includes to \$250,000 from the region's **Bendigo Community Banks**. The project includes renovation of the existing Institute building and the construction of a new adjacent building and it is expected to be completed by June 2017.

FRANKSTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1873)



The longrunning **Frankston Theatre Group** have returned to their old home the Frankston Institute. It was started in 1942 as a fundraising activity for the Red Cross and was a founding member of **Victorian Drama League** and hosted the VDL one act play festivals which ran for several weeks. Since commencing it has produced three to four plays annually, with seasons of one act or short plays, which provide an opportunity for young directors and actors. The FTG has had a number of homes since fire gutted the Institute in 1954. Whilst it now has its own rehearsal and storage facilities at The Shed, Overton Park, Frankston, the Frankston Institute has again become its main performing space. Membership or performance inquiries (03) 9775 2189.

KILMORE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1854)

The Institute's support of the move to have Kilmore's Crown Land Reserves recognised by Heritage Victoria was unsuccessful. However Heritage Victoria has resolved to register the Hume and Hovell Lookout Tower which is located on the Reserve. They accepted a well documented submission based on geology and mapping that

in all probability Hume and Hovell did ascend to the area to where the Tower now stands in 1824 and this will necessitate the rewriting of history. The Society hosted an event on the site last year and no doubt there will be another gathering this year on 13 December 2015.

LITTLE RIVER MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1910)

A MacRobertson Chocolate tin and an unused candy bar found in the Little River Institute library has found its way into the current **Royal Historical Society Exhibition Nail Can to Knighthood**, which tells the story of the legendary entrepreneur and philanthropist **Sir Macpherson Robertson**. The exhibition curated by **David Thompson** was opened by Sir Macpherson's grandson **David Robertson** on 14 July and runs until 18 December 2015. MacRobertson's grew to become the largest confectionery manufacturer in the Southern Hemisphere until it was taken over by Cadbury in 1967. For those who frequented the old Institute picture theatres there will be plenty of nostalgia at **Nail Can to Knighthood** which is at The Society's rooms at 239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne close by Flagstaff Station. To wet your appetite there is an adjunct website produced by **Jo Clyne** of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria: www.culturevictoria.com/stories/built-environment/macrobertsons-confectionery-factory.

In the mean time, Little River's library is building on their Regional History Collection, which now numbers around 250 titles.

MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM (Est. 1839)

NEW ART INSTALLATION CELEBRATES MELBOURNE'S LITERARY PEDIGREE



Photo: Melbourne Athenaeum Library Facebook

Hands In Print, an art installation recognising 14 leading authors and celebrating the wonder

of the written word, unveiled at **Melbourne's Readers' Walk**, a literary haven in the heart of Collins St.

Hands In Print is the reinterpretation of 14 authors' hands by Melbourne artist **Bridget Nicholson**, and was commissioned by The Readers' Walk partners - the **Melbourne Athenaeum Library, Reader's Feast Bookstore** and **Kay Craddock - Antiquarian Bookseller**.

"We hope this installation will cause people to ponder about the writer at work, and the process that takes place from an idea in the author's mind through their hand to the written word and out into the world," said Reader's Feast general manager **Mary Dalmau**.

"The authors have made significant contributions to our literary community and it is fitting that they be recognised in this permanent art installation."

The authors are **Graeme Base, Professor Geoffrey Blainey, Michael Connelly, Mem Fox, Kerry Greenwood, Kate Grenville, Andy Griffiths, Thomas Keneally, Stuart MacBride, Maureen McCarthy, David Malouf, Alex Miller, Ian Rankin** and **Christos Tsiolkas**.

Bridget Nicholson met the authors, captured their hands through a series of photographs and translated them into one of two mediums - clay sculpture or pencil drawing. The pieces have been framed and installed in each of the three Readers' Walk locations, and a map has been produced to aid a 'literary tour' of the precinct.

Melbourne has a proud literary pedigree, with a strong tradition in publishing, writing, bookselling and book borrowing. This was recognised internationally in 2008 when Melbourne became the second **UNESCO City of Literature**.

Collins Street is the spine of Melbourne's book industry, with a strong literary history and an exceptional concentration of book-related organisations.

Melbourne Athenaeum Press Release

ST ARNAUD MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1867)

The St Arnaud Institute site, is perhaps the only one in Victoria to have been annexed and sold from an original Botanic Gardens Crown Reserve. The red-brick Hall has been well used over the years and provided the community with its library until 1976, when it was relocated to Council-owned premises. The Hall's most recent long-term uses have included theatrical company rehearsals and dance classes.



The issue of the longterm management of the Institute, which was further complicated by the death of the solicitor who had been working on the issue for a considerable time, has recently been resolved. As a part of recording the Institute's complex history, the records have been recently digitised through the MIV program which has been liaised by MIV Secretary **Judith Dwyer**.

The Hall's President **Paula Pritchard Ellis** and her Committee organised an Open Day for the Hall on 10 October and are hosting a MIV Travelling Exhibition.

STANLEY ATHENAEUM AND PUBLIC ROOM (Est.)

Second Geoff Craig Memorial Lecture 2015

The Friends of Stanley Athenaeum presented the Second Geoff Craig Memorial Lecture 2015 with the renowned historian and acclaimed speaker **Dr Ross McMullin** at the Stanley Hall on 13 September 2015. The lecture began with a personal and poignant talk about the late Geoff Craig delivered by his brother **Doug Craig**, with an insight into his childhood and life that led to his great passion for local history, especially in relation to Stanley.

Ross McMullin, eminent speaker, historian and author then delivered the lecture on **Gordon Mackay Clunes Mathison** an internationally acclaimed medical scientist. Clunes Mathison was born at Stanley, near Beechworth, in 1883. His parents Hector and Mary (nee Barber) were both schoolteachers at Stanley. From his research Ross spoke of their time living and working in the remoteness of Stanley, they had a family of six children, only Clunes reached the age of 10; two siblings died of illness and when he was 12 his father died also.

The close experience of sickness and suffering evidently influenced Clunes' decision to study medicine following his brilliant scholastic results at Caulfield Grammar; his career at the University of Melbourne was similarly studied

with honours and exhibitions. After graduating, and already interested in clinical research, Dr Mathison travelled to London where he pursued a Doctor of Science at University College.

At 31 years of age Clunes Mathison was wounded at Gallipoli and died on a hospital ship on May 18, 1915, nine days after sustaining the head wound, he was just one of 60,000 Australian soldiers who died in World War I. Already he was an internationally acclaimed medical scientist, and had just been appointed the initial director of Melbourne's Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research. Ross says 'there has never been a greater loss to Australian medical science'.

Ross McMullin the author of the award-winning *Pompey Elliott*, has written about Clunes Mathison in his latest book, *Farewell, Dear People: Biographies of Australia's Lost Generation*, a multi-biography illuminating Australia's gifted lost generation of World War I, which was awarded the Prime Minister's Prize for Australian History.

Digitisation of Geoff Craig's Local History Collection

The Friends of the Stanley Athenaeum have just completed the digitisation and reprinting of the first of 15 volumes of Geoff Craig's books on Stanley history. 'A History of Hurdle Flat' is now back in print and is available to order and purchase, see contact below. Following his death in 2003 Geoff Craig bequeathed the copyright for his books to the Stanley Athenaeum, leaving a legacy for the future of the Athenaeum.

'Memorials, Memory and Loss: Stanley and the First World War'

This exhibition continues at the Stanley Athenaeum, it tells the stories of the 20 men (including Clunes Mathison) from Stanley who lost their lives in the First World War, in total 70 men enlisted from the Stanley community and many local families lost one of their men. The exhibition is on show until 30th June 2016.

Visit the exhibition at the Stanley Athenaeum and Public Room, Main Street, Stanley, and it is open 2nd Wednesday & 4th Saturday each month from 10am to 12pm or by appointment, contact 0458 606 922 or 03 5728 6702

Chris Dormer

TEESDALE COMMUNITY HALL (Est. 1874)

Built originally as the Teesdale Mechanics' Institute around 1873, with various additions, the Hall was rebuilt about 1968. This Hall has stood the test of time and the Hall Committee are very proactive and after an eighteen month



The new entrance-way to the Hall, and the defibrillator installed on the porch.

(Photo: Teesdale Community Hall Facebook)

fundraising campaign have purchased a Public Access Defibrillator which is now based at the Hall. Project coordinator **Kellie Dines** has the last word 'We have read all the data and seen the clear evidence that these machines DO save lives... and now just hope it will never be needed'.

TELANGATUK EAST MECHANICS' HALL (Est. 1885)

The Telangatuk East Hall has an adjacent tennis and recreational complex, and resultant high physical activity, which is used by over one hundred people weekly. Further, as it is a fairly intensively farmed district involving large machinery, fifty kilometres from Horsham, it accordingly seemed a logical place to install a cardiac defibrillator.

The defibrillator, which for the information of locals, is 'the grey and orange box on the wall' was funded by the Horsham Rural City Community Grants Program.

Community training, in the defibrillator's use, was in progress when a regional ABC news team visited. **Amity Dunstan**, Hall Secretary and Treasurer was on hand to explain recent Hall use: as a staging area during the recent Black Range fire; a recent large funeral; weekly sporting events; and evening meetings.

Trainer **Greg Hallam** said 'The hardest part is to actually get the machine and decide to use it... [You just] Open it up, follow the prompts, not only the audible tones but the visual ones and just follow the machine, it's that simple to use.'

Hall President, **Luke Rees** concluded: 'It's a great asset for the whole community.' Sentiments with which we can only but agree.

The Wonderful World of Mechanics' Institutes

In noticing Halls, some of which may not be strictly Mechanics' Institutes, we hope their experience, examples and stories will inspire and motivate you to emulate or even record your own Hall's story. You may even like to nominate a Hall not necessarily in our usual parameters. It could even be in Paraguay, where some interesting Halls, with Australian connections existed. We would most certainly like to hear of European continental Halls where Institute-like activities most certainly did take place.

AUSTRALIA - NEW SOUTH WALES

WYALONG SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL SCHOOL OF ARTS (Est. 1898)



Photo: Mattinbgn/Flickr

Located in the Northern Riverina, the Wyalong township was surveyed in 1884. Gold was discovered in the area in 1893 and the railway was constructed nearby in 1903 at Wyalong Central. There was also to be a separate **West Wyalong School of Arts**.

The move to establish a School of Arts started in February 1898 with an application to the Government to reserve a site for a School of Arts. It appears to have operated from rented premises, for by the end of the year the Institute had eighty-five members.

In November 1899 it was reported that 'The plans for the proposed new two-storey building for the West Wyalong School of Arts are now in Sydney for purpose of being submitted to Minister of Public Instruction.' And that a Government subsidy £51.12s.4d had been received.

Fundraising was by way of an Industrial Exhibition in 1899 and a second was planned during Easter 1900. Gifts books had been made to the library and a chess set had been donated to the Institute.

A further Industrial Exhibition in May 1901 was noted as 'a splendid success – very creditable to the promoters'.

In October 1901 it was reported 'It is well known that the present position of the School of Arts in Wyalong, situate in Cassin-street is very inconvenient seeing that Neeld Street is the main thoroughfare'. In 1900 an approach was made to the Minister of Lands for an allotment in Neeld Street, with an offer to vacate and relinquish the Cassin Street site.

There was some argey bargey before a site was obtained next to the Council site.

In September 1902 the Committee advertised a prize of £2.2s 'for the most suitable design of a brick building for use as a place of meeting, a reading room and a library.'

In July 1903 it was noted that 'the elaborate design of **Richard Rahnenfuehrer** has been accepted for a new brick building to be erected on the new site that has been secured adjoining the Council Chambers, in Neeld-street'.

In March 1904 it was reported that the Institute would borrow £200 in accord with School of Arts Enabling Act of 1902 to facilitate the payment of the contract of £420 and the additional plastering work of £25.

The official opening took place on 2 November 1904 by Institute President **WF Sully** and was followed by a concert and dance.

An exchange of books was arranged with the West Wyalong School of Arts in 1904.

The imposing front section to design of **ER Laver** was added in 1921 by builders, father **John** and son **William Charles Stephenson**, a World War I veteran, and was opened on 11 May by **Major General Sir Charles Rosenthal**. The building and furniture had cost some £800.

The Hall holds two marble tablet Honour Rolls, one depicts all those who served in World War I from the district, and the second records those who paid the supreme sacrifice. It was noted at the opening that every soldier would be granted Life Membership of the School of Arts.

The **Bland District Historical Society**, formed in 1965, occupied part of the building for a time.

Today the building is still used by the community and hosts the local FM community radio station, 94.5 Gold FM

AUSTRALIA - QUEENSLAND**MORELLA CWA HALL (Est. 1944)**

Photo: David Freeman/Flickr

There seems to some doubt whether Morella was named for a Spanish town or from an Aboriginal word 'Moorilla' meaning 'pebbly ridge'. Pastoral settlement took place in the region with the establishment of the Darra River Downs, Evesham and Corona Stations in the 1870s.

The Longreach to Winton railway line went through in the 1920s and Morella was established as a siding, rail maintenance depot and a very important wool forwarding centre. The railway station had a refreshment room where **Mrs McSherry** 'served particularly delicious meat pies'.

A Store, Post Office and Telephone Exchange served the local area as did a thriving transport business that carted the wool from the stations to the siding. In spite of all this activity the township was not surveyed until 1946.

The **Morella Branch of the Country Women's Association** was established from a meeting chaired and hosted by **Mrs Margot Mackenzie** of Tandara Station on 6 September 1944. **Mrs Eileen Davidson** was elected inaugural President.

Later meetings were held at the **Mackays'** Hereward Station. At the first annual meeting it was noted that twenty-nine members had joined. Early fundraising targets included: an artificial leg for the son of a Morella resident; parcels of clothing for an English orphanage; cash for the Blankets for China appeal; and Fat for Britain Scheme. Food and clothing parcels for Britain continued for a number of years. On 6 March 1947 each member agreed to donate five shillings towards a gift from the Queensland CWA for Princess Elizabeth's twenty-first birthday.

Running parallel to the CWA was the Central and Northern Graziers' Association which had been formed in 1946.

The two groups moved to establish a Hall and around 1951 a Government grant of a site for a Health Reserve was made on condition that the site be fenced. Fencing cost £2/10/-.

There a Hall was built in 1952 by **Sam Pryor** of Longreach, with the first meeting being held in the Hall on 6 August 1952. The distinctive gate arch sign was added later.

The CWA and CNGA met on the same days, the ladies in the main Hall and the men in the side veranda and they would join together for afternoon tea. Church services continue to be held there.

Fundraising over the years centred around the annual Morella Gymkhana and more recently with catering for the annual Stockman's Hall of Fame Endurance Ride at Alice Tank and Evesham, both events which have now ceased.

The Hall has been the venue for a long-running annual Christmas Tree. It was also used as a respite centre for travelling women and children.

Following the death of inaugural President Eileen Davidson in May 1990, a bequest was made to the Hall which enabled the purchase of new doors and catering equipment. The Hall was subsequently named the Davidson Hall in her honour.

The CWA funded and published **Jeanne Mims Morella Memories: A Local History** in 1992. Jeanne had come to live on Tuscon Station in 1962 with her husband Hadden.

Today besides the Railway Station, the Hall is all that remains of this small community centre.

The plight of the Morella CWA and Hall featured on an **ABC Landline** program in September 2015 which showed a meeting of the Morella CWA in progress inside the Hall and one of the longest running droughts in progress surrounding the Hall.

Morella CWA Member **Fiona Hamilton** summed it up well: 'It would be shame for it to fade away. I think the CWA brings something unique to the area that other organisations don't bring. And it's a shame when anything's lost out here, you know. Bit by bit we're shedding all different organisations and reasons to get together in the smaller communities. I would like to think that their efforts pay off. I would like to think so, but it depends on the next generation and how forthcoming they are to take roles.

May the rain tumble down well before July!

AUSTRALIA - SOUTH AUSTRALIA**CURRAMULKA INSTITUTE (Est. 1883)**

Curramulka is situated on the Yorke Peninsula and 15km from Minlaton. The district name is taken from the Aboriginal dialect 'curre' meaning 'emu' and 'mulka' meaning 'deep water hole'. The latter refers to the extensive chain of limestone



Photo: Mattinbgn/Wikipedia

caves, first discovered in 1850, but with major explored extensions in 1984. This makes some 14km of known passages, the longest cave being Corra-Lynn.

The area was first settled in the 1870s and the Hundred of Curramulka was surveyed in 1874 and the township became a busy through road to the coastal Port Julia.

The first meeting to consider the building of an Institute was held about April 1883 and obtained a land grant for a site August 1883. In November 1883 it was decided to call tenders based on the design of the Enfield Institute with a hall of 45ftx30ft, library of 15ftx12ft, and ladies' and gent's dressing rooms of 10ftx9ft.

In January 1884 the contract was let to **CH Marlow** of Minlaton, with the lowest price of £560. In March 1884 heavy rains and winds caused the collapse of the arch over the stage and Mr Marlow withdrew from the contract. In November 1884 **J Swann & Sons** of Maitland were contracted for £320 to complete the building. The total cost was £930.

The Institute was officially opened by **Robert Caldwell** MP on 27 March 1885 supported by fellow MPs **William Henry Beaglehole** and **David Bews**. Mr Beaglehole, who chaired the tea and concert, donated 'a complete set of the works of Dickens, handsomely bound' for the library.

The Hall was extended to 65ft in length and the stage to 16ft in 1907 and a supper room was added in 1924 by contractor **RJ Poole**. The distinctive cinema box was installed on the front of the Hall in 1926.

The Hall's fiftieth anniversary celebrations were held in 1935 when Jubilee Souvenir booklet was issued. A World War II Honour Roll was installed in the late 1940s.

On 16 August 2015 the Curramulka Heritage Group held an exhibition in the Institute to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II and the 130th anniversary of Curramulka Institute. (The Heritage Group had earlier received a grant to restore the Honour Board in the Institute.)

The Hall features in the annual 'Curramulka Lights Up!' event during December each year.

AUSTRALIA - TASMANIA

DERBY TOWN HALL (Est. 1921)



Photo: Stuart Smith/Panoramio.com

Derby, located to the north-east of Tasmania was an early important tin mining centre, which attracted a significant Chinese community. It was initially developed from the mid-1870s by the **Krushka** brothers - **Christopher** and **Frederick** - as the 'Brothers Mine' and the district became known as Brothers Home in 1882, a locality name which persisted until 1885, when it officially became known as Derby.

Large scale mining ceased in 1948, but was continued with solo 'tin scratchers'. Today the area largely relies on tourism centred around the **Tin Dragon Interpretation Centre and Café**.

The movement to erect a hall started in 1921 and the Government made available hall site by grant. In 1922 a poll determined that £1500 be borrowed to build a Town Hall. The distinctive 60ftx35ft structure designed by **Alfred Harold Masters** (1874-1951) was built in 1923 by **George A Rodman & Sons**. Electricity was connected to the Hall by courtesy of **Lindesay Clarke** of the **Briseis Mining Company**.

The Hall was to be opened on 12 July 1923 with Gymkhana in the afternoon and a concert in the Hall at night. An application for a half day holiday to be gazetted in conjunction with opening was made. Heavy rain caused the abandonment of the Gymkhana, but the well-attended evening in the Hall was chaired by **Alan Wardlaw** MLC.

The Hall became the centre for activity around the Derby mining tragedy on 4 April 1929, when the Briseis Tin Mine dam wall collapsed and an avalanche of water flooded the town and resulted in the death of fourteen people.

The Buffalo Lodge used the Hall for meetings and it became a centre for badminton and infrequent boxing matches. It was also used as picture theatre.

The Hall was used for the official launch of Radio Station 7DY by the Premier **AG Ogilvie** in February 1936, after which at 10.00 'a dainty supper was served'. The following year saw the official switch on electricity from the State Hydro grid.

There was a substantial upgrade of the Hall in 1946 by **Sid J Rodman** and **Les Crack**. The Derby Dramatic Society was operational in the late 1970s into the 1980s and this highlighted the superb acoustics.

Council took over the building in 1993. The long-running library closed in 1980s and reopened it 1994, with a computer in the library.

Today the **Make, Bake and Grow Market** is held on the third Sunday of each month and brings vendors and patrons from across the north-east.

On 7 February 2015 the award winning **Blue Derby Cycle Trail** was launched, which in part follows the Ringarooma River. When complete in mid-2016 the network will comprise some 80km of mountain bike tracks.

AUSTRALIA - WESTERN AUSTRALIA

KELLERBERRIN AGRICULTURAL HALL (Est. 1897)



Photo: Bahnfreund/Wikipedia

Located some 200km east of Perth, a number of grazing leases were allocated in the area in the years 1861-68. Explorer **Charles C Hunt**, in 1864, named a granite outcrop Kellerberrin, Aboriginal for a large ant colony 'keela' found on the side of a hill 'berrin'. Four large stations were established in 1877 – Cuttening (Massingham family), Milligan (Ripper), Mooranippon (Leake) and Mt Caroline (Sewell).

The Northam to Southern Cross railway line was constructed through the area in 1893-95. The township was surveyed adjacent to the

Kellerberrin siding in 1897 with a Reserve of ten acres being set aside for a Post Office.

In October 1897 the community was successful in having part of this Reserve set aside for a hall which was to be also used for a school.

The diversification from grazing to large scale cropping resulted in a grain handling facility in 1932, a use which still continues.

The Kellerberrin and Districts Agricultural Society, which was formed in 1920 has been staging annual shows since then, which are currently held in September and conclude with an evening in the Hall.

The Kellerberrin Agricultural Hall is located on the north side of the railway line, adjoining the Post Office. It was designed by **Howard Evans** and built by **Fairweather and Lunt** in granite with brick quoins, with a jarrah floor and galvanised iron roof. Local fundraising and a Government loan of £250 enabled the Hall to be opened 'free of debt'. (The grant resulted in outburst in Parliament by the MP for Yilgarn, the Hon. CJ Moran, protesting 'only a man, his dog and dead kangaroo existed' in Kellerberrin at the time.

It was officially opened on the morning of 26 December 1898 by **John Adam**, Resident Magistrate of Northam, who with his wife **Charlotte** had previously arrived by train. Before utilising the special key provided Mr Adam noted 'that this was the most easterly of the agricultural halls, the halls further east being known as mining institutes'.

Lunch followed and later afternoon tea was served with visits to the adjoining reserve where a cricket match was staged throughout the day. In the evening Mr Adam presided over a well-attended concert and dance.

The Hall was extended in 1907, with a further Government allocation of £125, and in 1908 the newly formed Shire of Kellerberrin moved in as a tenant. In 1912 a move to build a new hall elsewhere was rebuffed by the Government as the original loan had not been repaid. Council took over the building in 1916.

The Hall was used as the Court House from 1937-60s. The Hall was then used as Special School for Handicapped Children until 1972, when a purposebuilt facility was erected. It then became the town's museum.

On 27 March 1975 Reserve 5950 was changed to Reserve No. 33207 and vested in the Shire of Kellerberrin as a museum site.

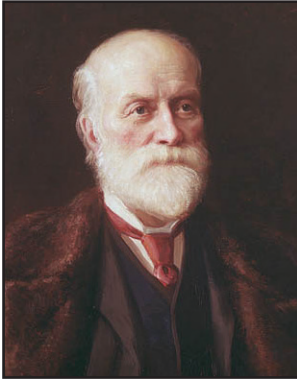
Council undertook a major restoration of the Hall in 1980-81 'repairing or replacing and

painting all exterior timberwork and restoring exterior brickwork and stonework’.

Today the Hall is used as the Kellerberrin Pioneer Museum which features ‘an extensive array of early type farm and household implements’.

CANADA

PETERBOROUGH MECHANICS’ INSTITUTE (Est. 1842)



Sir Sandford Fleming. Artwork held by the Library and Archives Canada.

Photo: Wikipedia

Peterborough, located in the Ontario Province, is on the banks of the Otonabee River. It was established as sawmilling and grain milling centre in 1818 by **Adam Scott** and became known as Scotts Plains.

In 1825 Parliamentarian **Peter Robinson** (1785-1838) promoted an immigration scheme and some 2000 settlers came mostly from Fermoy,

Cork in Ireland and settled in the area and it was subsequently renamed Peterborough and it was created a town in 1850.

The area attracted intellectuals including **Sir Sandford Fleming** in 1845, inventor of standard time and designer of Canada’s first postage stamps and he was to be joined by **Dr John Hutchinson**.

A hydro-electric installation of the Peterborough Light and Power Company in 1884 made Peterborough the first town to have electrical street lights in Canada. Known as ‘The electric city’ it hosts the major annual ‘Festival of Lights’. Technical development in boat building, engineering has followed and today the area hosts plants of Siemens, Rolls Royce and General Electric as well as the local businesses of Fisher Gauge and Bryston.

The Peterborough Mechanics’ Institute was established before 1843 for the *Constitution of the Peterboro Mechanics’ Institute* was adopted in February 1843. Sir Sandford Fleming records the Institute in his diaries 1845-53.

Robert Romaine, editor of the *Peterborough Review*, was Librarian in 1858 when it had 950 books and received 100 newspapers and periodicals and had 140 subscribers.

It was accredited as a suitable library by the Ontario Department of Agriculture in 1868 and henceforth was eligible for Government funding for the purchase of technical and scientific books. Fiction had to be funded from the Institute’s own resources.

It also conducted courses in the technical arts and ran a lecture series. The Institute was used by author and poet **Isabella Valancy Crawford** (1846-87).

The Institute was renamed Peterborough Public Library in 1895. A new Carnegie Library built in George Street in 1911. This was replaced by a new library at 345 Aylmer Street North and it opened on 2 September 1980.

The records of the Peterborough Institute, from 1868-1940, were purchased by Library and Archives Canada from Toronto-based David Ewens Books in 1995.

NEW ZEALAND

COLYTON HALL (Est. 1890)



Photo: geocaching.com

Located in New Zealand’s north island the Colyton district, originally known as Mangaone, is on the rolling Manawatu plains. The Hall has its genesis from a meeting held in the Mangaone School and as a result the Mangaone Hall Company Ltd was formed to build the Hall. The offer of a site by **TJ Smith**, near the school, was accepted and trustees appointed. A mortgage was arranged and a 50ftx30ft hall was constructed in weatherboard with a galvanised iron roof. It was opened with a plain and fancy-dress ball on 27 November 1890. It served as a church for all faiths, and community organisations such as the long-running Colyton Cricket Club, Women’s Institute, or the indoor bowls, table tennis or cards groups, have used it over the years. Children were always welcome and it generally required an afternoon nap to prepare them for the long night ahead.

Then there are the Annual Colyton School Prize Presentation Nights and the oft recalled hilarious Annual Colyton Young Farmers’ Club Review, a skit of one which climaxed unexpectedly. The thought of removing the shot from a shot gun cartridge and filling it with flour

seemed feasible and harmless, but in reality when discharged at the end of a skit it resulted in large hole through the stage curtain and a hole in the Hall roof and some very floury performers.

The sumptuous Hall suppers included a large bowl of punch made from cold tea and fruit juices.

The Hall and site were transferred to the Crown post-World War I. Over the years the Hall has been added to and upgraded. A side room has been built for the use of the Small Bore Rifle Club.

We are most grateful to **Jan Shanhun's** reminiscences. Indeed, the agricultural-based community Colyton continues to thrive with the Hall at its heart. A Hall that is clearly well maintained and much loved by all Colytonians.

UNITED KINGDOM - ENGLAND

WENTWORTH MECHANICS' INSTITUTE (Est. 1822)



Photo: John Goodall/Panoramio.com

The village of Wentworth, in South Yorkshire, has been inextricably associated with the aristocratic families of **Wentworth**, **Watson** and **Fitzwilliam** and the **Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estates**. The family also had longterm interests in coal mines, glass and pottery manufacture.

Today the village population of 400 is largely employed on the remnant 15,000 acres of the Wentworth Estates. Wentworth takes its name from the family name Winta and the Celtic 'wor' for 'enclosed or stockaded homestead'.

The Wentworth Mechanics' Institute appears to date back to 1822 when the Wentworth Estates were owned by the **4th Earl Fitzwilliam** (1756-1833) and were administered by his son **William Charles** (1786-1857), **Viscount Milton**, who was later to become the 5th Earl Fitzwilliam. It may have had a temporary home under the patronage of the enthusiastic William Charles who made that home more permanent after his father's death.

The Wentworth Christian Mechanics' Institute and Clubroom, a two-storey structure,

was erected in 1835, from deep coursed, horizontally-tooled sandstone, with a Welsh slate roof. The ground floor housed a library, a hall and a living room for the steward. The basement provided further accommodation. In 1894 there were additions to the building designed by **William Dickie** in the form of a billiard room, meeting rooms and a store.

Most of the library 'disappeared' during the early 1940s when the building was occupied as a canteen by soldiers staged in the Wentworth area. The Hall however was still used for dances and other fundraising activities.

Post World War II, the Institute fully resumed its community role until 1974 when the Wentworth Estates passed ownership of the Institute over to the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. Council restored the building and replaced the original 1835 decorative iron framed windows with modern ones. Council designated it as the 'Village Hall' but the locals still called it the 'Wentworth Mechanics' Institute' and still do.

In 1999 the Institute was handed over to the Wentworth Village Community Association and it became a Registered Charity 'for the charitable purposes and for the benefit of the public generally'. Consequently it shares in the annual distribution of Fitzwilliam Wentworth Trust. A library has also been reinstated.

The building amenities received an upgrade about 2012 when the kitchen received a major fitout and new tables and chairs were added to the lounge.

Current uses for the building include: coffee mornings; craft fairs; dancing classes; the Wentworth and Thorpe Hesley Youth Theatre, established in 2007, which produces two musicals a year; and Holy Trinity church activities, including its Toddlers Playgroup. Visiting medical practitioners conduct regular clinics in one of the meeting rooms.

The Wentworth Women's Institute, established in 1985, holds its meetings and lectures in the Institute. It is noted that 'Gentlemen are very welcome to attend any meeting or any outing they might find interesting.

Today the Institute continues to be managed by the Wentworth Village Community Association, the Committee of which is elected annually. It employs a full-time caretaker and bookings secretary.

There is an interesting connection with the Fitzwilliam family and the Wentworth family in Australia. It is believed that the 4th Earl 'fixed' D'Arcy Wentworth's trial and his transportation

to Australia in order to protect the family name, and the 4th Earl had D'Arcy's sons educated in England.

UNITED KINGDOM - WALES

TYLORSTOWN WELFARE HALL AND INSTITUTE (Est. 1882)



Photo: tylorstownwelfarehall.co.uk

Located in the South East Valleys of Wales, the district's population is almost 5000. The Institute dates back to the formation of the Tylorstown Workingmen's Club and Institute in 1882. In 1933 the Friendly Society Trustee signed a conveyance and trust deed to the site.

The present Institute was built 1933, financed by worker and colliery contributions and public donations. The basement space comprised a library, reading room and snooker and games room. The upper two floors were used as a hall and theatre. It was used as a cinema 1937-73.

The Hall underwent a major upgrade in 1993 providing for fire escape provision and restoration. It also brought the projection room up to current regulation. Universally known as 'The Welfare' it reopened for film and community use 1998.

The theatre is well resourced for conferences and theatrical productions. Theatre workshops from **Page to Stage** make good use of the facilities. Meeting rooms are similarly well equipped. A Computer Suite opened in 2015, and can be accessed on weekdays 9am-11am. The Espresso Yourself Coffee Shop is open weekdays during 9am-3pm.

A major targeted restoration and development program has resulted in a £749,152 grant in 2009 and more recently another of £1 million. Further in May 2015 The Hall was shortlisted in the community vote for **Jewson Building Better Communities** funding and a share in £100,000 funding.

Useful Knowledge

The building is Grade II listed. Records of various activities and organisations connected with the Institute are held in the South Wales Miners' Library, University of Swansea.

Website: www.tylorstownwelfarehall.co.uk

UNITED STATES

FOLIO: THE SEATTLE ATHENAEUM (Est. 2013)



The Seattle Athenaeum

Washington State's latest cultural addition is **The Folio** which was foreshadowed recently. Their rooms and library will open in the distinctive 1930s **Seattle YMCA** building in January 2016. Initially 6000 square feet has been leased and another

4000 square feet will be added in a year. This will then comprise two large well-lit reading rooms, conference rooms, an area for writers, and three rooms for performances and events, with seating ranging from 50 to 200 people.

Memberships are presently being received, along with donations of services, books and money.

The mission statement reads: 'Folio is a gathering space for books and people who read them. Devoted to the intellectually curious, Folio offers circulating collections, vibrant conversations, innovative cultural and civic programs, and work spaces for writers. Come to folio for an hour, a day, a week. The books are waiting for you.'

'Folio will provide a home for book collections from private libraries collectors and organizations that can no longer house them. It will 'daylight' such books which are frozen assets not currently available for public enjoyment.'

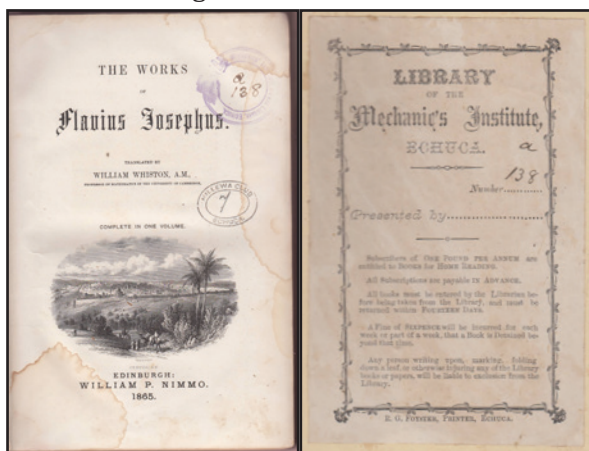
There was an unofficial opening of the Folio on 25 September, which was chaired by its President **David Brewster**. He outlined progress of The Folio to date and introduced recently hired Librarian **Lisa Sanders**. Soliciting book donations David stated 'We can take care of your books, and we can put them in the hands of good people.'

We welcome The Folio to the **Wonderful World of Mechanics' Institutes** and their ilk and we wish the Seattleites well in their exciting new innovative venture. Benjamin Franklin would be proud! www.folioseattle.org.

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

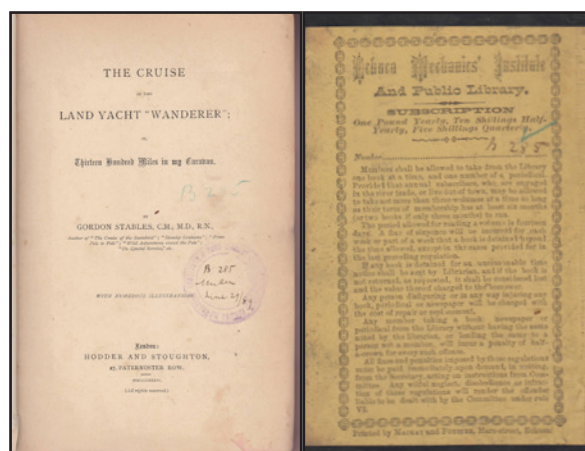
The Mechanics' Institutes are known universally for their libraries, which were in most cases the first in the many communities in which they were established. Whilst many books were taken to the local tip or sold, even the blandest title can tell us much about the Institute and the conduct of its library.

We have recently sighted several books relating to the **Echuca Mechanics' Institute**. The first title had its start as part of the 400 volume library of the **Millewa Club** which was established in 1872 under the aegis of Echuca merchant and carrier **James Shackell** (1833-99), who operated the local branch of **Permewan Wright**, which also had river boats. Echuca was very much the commercial hub of the Riverina and Shackell built premises for the Club on the understanding that the building would be paid off. However when the Club was unable meet its obligations he took over the debt and the Club it was duly wound up in 1877 and its book collection was passed to the Echuca Mechanics' Institute. The Institute, which had been established about 1875, had opened in its own premises in 1876. The remaining volumes highlight local printing and bookbinding trades.



Title 1: William Whiston AM (1667-1752). *The Works of Flavius Josephus*. Edinburgh: William P Nimmo, 1865. Hardback. vi, 684 pages, steel engraving of Flavius Josephus on frontispiece and of Jerusalem on title page, index. 165x250mm. Printer: Ballantyne & Company, Edinburgh. Bound in olive cloth, gold blocked on spine 'Whiston's/ Josephus/ Complete/ WP Nimmo, Edinburgh. Goldblocked line drawing on front, blind embossed front and back. Endpapers are white. The front pastedown features an oblong pasted white paper 95x155mm plate. It carries the wording 'Library/ of the/ Mechanics' Institute,/ Echuca./ Number [handwritten] A/138./ Presented by...'. The Rules follow. The label is printed by 'RG Foyster, Printer, Echuca.

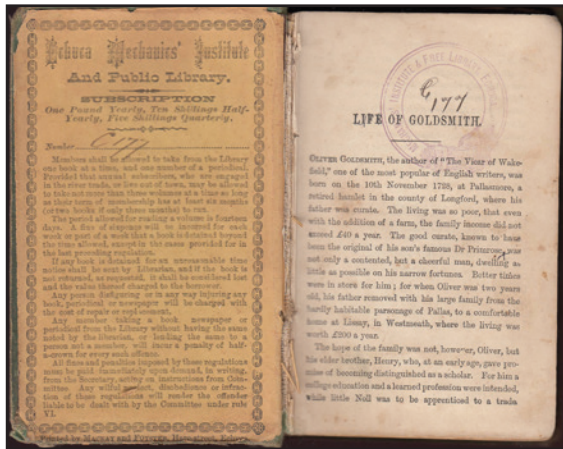
The opposite endpaper carries a 45mm diameter circular rubber stamp 'Mechanics' Institute & Free Library, Echuca' with a handwritten 'A/138' in the centre. The rubber stamp and number is repeated on the title page in addition to a 25x35mm oval rubber stamp carry the wording 'Millewa Club, Echuca', the handwritten figure '7' is in the centre. This stamp is repeated on page one of the text, but with a printed '7' in the centre.



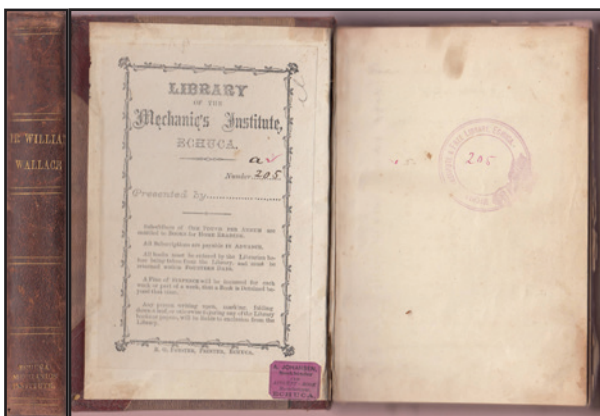
Title 2: William Gordon Staples, CM, MD, RN (1840-1910). *The Cruise of the Yacht 'Wanderer': or Thirteen Hundred Miles in My Caravan*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1886. Hardback. xii, 351 pages, 4 pages adverts. Line illustrations throughout. 150x230mm. Printer: Hazel, Watson & Viney Ltd, London and Aylesbury. Binding. Red cloth, blocked in gold on the spine and cover, with additional black stamping on cover. A much rubbed 95x65mm rectangular yellow label pasted on front cover of book carries the legible wording 'Echuca Mechanics' Institute/ and/ Free Library'. Front and back endpapers in black. The front pastedown features an oblong pasted yellow paper 100x150mm. It carries the wording 'Echuca Mechanics' Institute/ and/ Public Library./ Subscription One Pound Yearly, Ten Shillings Half-/ Yearly, Five Shillings Quarterly./ Number [handwritten] B285.' The Rules follow. The label is 'Printed by Mackay and Foyster, Hare-street, Echuca'. The half-title and title page carry the 40mm circular purple rubber stamp carrying the wording in caps 'Echuca Mechanics' Institute & Free Library. Within the stamp circle

Ex-Libris CONT...

on the title page is the notation 'B 285/Written/ Line 29/89.'

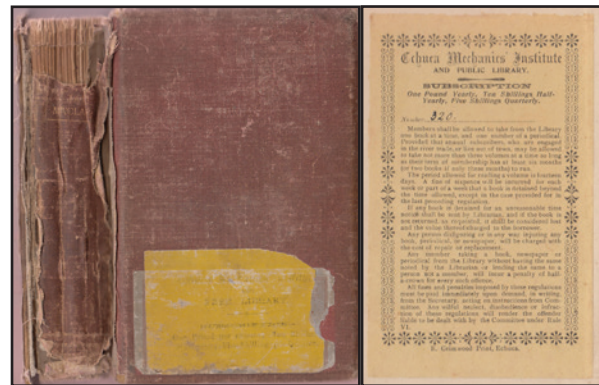


Title 3. Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74), *The Vicar of Wakefield*. London: Philip, 1817. Hardback. 1875. xiii, 288 pages, coloured plate at frontis. Lacks title page. 95x145mm. Binding in olive green cloth, with black and gold embossing on spine and front cover. Rear cover has blind embossing. Pages gilt top and foreedge. Endpapers are in chocolate brown. The front pastedown features an oblong pasted yellow paper 100x150mm. It carries the wording 'Echuca Mechanics' Institute/ and/ Public Library./ Subscription One Pound Yearly, Ten Shillings Half-/ Yearly, Five Shillings Quarterly./ Number [handwritten] C177.' The Rules follow. The label is 'Printed by Mackay and Foyster, Hare-street, Echuca.' The half-title carries a 45mm diameter rubber stamp with the wording 'Mechanics' Institute & Free Library, Echuca.' With handwritten 'C177' in the centre.



Title 4: John Donald Carrick (1787-1837). *Life of Sir William Wallace of Elderslie*. Edinburgh: Constable & Co., 1830. Hardback. 319p, 1p adverts. 120x180mm. Printer: Arch K Murray and Co., Glasgow, [1870s]. Quarterbound in leather

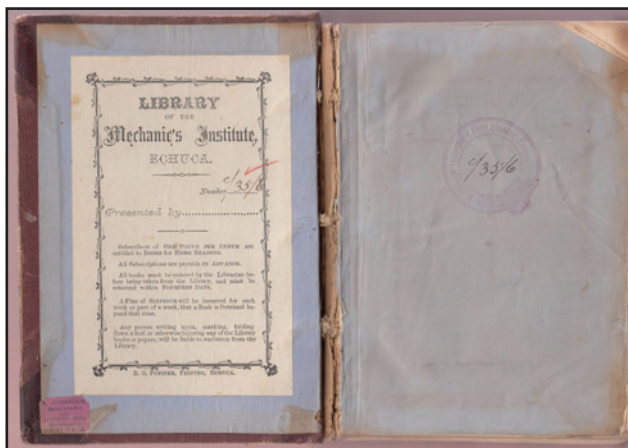
with light brown linen insets. Spine carries gold blocked title and 'Echuca/ Mechanics'/ Institute' byline. The front pastedown features an oblong pasted whitepaper 950x150mm. It carries the wording 'Library/ of the/ Mechanics' Institute,/ Echuca./ Number [handwritten] A205/ Presented by' The Rules follow. The label is 'Printed by RG Foyster, Printer, Echuca.' Also on the front pastedown is a 20x25mm oblong purple label carrying the wording A Johansen/Bookbinder/ and Account Book Manufacturer, Echuca.' The half-title carries a 40mm diameter rubber stamp with the wording the Mechanics' Institute & Free Library, Echuca.' With handwritten '205' in the centre.



Title 5. Ian Maclaren [pseud. Rev. John Watson] (1850-1907). *The Days of Auld Langsyne*. 3rd edition, completing fiftieth thousand. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1895. Hardback. xii, 358 pages. 130x195mm. Printer: T and A Constable, Edinburgh. Bound in maroon cloth, with white endpapers. (Appears to have been rebound in heavy bevel-edged boards.) Spine carries gold blocked title and 'Mechanics' Institute/, Echuca' byline. On the front cover is a rectangular 65x90mm yellow pastedown, over an earlier green one carrying the wording 'Echuca Mechanics' Institute/and Free Library' and subscription details. The front pastedown features an oblong pasted buff paper 95x155mm plate. It carries the wording 'Echuca Mechanics' Institute/ and Public Library./ Subscription One Pound Yearly, Ten Shillings Half-/ Yearly, Five Shillings Quarterly./ Number [handwritten] 320.' The Rules follow. The label is printed by 'E Grimwood Print, Echuca'. Number [handwritten] A205/ Presented by' The Rules follow. The label is 'Printed by RG Foyster, Printer, Echuca.' There are no library stamps. On the back pastedown is 65x100mm light blue oblong plate, with

Ex-Libris CONT...

red printing 'The Book belongs to/ **The Book Lover's Library**,/ Queen's Walk, Swanston Street,/ Melbourne./ Vol. No. [handwritten] 78. Price [handwritten] 3s. 6d. On the opposite endpaper is teh record of 33 rubber date stamp borrowings from Jan 1897 to S1898.



Title 6. William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63). *The Adventures of Philip on His Way Through the World: to which is now prefixed A Gentle Shabby Story*. Being Volume VI: The Works of William Makepeace Thackeray in Twelve Volumes. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1875. Hardback. xii, 622 pages, line drawing illustrated frontispiece. 135x190mm. Printer: Spotiswoode & Co., London. Quarterboard in leather, with maroon cloth insert, the spine is goldblocked. 'Works of Thackeray/Adventures of Philip/ Echuca/ Mec. Inst. Endpapers in grey. The front pastedown features an oblong pasted white paper 95x155mm plate. It carries the wording 'Library/ of the/ Mechanics' Institute,/ Echuca./ Number [handwritten] C/35/6/ Presented by...'. The Rules follow. The label is printed by 'RG Foyster, Printer, Echuca.' The opposite endpaper carries a 45mm diameter circular rubber stamp 'Mechanics' Institute & Free Library, Echuca' with a handwritten 'C/35/6' in the centre.

Notes:

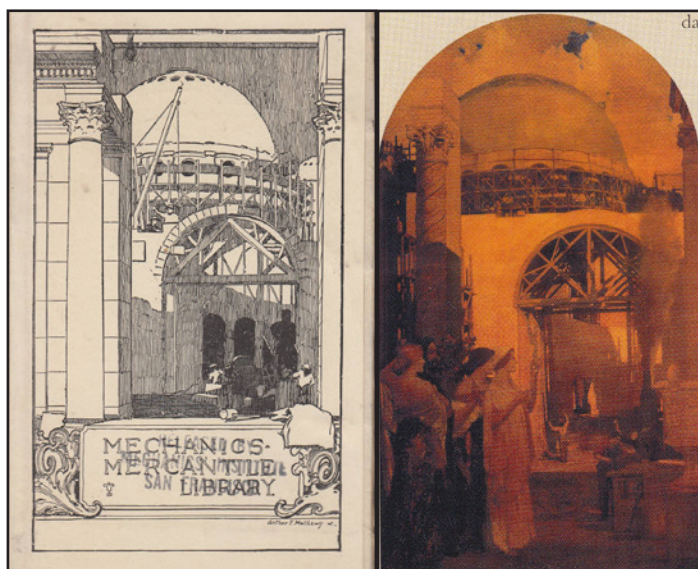
Bookbinder **Andreas** [aka Anton and Andrew Frederick] **Johansen** was in Echuca by 1877. In 1880 the Echuca Institute record notes: 'From Mr Johansen expressing his willingness to continue his contract for binding, to look over the library once a quarter free of charge and do any repairs required.' A fire gutted his premises in 1881 and as 'Anton Johansen, of

Echuca, bookbinder' he was declared insolvent in November 1881. He appears to have continued to reside in Echuca for a time as he continued to repair and bind books for the Institute. However he was in Melbourne by 1898 trading as Johansen, Castwood & Co., bookbinders.

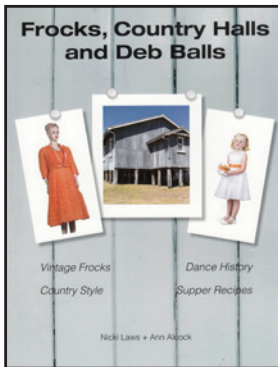
Printer **Robert George Foyster** (1833-1916), after a stint in the Victorian Government Printing Office and on the goldfields, was in Heathcote in 1864 where he commenced the *Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser*. In 1875 he established the shortlived *Teachers' Journal and Educational News*. He moved to Echuca in 1877 and established the *Echuca and Moama Advertiser and Farmers' Gazette* in 1877 and in 1885 merged with **Angus and Robert Donald Mackay** in the *Riverine Herald*. In 1892 he was involved in a partnership with **Hugh McKenzie** and **Andrew William White** which established the *Echuca and Moama Stock Journal*.

ADDENDUM

In UK 37 we noted a book, ex-libris the **San Francisco Mechanics' Institute**, and the bookplate it contained was by **Arthur Frank Mathews**. It has been pointed out that bookplate was produced by Mathews for the Institute in 1906 and it was used until 1956 when the fifty year agreement with the merging **Mercantile Library** expired. The same theme was used in the floor to ceiling mural painted by him for the Institute in 1917 called 'The Arts'. This is painted in the California Decorative Style dominated by Mathews and his wife **Lucia Kleinhans Mathews** between 1890 and 1915.



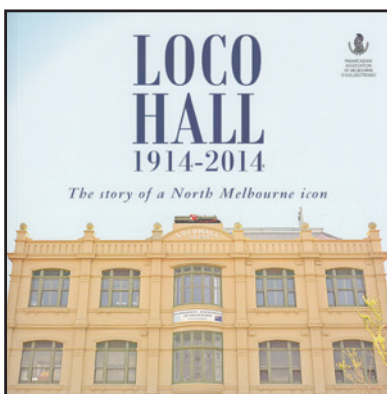
Book Reviews



Frocks, Country Halls and Deb Balls – Text by Nicki Laws and photographs by Ann Alcock. Toowoomba: Photovoice Australia, 2015. Paperback. 63 pages, illustrations, mostly in colour. 215x280mm.

This well researched and illustrated book is centred around the Halls of the North-East Darling Downs. The dresses of the legendary **Thelma Beutel** and **Dulcie Mason** and the dances and debutante balls where they were worn, covered a period of around sixty years. There is much about: dress design; hall management and managers; dance styles; band history, particularly **Ronnie and the Ramblers** and the **Silvertones**; hall users; and the legendary suppers served, with some recipes. The author, photographer, designer **Lucy Robertson-Cuninghame** and un-named printer are to be commended on its skilled production. This book is a most valuable reference for Australian Halls and is highly recommended for every hall library, for its ideas and inspiration. It needs to be passed around every Hall Committee member.

Available from: Ann Alcock, Box 1791, Toowoomba, Q 4350. \$25, posted.



Loco Hall 1914-2014: The Story of a North Melbourne Icon – Tony O'Brien. Translated by Stavros Messinis. North Melbourne: Panarcadian Association (O Kolokotronis),

2014. Paperback. 52 pages, illustrated, bibliography. 210x210mm.

This bi-lingual book defines the occupancy of the Hall's two owners: the **Locomotive Engine Drivers, Firemen and Cleaners Association** which built it in 1914; and the **Greek Panarcadian Association of Melbourne** which purchased and has occupied it since 1985. The imposing three-storey Loco Hall was designed

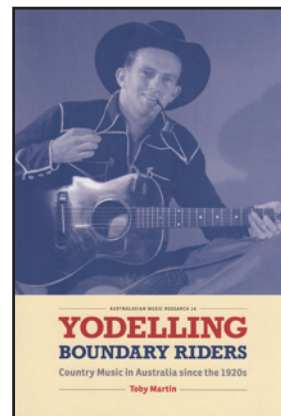
by **William Atkins Dalton** (1846-1921) and built by **William Fullerton Holden** (1862-1917).

The 1500 seat Hall opened with a Federal Union Conference on 12 December 1914, at which **Billy Hughes** was present. In 1938 architects **Cowper, Murphy and Appleford** were commissioned to turn the it into an 800 seat art deco picture theatre, the Loco Cinestar Theatre, which from the late 1950s screened foreign language films into the 1970s. It then became known as the New Marconi Ballroom.

Meanwhile post-War migration of Arcadians, fleeing from the Greek Civil War 1946-49 saw several thousand arrive in Victoria. They formed themselves into an Association and needed a permanent home. Loco Hall was purchased at auction in September 1985 and after a massive refurbishment of the art deco features and much fundraising it was launched as Arcadia Receptions in October 1987. Each year on 23 September Loco Hall is the centre of celebration, representing both liberation from Ottoman rule in 1821 and the formation of the Panarcadian Association in 1959. In very recent times the building has been upgraded, including the installation of a lift, and this will take its use well into the 21st century.

This well produced and illustrated publication, with a bi-lingual narrative, just goes to show that the Hall is a universal centre of community, in whatever language. We thank the Panarcadians for sharing their story with us.

Available from: Panarcadian Association, Box 789, North Melbourne, V 3051. \$20.00, posted.



Yodelling Boundary Riders: Country Music in Australia since the 1920s – Toby Martin. Melbourne: Lyrebird Editions, 2015. Paperback. 178 pages, illustrated, bibliography, index. 170x250mm. 9780734037787.

Travelling showmen brought Country and Western music to many halls throughout Australia and the genre was embraced by local rodeos, agricultural shows and even regional radio stations. We all grew up with **Dick Cranbourne's** longrunning 'Hillbilly' show on radio 3DB, with regulars, **Stan**

Book Reviews cont...

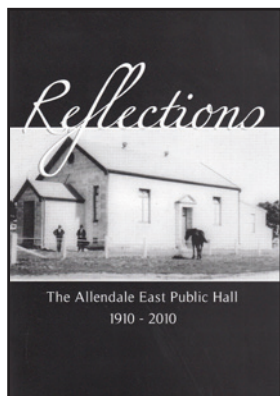
Stafford and yodeller **Colleen Honeyman**, alas not mentioned in the book. Nor does the author mention **Denis Gibbons** who, besides having a radio show, straddled the rail between Country and Folk with a recording career from 1959-74.

The author however mentions **Bob Dyer** who first came to Australia in 1936, toured with Cranbourne and others, and finally settled in Australia in 1940. In 1942 Dyer recorded twenty-six episodes of 'The Last of the Hillbillies and His Mountain Men' for 3DB which was nationally syndicated. He later compered Pick a Box on radio from 1948, then television from 1957-71.

Well documented, the author takes a new look at the evolution of Country Music in Australia. He mentions along the way, the recorded influence of **Jimmie Rodgers** and **Hank Williams**, and locally based-singers **Tex Morton**, **Slim Dusty**, **Buddy Williams**, **Smoky Dawson**, **Chad Morgan**, **Tex Baines**, **Reg Lindsay**, the **Schneider Sisters** and **LeGarde Twins**. The book focuses mostly on the post-1950s era which leads into the annual Tamworth Festival from 1968, and progressing from **Jimmy Little**, **John Williamson**, **Lee Kernaghan** and **Keith Urban**, to **Guy Sebastian** and **Kasey Chambers**. The death of Slim Dusty in 2003 and the void that created in the Country Music scene was left for musing in the final chapter.

This volume is a worthy contribution to the slim library, that presently exists, documenting Australian Country and Western and Folk music.

Available from: Lyrebird Editions, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, V 3010. \$55, posted.



Reflections: The Allendale East Public Hall 1910-2010 – Compiled by Robert Thompson, edited by Gretel Sneath. Allendale East: Allendale East Public Hall Committee, 2010. Paperback. 55 pages, illustrated. 1 5 0 x 2 1 0 m m . 9780646546735.

This fascinating volume shows how a small South Australian Community Hall has worked, with life from Primary School, Church, Country Women's

Association, indoor bowling, piano teacher **Mrs Yvonne Black**, and intervening Wars, all through successive generations of families.

In 2006 the Grant District Council staged a public meeting, following the inability of the Hall Committee to meet the insurance bill for the year. The meeting was to either consider the sale or bulldozing of the aging stone hall. Both options were unacceptable and shortly after that a 'Save Our Hall' banner was draped across the front of the building, and a community became focussed on celebrating the Hall's centenary, four years hence. Council subsequently gave the Committee a year to turn things around, which they did, upgrading the Hall along the way.

The district was named for Port MacDonnell-based storekeeper **William Allen [Allan] Crouch** (1821-99) and the town was originally known as 'Allendale' until the 1930s when it was realised that his name was spelt with an 'e'. The Hall has a remarkable collection of pictures of district soldiers and office-bearers. Known for its sink holes, one of which is in the main street and the road splits either side. The Australian Cave Divers' Association was formed on the Hall in 1973. The Hall is also a major site for Cancer Research's Biggest Morning Tea, with the Allendale Arvo Tea being consistently among the State's top ten events.

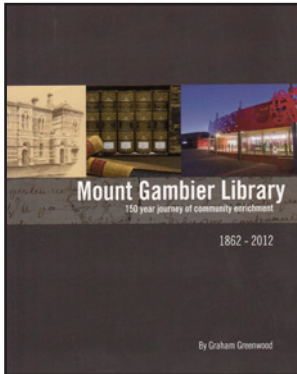
The book's 'People's Stories' section shows what the Hall meant to the lives of the various generations, watched over by the portraits of the World War I and II soldiers who were farewelled from the Hall, but six of which did not return for the homecoming celebrations. A post World War II Soldier Settler project brought a number of new families to the area and that resulted in the establishment of the Allendale East Area School in 1953, which also used the Hall.

Available from: Grant District Council, Port MacDonnell Community Complex, 5 Charles Street, Port MacDonnell, SA 5291. \$25, posted.

Mount Gambier Library: 150 year journey of community enrichment 1862-2012 – Graham Greenwood. Mount Gambier: Mount Gambier Library, 2012. Paperback. 200 pages, illustrations many in colour, index. 195x250mm.

This book includes and completes the story which **Colin Maslen** wrote in 1980 at the time of the dissolution of the Mount Gambier Institute. It is a valuable reference for Institute

Book Reviews cont...



administration and legislation in South Australia. Mount Gambier had its first library, a Book Club formed in 1847, and Compton Station squatter **EPS Sturt** was its first librarian. The idea for a library or literary Institute was solidly advocated by a

lecture from the Anglican **Rev. Pitt Cobbett** in July 1862. Another lecture by the Presbyterian **Rev. James Don** saw books purchased and a library being set up in the house of John McDonald. A Library and Hall were built in 1868 and a museum was established. In 1885 **John Riddoch** promised a donation of £1000 provided the Government would match it and a second storey was added to the building. The euphoria with the construction of new building in 1906 was tempered when it was found that the librarian of twenty-seven years, **Robert Pickering**, had hung himself in the Institute cloakroom. In a note he wished the Institute 'good

luck and God's blessing'. The Institute was used for a time by the School of Mines and Industries for training courses and it continued to provide the community library service. However the fate of the Institute was sealed when Council opened the Penola Road Public Library in 1967. In 1981 the Institute was wound up and its collection of paintings, artifacts and sculptures was passed to the South East Regional Cultural Trust and its books went to Council's new Civic Centre Library. Books that were not wanted for the new library were simply given away. That said the Mt Gambier library has remained at the cutting edge of library technology and innovation and is considered an exemplar of regional libraries in Australia. Interestingly many activities carried on in conjunction with the library today fit very well with the original Institute model. The author has done well in teasing out the various threads of the 150 years of library history in Mount Gambier, much of which will have universal interest. The book's designer **Jessica Tucker** has used the available material to produce visually a very pleasing book.

Available from: Mount Gambier Library, Box 56, Mount Gambier, SA 5290. \$30, posted.

Our People



Trinity College, Cambridge long-time Librarian and Vice-Master **Dr David McKitterick** was a keynote speaker at **Mechanics' Worldwide 2004 - Melbourne**. Author of many books and articles on the history of the book, David was recently awarded

the prestigious **George A and Jean S DeLong Book History Book Prize** for 2014, for his *Old Books, New Technologies. The Representation, Conservation and Transformation of Books since 1700* (Cambridge University Press, 2013). The prize was awarded at the Antwerp conference of the **Society for the History of Authorship,**

Reading and Publishing (SHARP), a global network of book historians, researching 'composition, mediation, reception, survival and transformation of written communication in material forms including marks on stone, script on parchment, printed books and periodicals, and new media'.

David has also recently joined the Editorial Board of Oak Knoll Press, along with: **David Way**, former publisher, The British Library; New Zealand's **Sydney Shep**, Reader in Book History at the University of Wellington and Director of the Wai-te-ata Press; and several other book history luminaries. The US-based Oak Knoll, which operates from New Castle, Delaware, publishes extensively on the history of the book in the broadest sense of the word. They also sell secondhand books, often purchasing libraries of collectors or book producers.

Our People cont...



David, who has been Trinity College Librarian since 1986, has recently stepped down and will be succeeded by **Dr Nicolas Bell** (left), former Curator Music Collection at the British Museum. However David will continue in his current role as Trinity

College, Vice-Master. (Photo: McKitterick: www.cambridgeearlymusic.org; Bell: www.lewespriory.org.uk)



St Arnaud citizen-extraordinaire **Ella Ebery** OAM has passed the ninety-nine year old milestone and has celebrated it with the passing of a driving test. Ella has been a St Arnaud Institute supporter for many years and co-authored its history in 1983,

having been its last librarian. Besides editing St Arnaud's *North Central News* from 1981 until quite recently, she is an ardent spokesperson for St Arnaud. Ella recently came out in attack of an

article that cast aspersions on the St Arnaud community, an interview of which was conducted in the *RACV Journal*. She is also working on an update of the St Arnaud Mechanics' Institute history and we look forward to seeing that in print, shortly. (Photo: racv.com.au)



Elaine Murphy, after many years as President of the Barfold Mechanics' Hall, has stepped down after much valued service, but will continue to run her farm which abuts the Hall site. Barfold was the venue for the very successful launch of the 2013

Home is Where the Hall Is month of November and a destination on the Pieces of Eight bus tour conducted by **Ken James** and **Noel Davis**. However Elaine's retirement was not before she had overseen the creation of MIV Plaque No. 43 and its installation on the Hall wall. Thank you Elaine for your community work and energetic collaboration with MIV. Elaine's position has been taken over by **Sandra Aitken**, who is a partner in the nearby Barfold Estate vineyard and winery, and we wish her well in continued activity centred on the Barfold Hall. (Photo: *Kristina Holdaway*)

Vale



We note the passing of academic and author **Dr Derek Anthony 'Derek' Whitelock**. Derek was born in Sunderland, England on 22 January 1934. He spent most of his working life in South Australia

where he became a noted educator, commentator on public issues and a broadcaster. Derek authored the landmark: *The Great Tradition: A History of Adult Education in Australia* (1974); and *Conquest to Conservation: History of Human Impact on the South Australian Environment* (1985). His quick wit was enhanced by the presence and manipulation of his much loved pipe. He passed away peacefully at the Lerwin Nursing Home, Murray Bridge (SA), on 24 April 2015, aged 81 years, survived by his children to whom we extend condolences.

Vale cont...

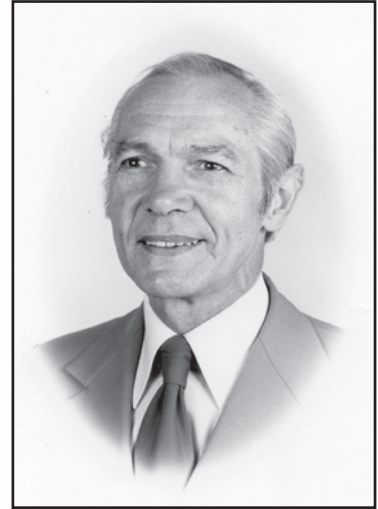


Lake Charm's **Rosemary Elizabeth 'Rose' Simms** (1941-2015), besides being on the Hall Committee for many years, co-wrote with **Pat Gillingham**, its history *The Lake Charm Mechanics' Institute: the first*

one hundred years 1891-1991. Rose was a tireless worker for the Lake Charm Hall: maintaining and collating historical documents and memorabilia in the hall safe; organising food and catering for Hall events; working in the garden; and general cleaning duties before and after events. An interview with Rose conducted by **Bob Willis** in 2007 survives in the National Library of Australia sound archive. There is an interesting and very apt quote when Rose's husband **Stuart** was interviewed as to success of their farming partnership: 'Why has it worked? Because decisions are made in an 'equal partnership' with good communication. The bottom line - diversify, think outside the square, take controlled risks and be prepared to be a little different from the bloke down the road.' This could well apply to managing the Community Hall. Rose was called to her eternal reward at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne on 7 February 2015, aged 73. At the time a local resident noted 'The huge and unexpected loss to the Lake Charm community.' Our deepest sympathy to Stuart, their daughter Fiona, and her extended family, including that of the Lake Charm Hall Committee. (Photo: Charlie & Joanne Gillingham)

The passing of **Dr Walter Ernest 'Walter' Savige**, former Narracan Mechanics' Institute stalwart, was noted on 17 August 2015, aged 97, finally jumping off his proclaimed 'merry-go-round of life'. Walter was born at Old Bonalbo (NSW) on 31 October 1917 and returned to Narracan with his parents shortly after. He continued his Narracan district association by way of triennial family reunions in the Narracan Hall from the early 1960s.

He was educated at: Thorpdale State School; Sale Grammar School; Warragul High; and Melbourne University. Walter served during World War II in the Royal Australian Air Force. After teaching for a year at Swan Hill High School he



returned to academic life completing his MSc and PhD and then by scholarship to Liverpool University. He joined CSIRO in 1954, and had research stints at Pisa, and Berkeley and Padua universities, working on protein and organic chemistry until 1979.

Walter was very proud of his Scottish heritage and produced several versions of his family's history in *From Crichton Dean to Kilmore* and helped many budding genealogists using, first a faithful Tandy computer in the early 1980s. He had longterm interest in chess, scrabble and 'social' tennis. Table tennis was however his first love both as a competitive player and administrator, even into his nineties.

Walter organised for the Narracan Mechanics' Institute record to be digitised by MIV several years ago and this remains one of the most complete Institute archives that exists and tells far more than just a single Institute's history.

Walter was pre-deceased by his wife Hazel in 2008, but is survived by his five sons. His casket was decked with native plants and flowers, partially from the family's garden and following the service at St Dunstan's Anglican Church Camberwell, his remains were interred in the Narracan Cemetery. Indeed 'A limb has fallen from the family tree...' and we send our most sincere sympathy to his family. (Photo: belindajanevideo.com)

The above are but a few of the generous men and women whose good works have not been forgotten

Community Page

RECIPE

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

APPLE CAKE

Ingredients

- 2 cooking apples
- 1 cup sugar
- 125 grams melted butter or margarine
- 1 egg
- 1.5 cups plain flour
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 1 cup pecan nuts

Method

1. Combine apples and sugar in a large mixing bowl.
 2. Mix egg with fork and add to melted butter/margarine.
 3. Combine with apple mixture.
 4. Sift flour and spices and add.
 5. Roughly chop pecan nuts and add.
 6. Spoon mixture into greased ring cake tin.
 7. Bake at 180 degrees for 40-45 minutes.
 8. Turn out to cool on a rack.
- * For a variation you can use raw sugar or walnuts.

SPOT THE BAKER'S DOZEN REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE NO. 38

1. Who photographed many of Victoria's Mechanics' Institute buildings during the period 1962-72?
2. In which Melbourne suburb is the Loco (Panarcadian) Hall situated?
3. Who designed the Wyalong School of Arts, built in 1903?
4. Which South Australian library celebrated 150 years in 2012?
5. Who represented the Wonderful Women of Warburton at the Let's Talk Forum?

6. What are the names of the people featured in the Oil Paint and Ochre Exhibition at the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum?
7. Where is No Lights No Lycra staged in New South Wales?
8. Who suggested the idea of the MIV Memorial plaques which has now reached Plaque No. 49?
9. Who coordinates the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies' Mechanics' Institutes' Research Project?
10. What is the name of the theatre group which operates out of the Frankston Mechanics' Institute building?
11. Which Mechanics' Institute has a Victory Hall attached?
12. Who wrote the *History of the St Arnaud Mechanics' Institute* in 1983?
13. What was the name of the Echuca Club that has a 400 volume library was gifted to the Echuca Mechanics' Institute in 1877?

SPOT THE BAKER'S DOZEN REFERENCES IN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE NO. 37 - ANSWERS

1. Lilydale Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute
2. Hallston
3. Mooroopna Mechanics' Institute
4. Chowerup
5. Emeritis Professor Reid
6. Surrey Hills Literary Institute
7. Queensland
8. Chowerup
9. Aubrey and Watchem
10. Dunalley
11. San Francisco
12. Catherine 'Kit' McNaughton and Sarah 'Sadie' McIntosh
13. Runanga Miners' Institute

"The Hall is a safe space where we can think, talk, learn, listen, laugh and dance. It brings out the best of us. So come along and see what we are doing with your own eyes, don't be frightened.

It is not just a building, it is what we are... and we have to protect it."

Quotations from the movie JIMMY'S HALL

Ideas & Opportunities

NO LIGHTS NO LYCRA

Ever wanted to have a night out dancing, while having the freedom to dance like when no one is watching? No Lights No Lycra may just be the event for you!

From their website: 'No Lights No Lycra is an dance community that started in Melbourne by unruly dance students **Alice Glenn** and **Heidi Barrett** in 2009. There is no light, no lycra, no teacher, no steps to learn, no technique, just free movement. NLNL is a space where you can completely let go, shake out the stresses of the week, and lose yourself in the music and the physicality of your body. NLNL is a daggy, non-pretentious place to completely be yourself.'

NLNL is a unique event that could be held at your Institute (it is already on the roster every Wednesday night at the Warrandyte Mechanics' Institute at 7pm, and at the Cobargo School of Arts Hall (NSW) on Monday nights). If you already have a sound system connected in your Institute's Hall, put together a playlist on your iPod, laptop or smart phone, plug in, play and dance the night away. A small entry charge (\$5) would help to cover costs for the Hall use for an hour, and it may add a little more into the kitty for a rainy day.

Website: nolightsnolycra.com

SAY NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Recently **Prime Minister Turnbull** highlighted the deaths of sixty-three women as the result of family violence so far this year and suggested we are all in this together. In the \$100 million funding launch we noted former Immigration Minister **Michaelia Cash** who indicated that visas had been denied to sports people who had a record of family violence. 'We don't want them here!' Nor do we want activities in our Hall that degrade or belittle women. These ladies have been the lifeblood of fundraising for our community halls since their inception.

SCRAPBOOKING FOR YOUR HALL

At the recent **Halls Forum** the **Wonderful Women of Warburton's Sue Mann** brought along her scrapbook/ photograph album depicting the battle journey to save the Warburton Institute covering several years. And what a great record it was. The scrapbook idea should be 'mandatory'

for every Hall, just like it used to be for every Rural Youth or Young Farmers' Club. This will make the writing of your Hall history or just remembering when the great working bee of 1994 was written up in the press. And don't forget the obituaries of those Committee members who have gone to the great Mechanics' dance hall in the sky, they too should not be forgotten.

SAYING THANKYOU

There is hardly an issue of *UK* where a **Bendigo Bank Community Bank** is not mentioned and this entity in its various communities in having a very significant impact. Grants can be modest but they can also be substantial. In recognising the contribution of the **Wallan and Kilmore Community Banks** which have made grants to almost 150 groups in Mitchell Shire the **Wandong and Heathcote Junction Community Group** and **Wandong-Wallan Lions Club** hosted a night in the **Wandong Mechanics' Hall** on 30 September. The well attended function, where finger food and drinks were served, heard of some of the outcomes of 'where the money went'. Event co-ordinator **Vivian Kenney** summed up the sentiment 'The Bank has played a huge role in the community and now it is time to say 'Thanks!'. Sentiments which are endorsed by many Hall committees across Victoria.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

CAPITAL WORKS

The Federal Government has made \$45 million available under the Department of Infrastructure's Stronger Communities initiative, through local Federal electorates. Grants are for capital works and range from \$5000-\$20,000 and are on a \$1 for \$1 basis in cash or kind. More information can be found on Department of Infrastructure's Stronger Communities Portal. **Applications close on 30 October.**

DEFIBRILLATORS

The Victorian Government is making available 1000 defibrillators to Sporting Clubs in Victoria. It is suggested you make contact with the office your local State Member of Parliament arguing that Halls are in effect sporting clubs, with dance, badminton, judo, etc. **Applications can be made through the Department of Sport and close on 27 October.**