



Useful Knowledge



Where it all began in Victoria - the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution. See page 4.

Original drawing: S.T. Gill. Engraver: Arthur Willmore.
Appeared in *Victoria Illustrated* published by Sands & Kenny, 1862.
State Library of Victoria image

Inside this issue

Committee	2	MIV Scanning	6-7	Queensland SoA photos	17
Jim Lowden	3	Warrandyte MI	8	Pinnaroo Institute	18-19
Vice Pres report	3	Stanley Athenaeum	9	Roller Skating	20-21
Melbourne Athenaeum	4	Joyces Creek MI	10-12	Women's Suffrage	22-23
Williamstown MI	5	Wingello Institute	13	Vale	24
		Dalby School of Arts	14-17		

Current MIV Committee

President: Steven Haby

Vice President: David Berry

Acting Secretary: Judith Dwyer

Treasurer and Membership

Secretary: Gary Bester

General Committee members

Pat Anderson, O.A.M.

Corinne Brewer

Chris Dormer

Robert Kingston

Felix Meagher, O.A.M.

Peter Nankervis

Peter Pereyra

Les Sanderson

Robert Shackleton



The Committee at the recent Strategy Planning meeting

Image: Robert Shackleton



**PMI Victorian
History Library**

P.O Box 1080, Windsor, 3181, Victoria

ISSN 1835-5242 Reg. No A0038156G ABN 60 337 355 989

Price \$6.00.

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

A note from the editor: Heather Arnold

I have volunteered to be the new editor of *Useful Knowledge*. The newsletter will look different, and some regular columns will re-appear in future issues, but we still hope to bring you information about upcoming events, stories about Mechanics' Institutes, Athenaeums and School of Arts and other matters of interest.

I was, until I recently retired, the Local History Librarian at Casey Cardinia Libraries. I am also the President of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp Historical Society and Secretary of the South Eastern Historical Association, the umbrella group for Historical Societies in the southeast of Melbourne, Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast.

I love and I write a lot of local history. As a friend told me, I have an interest in the parochial and the obscure. I write three blogs -

Carlo Catani

<https://carlocatani.blogspot.com/>

Carlo Catani (1852-1918) was a Public Works Department engineer, responsible for drainage on the Koo Wee Rup Swamp from 1893; reclaiming the St Kilda foreshore and had the Catani Gardens there named in his honour and also designed Alexandra Avenue and Alexandra Gardens amongst many other projects.

Koo Wee Rup Swamp History

<https://kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com/>

Victoria's Past: rescued and retold

<https://victoriaspast.blogspot.com/>

I welcome contributions—tell us how your community uses their MI; have you received any grants? Undertaken renovations? Written a history? Formed a partnership with other organizations? Send us a story or some photographs.

I am very much into the social history of MIs and the role they played (and still play) in the community; I also like lots of photos. I could just fill this newsletter up with endless stories of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp and Carlo Catani, so to save us all from that, please send me something!

I am not an expert in the use of MS Publisher, still working through the formatting and how things should look. I am just experimenting at the moment and it may well look different next issue, but I will just do the best I can.

Contact me on mivnewslettereditor@gmail.com

Presentation to Jim Lowden

At the 2021 AGM, Vice-President David Berry presented a certificate of appreciation to out-going secretary, editor and our Living Treasure, Jim Lowden. Jim was an inaugural member of the MIV and was elected a Life Member in 2000; he was the Citizen of the Year for the Shire of Kilmore in 1994 and for the Shire of Mitchell In 2001.



Jim Lowden, left, with Vice President David Berry



Note from the Vice President: David Berry

I am penning these few paragraphs owing to the unavailability of our President, Steven. It's been a while since our last edition of *Useful Knowledge* and indeed meaningful MIV activity. As with most organisations, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major effect on being able to meet and create anything other than our ongoing services.

Recently however, the MIV took the opportunity to review our mission and strategy plan. To this end, we were ably assisted by Denys Correll (Secretary of the Prahran Mechanics' Institute) who has consulted widely with his experience in this area. Those who attended were guided through each step where a consensus was attained. That outcome will be ratified at the next Committee meeting and the members will be informed in a subsequent edition of *Useful Knowledge*.

The Wesson Lecture which was inaugurated in 2015 and held in conjunction with the AGM, has had an impressive list of speakers. Over the COVID period, we have been unable to hold it for logistical reasons. However, consideration is being given to making it a standalone event recommencing in 2023.

The MIV has a loyal supporter base and we are appreciative of the patience that has been shown by all over this difficult time for everyone. We look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming AGM and hope that we continue our valuable association long into the future.

A big welcome to our new Editor of *Useful Knowledge*, Heather Arnold. We look forward to her contribution by way of news and articles in the coming issues.

Mechanics Institute at the Athenaeum by B.A. Street

Read before the Royal Historical Society of Victoria 15 April 1953

Source: *Port Phillip 1840-1850: the life and times of the 'forties' in the Port Phillip District of New South Wales*

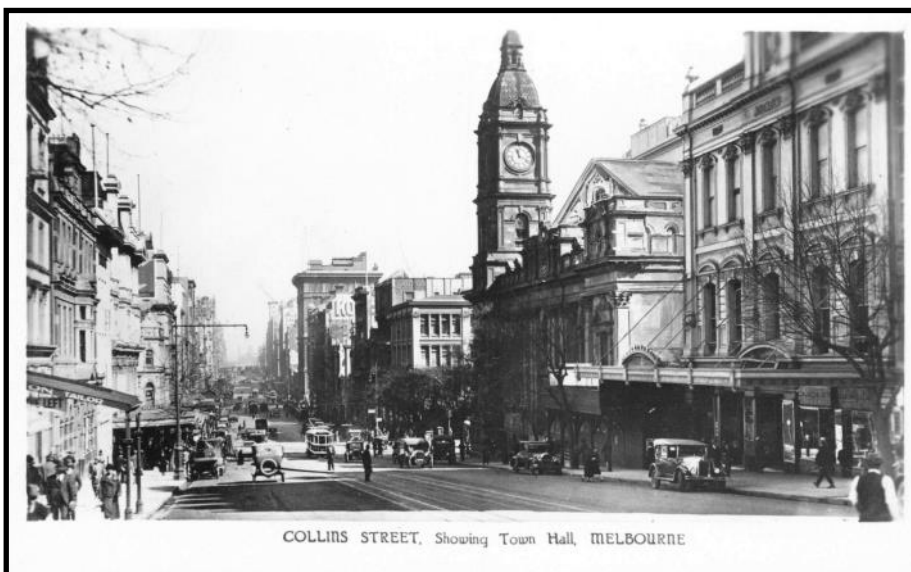
Victorian Historical Magazine , v. 26, no, 102, 1956.

The desire for cultural development from increased educational knowledge was evident amongst some of the early inhabitants of Melbourne. In 1839 a Union Benefit Society came into being, and from its members sprang a desire for the promotion of science. At a public meeting held on 4th October, 1839, with a Mr A. Sim, a builder, in the chair, a resolution was passed that a Mechanics Institution be formed for the promotion of science in the rising colony, particularly amongst the young as well as the operative classes. In the Scots Church school a public meeting was held at 7 o'clock on the first Tuesday of November to elect office-bearers, and a number of prominent citizens were requested to act as officers. The committee for the year 1839-40 consisted of the following: - Messrs. Anderson, Beaver, Best, Bodecin, Brown, Burns, Caulfield, Dinwoodie, Peers, Rankin, Rattenbury, Wintle, Brewster, Craig, Reeves, Rucker, Welsh, Williams. An entrance fee of £1 and an annual subscription of £1 was agreed to, and a donation of £25 secured a life membership. Rules for the government of the institution were drawn up. The object of the institution was to promote the diffusion of scientific and other useful knowledge amongst its members and the community generally, and a series of lectures were arranged.

Rev. J.H. Osborne, a Presbyterian minister, delivered the inaugural lecture on 16th April, 1840, on "The Advantages of Such Institutions." Mr Redmond Barry followed with a lecture on Agriculture on 1st May. The Superintendent, Mr. LaTrobe, was present when the Rev. James Forbes lectured to a crowded audience on Colonisation. Other lectures were delivered during the year by Mr George Arden, Mr Edward Sewell, Rev. P.B Geoghegan, Dr. Wilmot, and Mr Osborne. The members decided to acquire two blocks of land in Collins Street just above Swanston Street on the north side. These were blocks 2 and 3 of Section No. 11. A section 66 ft x 155 ft. was used as a site for a building and the remainder was kept to be sold later at a good profit. The Government offered some financial assistance, but the members considered it insufficient. While the building was being erected meetings were held in the Scots Church schoolroom.

In 1840 the committee was reduced to 15 persons and a board of management was appointed. In 1843 the building was opened for members. It was a brick two-storey building with a library and reading room, and the town clerk occupied portion of it for the municipality until the Town Hall was available, which was began in 1849.

The hall of the institution was used for social, charitable and political purposes and cost £1921/10/-. During the financial depression the institute had to struggle to meet its financial obligations. In March, 1845, the New South Wales Government made a grant of £150 per annum, and Mr G.A. Gilbert was appointed secretary and Mr W. Roycroft as assistant secretary at £50 per annum and quarters, Mr T. Burns acting as librarian.



Assisted by the active support of prominent citizens such as Redmond Barry, D.C. Macarthur, David Blair and others, the institute by the end of 1880 had a membership of 450. The library contained 4055 volumes besides a good supply of current newspapers and periodicals. Such is the story of the Melbourne Mechanics Institution, the first home of culture in the Port Phillip District, during the first decade of its valuable contribution to the literary and scientific progress of our country.

The Athenaeum, next to the Melbourne Town Hall, c. 1929.

State Library of Victoria image.

Williamstown Historical Society

The Williamstown Mechanics' Institute is undergoing major works and the Historical Society has supplied this update.

The Williamstown Historical Society (WHS) was formed in 1956 as an organisation to preserve and display the History of Williamstown. It subsequently set up a museum housed within the Mechanics Institute building in Electra Street Williamstown. The WHS over these 65 years has become the repository for many historical records, ephemera, photographs and items relating to the rich history of the Williamstown, Newport and Spotswood area. This area was under the control of the then Williamstown City Council which was a big supporter of the WHS and the Hobson Bay City Council (HBCC) has also been supportive of the WHS since their creation.

Over the years the WHS has been involved in providing research for many books, newspaper articles, family histories, research for HBCC for its various projects, etc, and has also been involved in looking after and assisting in restoration of various Williamstown icons such as the Timeball Tower and the Morgue.

Four years ago, the HBCC moved the WHS out of its long residency of the Mechanics Institute building in order to carry out underpinning works to stabilise the building. Prior to the WHS moving and work commencing, several meetings were held between WHS and representatives of the HBCC. These representatives along with project managers discussed and planned for the renovations of the building and the eventual return of the WHS to the Mechanics Institute building, a period that was calculated to be around 3 years.

We have now been without a museum for over four years and have been operating out of temporary accommodation just to keep answering emails and research enquiries and to keep the WHS going. However, the time away from our museum has limited our capacity to be able to participate more in community and historical activities and we have been unable to be involved in Heritage Week or in Open Melbourne.

We have now been advised that we will be required to move again as our temporary home will soon be sold and, as there have been budgetary constraints in HBCC being unable to complete the renovations of the Oldest Public Building in Williamstown, and no confirmation as to when this is likely to be possible, a new space for us to work in and display our collection is required.

Meetings between the WHS and HBCC are continuing and we hope to have a new office space and museum in the near future.



Williamstown Mechanics' Institute
Image supplied by Williamstown Historical Society

MIV Scanning Project

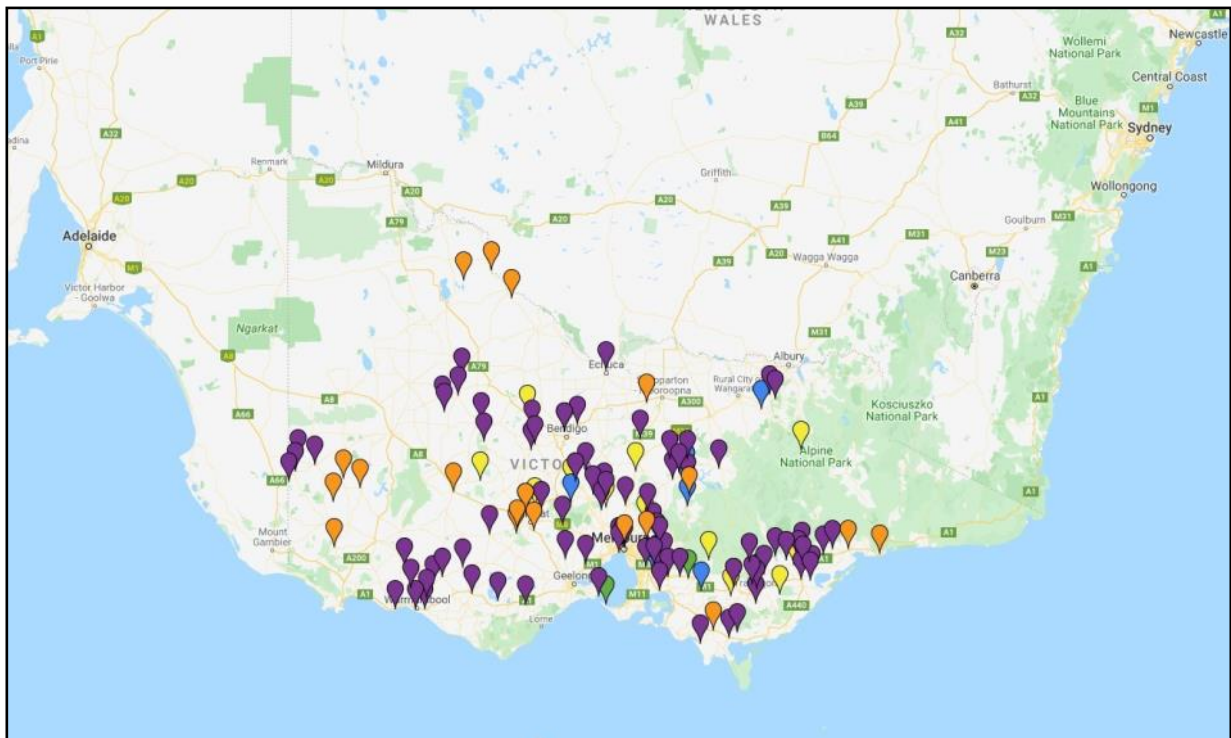
Text and images by Judith Dwyer

The MIV digitisation program began in 2005 with the scanning by a volunteer of the records of 15 Mechanics' Institutes. From 2010, with the aid of government and private grants, the records of more than 130 Institutes have been digitised.

The Aim of the Scanning Project:

1. To preserve the archival records - the minute books, cash books, library catalogues and rules, correspondence, membership lists - of Victorian Mechanics' Institutes;
2. To make the records accessible for future researchers.

There was once more than 1,000 Mechanics' Institutes established in Victoria, with the majority in rural areas. They were integral to Victoria's cultural and social history. When the project began it was estimated that the original records of only about 100 Institutes had survived. However as the project progressed, and direct contact was made with Institutes, local libraries and Historical Societies across the State, many more records have been located.



Records scanned to January 2020.

Image: <http://www.mivic.org.au/scanning-project.html>

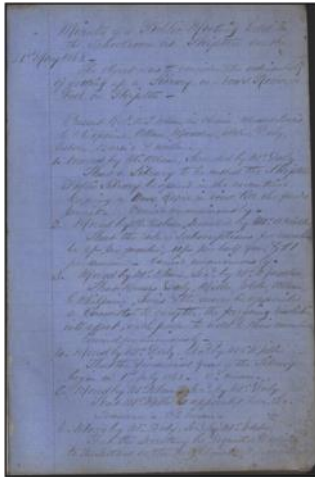


The records collected vary from a single exercise book, preserved in a specially crafted box, to multiple volumes of leather-bound books from the 19th century.



MIV Scanning Project

Old records are still being discovered. The Minute Books of the Skipton MI were given to the local Historical Society in 2014. They begin with the Minutes of the Public Meeting held in the schoolroom at Skipton on 21st May 1868 when it was decided to have a library in the town. The first grant was received in 1869.



Left: Skipton MI Minute book and Skipton Schoolroom.



Right: There are some books that have been rescued from both fire and flood.

It is now estimated that more than 500 original records could still be in existence. Have the records of your Mechanics' Institute been digitized? Do you know where they are located? If you would like further information contact Judith Dwyer, the project co-ordinator, on mirc@miviv.org.au

The opening of the Skipton Mechanics' Institute in 1905

SKIPTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.
THE OPENING CEREMONY.
 SKIPTON, Saturday.

The old Mechanics' Hall, built over 35 years ago, having become quite inadequate to the requirements of this growing district, it was decided some time ago to erect a much larger and up-to-date building. In April last a public meeting was held, and a strong working committee was appointed, and instructed to have erected a good and suitable hall, with the necessary conveniences. That they have been successful in their task is beyond doubt, for there is not to be found outside of our large cities a better or more suitable building than that just finished, and opened on the 10th inst. by the Hon. John Murray, Minister for Lands. Though all the members of the committee did good work, special reference was made to Cr D. Stewart (president), Cr A. R. Slater (vice-president), and Mr J. M'Donald (hon. secretary), who did the lion's share of the work. Messrs Slater and M'Donald did most of the work of collecting the large sum of £750.

Following on from Judith's article, which refers to the Skipton MI Minute Books, I have found this report of the opening of the Skipton Mechanics' Institute on November 10, 1905 from the Ballarat Star—

Skipton Mechanic's Institute—The Opening Ceremony—

The old Mechanics' Hall, built over 35 years ago, having become quite inadequate to the requirements of this growing district, it was decided some time ago to erect a much larger and up-to-date building. In April last a public meeting was held, and a strong working committee was appointed, and instructed to have erected a good and suitable hall, with the necessary conveniences. That they have been successful in their task is beyond doubt, for there is not to be found outside of our large cities a better or more suitable building than that just finished, and opened on the 10th inst., by the Hon. John Murray, Minister for Lands. Though all the members of the committee did good work, special reference was made to Dr D. Stewart (president), Cr A. R. Slater (vice-president), and Mr J. M'Donald (hon. secretary), who did the lion's share of the work. Messrs Slater and McDonald did most of the work of collecting the large sum of £750.

Following is a brief description of the building:—The main hall is 50 feet by 30 feet, and 17 feet from floor to ceiling. A stage 20 feet by 18 feet, is provided. On either side are dressing rooms 12 feet by 10 feet, having folding doors between the dressing-rooms and stage to enable the whole to be used as a supper room during dancing, etc. On one side of the entrance in the immediate front of the building is a billiard room 15 feet by 18 feet, and on the other side a reading-room 25 feet x 12 feet. The appearance of the building architecturally is all that can be desired, and reflects great credit on Messrs Clegg and Miller, architects, of Ballarat, to whom the work was entrusted. The general contractor for the work was Mr Wm. Robertson, of Ballarat, and he undoubtedly deserves every credit for the manner in which the architects' wishes have been put into execution. The whole of the building is lighted up with acetylene gas.

Ballarat Star November 13, 1905 p. 1

Warrandyte Mechanics' Institute

Pat Anderson has provided this update of activities at Warrandyte.

So far 2022 has proved to be a better year than the previous two, both for activity and for income. Sadly, one of our life members, who had played a huge part in the amalgamation of Warrandyte Mechanics Institute and Warrandyte Arts Association back in the 1980s, passed away in August.

We were successful in obtaining a "Grass Roots" grant from Manningham Council to present an Expo – an event that was supposed to re-engage the community after the 2020- lockdown. Scheduled for early 2021, when 1.5m spacing was still necessary, it soon became obvious that we should postpone the occasion until the capacity of the hall could be increased. Then by the end of 2021, we were back in lockdown. Finally this event is scheduled to take place in this coming November, albeit in a slightly different form, the council having been very accommodating about the delays. The Expo will involve all our groups, as well as music performances to attract younger people, theatre sports, a reception, a showcase of visual arts and pottery and some collaboration with the neighbourhood house. We are also planning to launch a "Friends of the hall" at a reception as a way of boosting community interest in the hall.

Theatre has been active in 2022. After struggling with on-line performances in 2020/2021, or plays involving a very limited cast, 2022 has been more adventurous. The first season was another two-person show – "Blackbird" – a very challenging theme, but well received.

To cope with Covid threats, front of house folk wear masks and audience members were encouraged to do likewise. Also, instead of our usual seating of people in rows, allowing a maximum of 80, we have invested in 10 small, stacking tables, around which people can sit in groups of 3 or 4 - generally in the groups in which they book. So, people are well spaced out while the hall feels full. It's a lovely atmosphere. The downside is that the maximum number is forty, hence the income is halved.

The second season was a play involving a much bigger audience – "A View from the Bridge" by Arthur Miller – and, you guessed correctly, there were a few instances of Covid during the rehearsal period that complicated things enormously. Thankfully they had begun rehearsing at another venue before the first season was staged, so it all worked out OK. The cast survived and the play had great reviews.

Now they are in rehearsal for the popular "Calendar Girls" – a production that had reached the stage of the technical rehearsal the day before the lockdown in 2020. So, this will be the third attempt after eighteen months and we are crossing our fingers for a full house at all ten performances to swell the coffers.

Meanwhile writers have been busy preparing for the revival of our formerly, annual "Follies", to be staged in November. This show is very inclusive. Everyone who comes to the audition gets a role of some sort. Likewise, most scripts and sketches are generally accepted, even if they might need a bit of editing.

Our Repair Café, which began in 2019 and was subject to several lockdown gaps, has really taken off again. We have streamlined the system – a bit like a combination of triage and the queue in the deli – with colour-coded, numbered cards, directing people to the right repair area. This month, a new repairer brought along his ukulele and had a group of repairers singing along in the corner at one stage.

We have a new vocal group using the hall, in addition to the larger choir that has been able to resume singing indoors again, after the challenge of singing online or out of doors. Some regular hirers have not resumed, but we are gradually getting more individual hirings.

Over the past two years, Warrandyte Mechanics Institute and Arts Association has formalised some procedures and our new secretary has managed to complete our registration as a charity, with donor gift registration also. He has also submitted various grant applications as we chase dollars to make up the gap between a generous grant of from the Bendigo Bank Enterprise Foundation towards some necessary major works and the total sum. We will lose the former if we can't plug the gap. The necessary major works involve re-bracing the hall walls, which are slowly pulling apart and are held in place by metal bars. In turn, these bars are used to hang the many theatre lights, so the second part of the project is to install a cranked lighting bars in a more suitable position for lighting the stage. The third part is an extension to the bio box which is hopelessly inadequate for modern, computerised sound and lighting boards and equipment in a confined space – an accident waiting to happen.

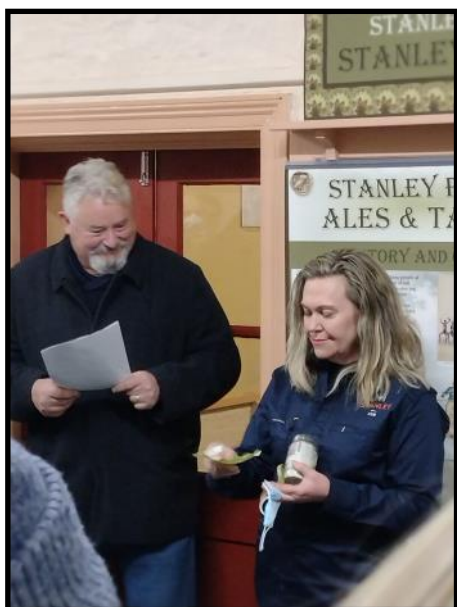
In summary, 2022 has been one of slow recovery, but one of renewed energy and excitement, with many crossed fingers.

Stanley Pubs, Ales and Tales: a new exhibition and space

Story and images by Chris Dormer

A new exhibition opened 'Stanley Pubs, Ales and Tales' at the end of July 2022, it covers the first 150 years of hotels in the Stanley area, with informative illustrated story panels and locally found objects it highlights the importance of and the essential role of hotels during the gold rush era. The story of hotels covers the history of Stanley and the vital role played by hotels in providing food and drinks as well as accommodation and entertainment. 'Stanley Pubs, Ales and Tales' highlights the significant contribution of women as publicans and the diversity of the community on the goldfields.

Featured are a range of found and collected objects including bottles, china, wallpaper and original signage many of them have been unearthed around the local area. 'Stanley Pubs, Ales and Tales' is an engaging adventure for anyone interested in the local area and hotels and can be seen at the new community venue at the former Stanley School and is a collaboration with Stanley Rural Community Incorporated and the Stanley Community Post Office.



Visit the exhibition at the Stanley Post & Community Hub (old Stanley School), Main Street, Stanley. Open from 28 July 2022 - June 2023., it is open Monday - Friday 8.30- 10.30 am & 3.30 - 5.30pm, Saturday 9.00 - 11.00 am. It is closed on Sunday, Public Holidays and Red Code days. It can be viewed by appointment, contact: 0458 606 922 or 03 5728 6702

Left: Chris Baker who donated objects for the exhibition with Sally Wright the new publican at the Stanley Pub who recently launched the Stanley Pubs, Tales and Ales exhibition in Stanley.
Right: At the Exhibition opening.



New Partnership

The Athenaeum has moved its main community exhibitions to a new venue in the former Stanley State School, the school is now the home of the Stanley Community Post Office and other community spaces and the Athenaeum exhibition shares a space with the Post Office and is open the same hours.

The Athenaeum Main Room has now been restored to the furniture arrangement it was most of the 20th Century, the removal of recently added display cases and other exhibition equipment has made a more open and inviting space for readers and researchers. This new venue enables exhibitions to be more accessible with longer opening hours, increased visibility and will encourage and increasing number of visitors and a offer a unique visitor experience.

Publications from Stanley Athenaeum now available

A Hearty Vote of Thanks: Christina Muter- First Woman President of the Stanley Athenaeum (2021) \$8.

Hearts of Gold and Minds of Mettle (2021), by Robyn Harcourt, Helen McIntyre and Valerie Privett. \$35.

Fire on the Plateau: A History of Fire and its Management in Stanley (2019), by Dr Jacqui Durrant, is still proving to be popular. \$30.

Stanley Times and Mining Journal (2018), by Geoff Craig. Now in its 4th Edition. \$30.

Cards and bookmarks - various prices. Books are available for sale at Beechworth WAW, Beechworth Books or Stanley Athenaeum or can be posted.

Contact

Stanley Athenaeum and Public Room, 2 Mount Stanley Road, Stanley.

Open every Friday & 4th Saturday each month from 10am to 12.30 pm or by appointment. Enquiries: Chris 0458 606 922.

E: stanleyathenaem@gmail.com

<http://www.facebook.com/Stanley-Athenaeum-1192094190800862/>

W: <http://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/stanley-athenaem>

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~mivic/stanley.html>

Joyces Creek Mechanics' Institute

By Ken James

Images supplied by Ken

This is a chapter from a forthcoming book by Ken on the Joyces Creek MI. The book is due for publication in 2023. Ken has only recently discovered that this building was an MI, so it does not appear in *These Walls Speak Volumes: a history of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria*, which he co-authored with Pam Baragwanath.

Joyces Creek is situated between Castlemaine and Daylesford on the Pyrenees Highway. A large part of the district was submerged under Cairn Curran Reservoir which officially opened in 1956.

Joyces Creek Mechanics' Institute was opened in April 1902 by Mr Keast, M.L.A. It was initially referred to as the Joyces Creek Mechanics' Institute, later as the Joyces Creek Public Hall. In the early 1950s, it was relocated to a new site at Joyces Creek by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission as the original site was to be submerged under the reservoir.

In 1958, due to the decline in the population due to loss of farms to the reservoir, the trustees sold the building. It was relocated in 1960 to Carisbrook for use as a Scout Hall. It is still there and is today used by the Lions Club.

Credit for the erection of a hall was given to Mr William Clarke (who can be seen in the following photograph) who was in charge of the Joyces Creek railway station from 1894 to 1903 (1). Fund-raising activities in October and November 1902 saw the liquidation of the debt owing on the hall (2).



Joyces Creek Mechanics' Institute Committee, 1902

Back row: D. Cameron (committee), A. Annand (Committee), W. J. Clark (President & Committee), J. W. Mitchell (Secretary and Trustee), F. Brebner (Committee), G. Annand (Trustee)
Seated: W. Brebner (Treasurer and Committee), A. McKay (Trustee), E. J. Mitchell (Committee)

1. *Mount Alexander Mail*, 20 October 1903, p. 2.

2. *Mount Alexander Mail*, 25 October 1902, p. 3; *Mount Alexander Mail*, 4 November 1902, p. 2.

Joyces Creek Mechanics' Institute

Honoring those who served in World War 1, 1918

In July 1918, the hall committee arranged for beautifully framed enlarged photos of those who volunteered for service in the early part of the war to be hung in the hall.³ An honor roll, with the names of those who served in World War One and later World War Two, was also placed in the hall.



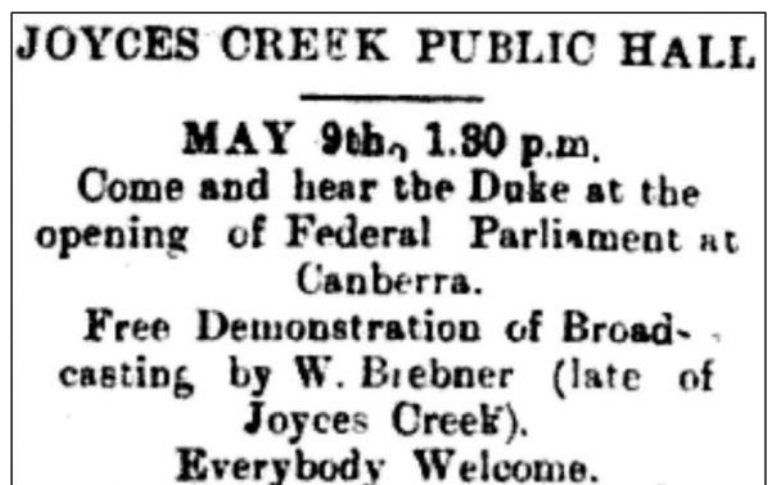
Joyces Creek Hall World War Honor Rolls

Some uses of the hall over its life

The variety of uses the hall was put to over its 56 years included benefit concerts, farewell socials, euchre parties, dances, tennis club AGMs and local, state and commonwealth election meetings.

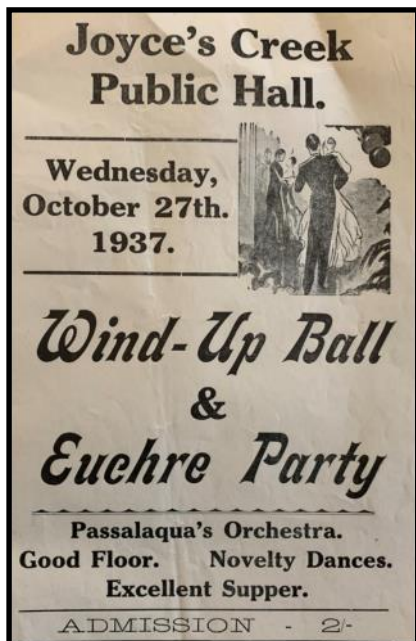
Right: A function to listen to the opening of Federal Parliament in 1926.

Newstead and Maldon Echo, 4 May 1926, p. 2



3. *Castlemaine Mail*, 2 July 1918, p. 1.

Joyces Creek Mechanics' Institute, continued



Regular monthly dance and euchre nights were held to raise money for hall funds. The 'Closing Ball and Euchre Night' was the final function in 1937.

The last year of use was 1955 when the hall was only used on three occasions.

The hall was sold in April 1958 to a group of Carisbrook residents in order to provide a Scouts Hall at Carisbrook. The one acre site on which the hall stood was sold to a local farmer. The hall piano was purchased for £100 by the Guildford Hall Committee. The following year, the hall trustees donated £150, part of the proceeds to the Newstead Mechanics' Institute with the wish that the money be used towards cost of installing a septic tank system.

The building was relocated to Carisbrook in 1960. The hall later became the home of the Carisbrook Youth Club. Today it is the home of the Lions Club.



Former Joyces Creek Hall at Carisbrook. Image: Rob Sewell

An interesting connection with Joyces Creek and mechanics' institutes

Jim Lowden, in correspondence with the author, told how Alfred Joyce of the pastoral property, Plaistow, was educated at the London Mechanics' Institute, and one of his daughters, Alexandra, married George Merrick Long. Long was born at nearby Carisbrook, trained as an Anglican priest and was one of the founders of Trinity Grammar School, Kew. He was the architect of the World War I soldiers' education scheme which was to prepare ex-soldiers for work. Later, as an Anglican bishop in NSW, George Long was heavily involved in promoting and establishing Church schools.⁽⁴⁾

4. Jim Lowden, Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria, Inc.

Wingello Mechanic's Institute Hall, New South Wales Text and Images by Carol Olde



Wingello Mechanic's Institute Hall (NSW) celebrated its centenary in 2018 after which an approach was made to have a Memorial Honour Board to World War II installed. Keith Garbutt had been working on the project for many years in order to keep a promise to his older mates but had not received the support he needed. Keith was 8 years old at the beginning of the war.

My husband Graham and I have vivid memories of the aftermath of the war and it was with this in mind that we embarked on the project. Keith and wife Wendy, Jack and his (now late) wife Sylvia Jeffery represented two of the early families of Wingello and they, together with local woodsmith, Richard Norton and myself as admin, brought Keith's promise to fruition. Keith penned a small booklet for the occasion.

Left: Framed copied of the service certificates of WW1 veterans.

The Honour Board, crafted from Australian red cedar was unveiled in September 2019 with a brief service in front of a packed audience. Cadets from the Goulburn Unit were in attendance. The Board lists the names of all those who enlisted and copies of service certificates were available for families to take home.

The project was supported by Department of Veteran's Affairs, Wingecarribee Shire Council, the Wingello Village Association and many relatives and former residents. A long overdue addition to the Wingello Mechanic's Institute Hall has been completed.



Unveiling of the World War Two Honour Board at Wingello Mechanics' Institute Hall.

Dalby School of Arts, Queensland

By Steve Kellermeier

Dalby is situated approximately 210 km WNW of Brisbane and is the centre of a wheat, sorghum and cotton growing area in Queensland. It has a population of around 13,000 and the surrounding area is the traditional home of the Baranggum people.

The area was settled during the early 1840's and Ludwig Leichhardt passed through in 1844. Charles Douglas Eastaughffe arrived in 1854 with a document under the Seal of the NSW Government proclaiming Dalby to be a township. He later became the Chief Constable and stayed in Dalby until his retirement. The new colony of Queensland came into existence in 1859 following excision from NSW.

Little has been found of the early stirrings for a School of Arts, but the *Brisbane Courier* reports that *at the suggestion of one or two gentlemen, the clergy of the town called a public meeting to consider the advisability of establishing a School of Arts. A committee was appointed on April 12th (1864). Ninety-four persons gave their names, which guaranteed an annual income of £142 10s.*

The *Brisbane Courier* reported on the subsequent opening of the new association on July 9th, 1864. The correspondent reported:

This institution was opened on Friday evening, the 1st instant, in the capacious building erected in Drayton Street, by Alderman Gayler. Long before the appointed hour crowds had assembled outside to make sure of a seat. When the doors were thrown open the large hall was soon filled, and on looking around we were much pleased with the decorations—the flags, banners, flowers and evergreens having a very pleasing effect above the mass of cheerful faces present.



Dalby in 1868, four years after the School of Arts was first erected.

The image was taken on the day the railway line was opened.

Image: State Library of Queensland

Dalby School of Arts, Queensland

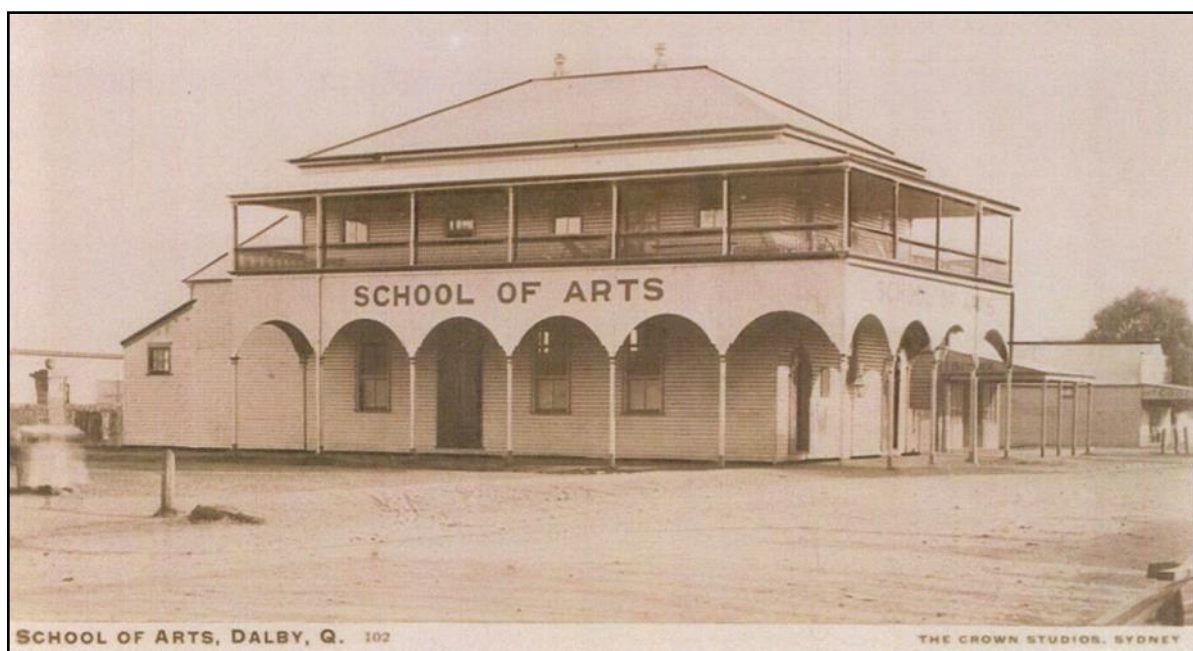
Photographs or details have not been found of that building but it obviously had to have been quite large for such a new association. It may have been on loan or lease because at the first annual meeting one year later, a Mr Roach held the chair and announced that the Government were about to grant a piece of land for a building site.

The report continued to say that the reading-room and library had been used extensively by all classes of the inhabitants and the number of subscriptions received had equaled expectations. An Elocution Class had been formed by the members, who had given two free entertainments, but sadly these meetings were not well attended. It seems that in those early years of the association it was well received and supported, and the annual commemorations were heartily attended. Each of the annual meetings attracted excellent speakers who orated well on the activities of the institution.

The association continued and at some stage prior to 1873 a new building was constructed. On May 11th, 1899, a fire broke out in the early morning that resulted in destruction of the large School of Arts building and several adjoining buildings. The School of Arts was insured but the piano and library contents were not. A month later the committee discussed a proposal from the Colonial Treasurer to construct a building for joint occupancy of the Municipal Council and the School of Arts. The committee was open to the idea, but the council was not in favour of sharing their space.

The School of Arts continued on their own and secured a government grant of £500 towards construction of a new building. Tenders were called and the job was awarded to Mr W.S. Smith of Toowoomba for £1,047. When it came time to sign the contract Mr Smith advised he could not undertake the work as his sums were incorrect and the total figure should have been £1,147. Subsequently, in May 1900, the contract was awarded to Mr Garner, the second lowest tenderer for £1,186.

By the time of the annual meeting in 1910 the association had installed a billiard room which seems to have been a great success. A card room was also successful and together with the billiard room provided the institution with extra income. The association evidently thrived over the next few years as in November 1913 the monthly meeting was advised by the president that the adjoining allotment behind could be purchased for £200. It was agreed to seek subscribers' approval to borrow £500 to purchase the lot and to effect improvements.



Dalby School of Arts, most likely 1920s, before it was destroyed by fire.

Image supplied by Steve Kellermeier

Dalby School of Arts, Queensland continued

Perhaps the Great War had an effect and by August 1916 the School of Arts was facing bankruptcy. The council thought it was time to add a free reading room to their facilities and offered the municipalization of the institution. There was much discussion around the pros and cons of agreeing to the council offer. A meeting on October 3rd, 1916, was held to confirm a vote that the School of Arts be handed over to the Town Council. The result was in the affirmative by a margin of 3 votes.

The transfer may not have gone all that well because on February 13th, 1918, the *Dalby Herald* published a letter "by Striker", part of which is reproduced below.

Some time back the members of the Dalby School of Arts decided to hand over the institution to the Town Council. Considering the value of the property given to the council one would expect improved service. However, what is the result? Efficiency; No: Desolation, broken chairs in the reading room and the verandahs strewn with dilapidated deck chairs. Of course, the place is kept very clean, as the committee who take a lively interest in the institution can see.

By June 1926 the Town Council was having misgivings about having acquired the institution. A report of the council meeting at that time stated what it had cost their constituents and what little they had received in return. They would have been in *favour (of) the committee taking it back again and cutting the losses*. It seems that the council was stuck with it, at least until some way could be found around the trusteeship of the land.

Four years later on August 22nd, 1930, a fire again consumed the building. It was so fierce that news of the fire made interstate publications including as far away as Western Australia. The *Western Argus*- Kalgoorlie reported:

The Dalby School of Arts was destroyed by fire at 4 o'clock this morning. The building was of two storeys. The fire was prevented by the brigade from spreading to the shops at the rear and to the side of the building. The heat was terrific and many panes of glass in the post office windows on the opposite side of the road were broken or cracked. The building and contents were insured with the State Government office for £2,330. On July 25 last a fire was discovered in the School of Arts but was extinguished before any damage was done. The origin of the present fire is unknown.



Dalby Town Council Chambers building, Dalby, ca. 1935. The School of Arts formed part of this building.

Image: State Library of Queensland

Dalby School of Arts, Queensland

The committee scraped together some books donated by generous subscribers and set up the nucleus of a library in temporary premises owned by Mr. Peter Zaunders. Whether by lack of trying or otherwise the Town Council had not been able to divest itself of the institution and the *Toowoomba Chronicle* of July 16th, 1931, announced that the State *Treasurer was prepared to grant a loan of £4,000 towards the cost of re-erecting* the building in conjunction with the new council offices and furnishings.

Very little has been found of the ensuing construction of the School of Arts, but it did survive as part of the Town Council and a *Dalby Herald* report of July 1st, 1949, paints a glowing report.

Few Queensland provincial towns can claim to have anything to equal Dalby's fine School of Arts, which offers excellent, reading and recreational facilities for citizens and visitors. Only one of the splendid civic amenities of the town, this institution deserves much wider interest and support than it receives for it is worthy of civic pride.

The School of Arts premises forms portion of the main Dalby Town Council building and the large members' reading room contains over 10,000 books on every subject, in addition to the latest periodicals and principal newspapers. A gesture to visitors is the public reading room which is unique in itself. The visitor to Dalby gains a favourable impression of civic pride and council foresight by inspection of the School of Arts. There is every facility for all tastes in reading, and the recreation room with its three full sized billiard tables is spacious.

The last published article found, concerning the School of Arts, was in the *Dalby Herald* December 24th, 1954. The librarian reported that the Olympic pool was stealing away their patronage, the pool being more suited to the hot weather than the billiard room. The librarian reported that there were still 279 recreation members and 189 library members, so it is likely the institution held on for some time.

School of Arts buildings in Queensland

Images from the State Library of Queensland

Top row Left: Beenleigh, 1900. Top row right: Murgon, c. 1912. :
Bottom row left: Emerald, 1914. Bottom row right: Canungra, 1918



Pinnaroo Institute, South Australia

By Joeline Hancock

Pinnaroo is a South Australian township 27km from the Victorian border. The town was surveyed in 1904 at the same time as the railway line that came from Tailem Bend. Pinnaroo soon became a thriving farming centre.

The community formed an institute with a library in 1907, using a church building for the library and a local hotel for meetings. It soon began working towards having its own Institute building. This timber and iron hall, that cost between £400 and £500, was opened in October 1908 by the Governor, Sir George Le Hunt. He was welcomed by the local band at the railway station. A banquet and a concert were held after the opening ceremony.

The hall was used for social events, concerts and other meetings as well as a library. Its activities soon outgrew the building so that a supper room and dressing rooms were added to the building six years later. The library was then housed in the supper room.



Pinnaroo's First Institute, c. 1910.

Image: State Library of South Australia

The Pinnaroo Council took over the building in 1921. The following year a Literary and Debating Society was formed and a Japanese Fair organised, that realised £400. In 1924 plans were prepared for a new Institute building. The original building was turned to face east instead of north, the additions demolished, and a new Institute building erected. This new building was extensive. It included the Council Chambers, a reading-room, a library, three offices and three shops, for the cost of £7,000. A further £1000 was spent on furnishings (raised by the Ladies' committee) and another £280 on the electric light system. Spacious dressing rooms were built under the stage.

The opening ceremony was performed by the Premier, the Honorable John Gunn on 28 August 1925. For the occasion the streets of Pinnaroo were lined with cars and the new hall was filled to overflowing.

Over the next ten years the finances of the Institute became precarious but gradually improved with a grant of £230 from the District Council and income from hall hire and rents. Picture nights and annual balls contributed to the coffers. In 1940 the Institute library had more than 2,200 books and 106 subscribers. It took until 1956, however, before the Institute was debt free.

Pinnaroo Institute, South Australia

In 1976 the Institute subscribers approved transferring the Institute library to the Pinnaroo School Community Library. Instead of being open only four hours a week, the Community Library was open 30-40 hours, and it was free. As part of the government's phasing in of free public libraries, the Institute was dissolved in 1977. Over the next five years the Council upgraded the Institute's interior, replaced the ceiling and roof, laid a new jarrah floor and completely renovated the foyer. The building continues to be a social centre for the district.



Pinnaroo Institute in 2007. Photographer: Peter Wolfenden. Image supplied by Joelle Hancock

Institutes of South Australia website <https://institutessa.com/>



Joelle Hancock is the woman behind the wonderful *Institutes of South Australia* website. This is part of the introduction to the website—

I was curious about the proud buildings dotted around South Australia identifying themselves as an INSTITUTE. When in 2016 I purchased a second-hand copy of A Chance to Read (1992) by Michael Talbot, I was astounded

to discover how vital these Institutes with their libraries were to communities, since the early days of our colony. This was news to me although my background was as a literacy teacher-educator. I was inspired to set about documenting all the Institutes that we had in SA.

Many people have encouraged and supported my resolve in this task. Victoria's Jim Lowden, a tireless promoter of all things to do with Mechanics Institutes, revealed how widespread the Institute movement was throughout the western world. Talbot's book A Chance to Read became my bible, while A Trunk Full of Books (1986) by Carl Bridge pointed to other sources. My husband Ken Hancock has been invaluable in finding relevant newspaper reports on Trove, photos on the internet, and solutions to computer difficulties. He also prepared the maps for the website. I am delighted that people who have had personal experiences of Institutes in SA are contributing their stories to the site. You are invited to add your story or any additional information through the site.

Roller Skating in Mechanics' Institutes

Compiled by Heather Arnold

The roller skate was invented by a Belgium, Joseph Merlin in the 1760s. The early skates had the wheel 'in-line' but in 1863 James Plimpton of Massachusetts redesigned the roller skate with pairs of wheels at the back and the front. In 1866, the Apollo Music Hall in Bourke Street introduced roller skating to Melbourne. Further innovations in the roller skate gave the skater greater maneuverability and thus skating continued to gain in popularity. The first two decades of the 20th century saw the sport of roller skating boom again. There were purpose-built rinks but in many country towns it was the local Mechanics' Institutes which provided a venue for skaters.

The entertainment was many and varied. You could enter fancy dress competitions; at Koroit you could skate to the music of the Koroit Band Orchestra; skating at Nurmurkah promised that *If you would be graceful, learn to skate* and at Horsham ladies could learn to *roll on skates*, free of charge.

Here are some advertisements from around the State.



S KATING
SKATING, SKATING!
 IN THE
BUNYIP MECHANICS
 ON
STURDAY AND WEDNESDAY,
 At 8 o'Clock,
 And Continuing Every Wednesday and
 Saturday Evenings following.
ADMISSION 6d. SKATES 6d.
 Children Half Price.

SKATING
 ... AT ...
MOE MECHANICS' HALL
 .. EVERY ..
Wednesday Evening.
Admission, 6d. Skates, 1s.

SKATING.

**Mechanics' Hall, BACCHUS
 MARSH.**

TUESDAY, August 19.

Admission, 6d. Tax, 1d.

Floorage—(with own Skates) 6d.

Floorage—(with Skates provided) 1/.

SKATING. SKATING

THE GREAT WINTER PASTIME.

A. Bongiorno and Co.

COLUMBIA SKATING RINK.

MECHANICS' HALL, HORSHAM.
 Come and See Horsham on Wheels.

NOTE.—The Rink will be open on
MONDAY, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY
NIGHTS, and will be equipped with
 the latest American Ball Bearing and
 Plain Bearing Skates.

The rink will also be open at 3 o'clock
 on the afternoons of **MONDAY, WED-**
NESDAY AND FRIDAY, and at
 7.30 o'clock in the evenings. **ADMIS-**
SION FREE. Skates 6d. and 1/. Any
 ladies wishing to learn to roll on skates
 may have lessons **FREE** of charge.

Fun for Young and Old.
 Don't Miss this Great Pleasure.

PRICES.—Admission, 6d; skates, 6d.
 and 1/.

A. BONGIORNO, Proprietor.
A. KING, Manager.

Roller Skating in Mechanics' Institutes

Grand Skating Carnival

Will be held in the
MECHANICS' HALL, LISMORE,
 On Saturday, Sept. 19, when prizes will
 be awarded for the following:—Best
 Fancy Dress, trophy valued 10/6;
 most Comical Character, trophy value
 10/6; Great American Basket Trick,
 5/. Entry, 1/. T. HILL, Manager.

SKATING! SKATING!

Mechanics' Hall, Orbost,

Monday, Wednesday and
 Saturday,

7.30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Admission 6d, Skates 6d,
 Floorage 6d.

G. O. GLUTTF,
 Manager

Skating! Skating!

In Mechanics' Hall, Ballan.

Winter's Most Up-to-date Pleasure.
 Healthful, Fascinating, Joyous.

**Saturday 2nd, Monday 4th,
 Wednesday 6th, Saturday 9th.**

Afternoon and Evening.

The Rink will be open Afternoons, 2.45
 to 5 p.m.; Evenings, 7.45 to 10 p.m.

On Saturday mornings the skating will
 be open for children only.

Rink equipped with plain and the latest
 American ball-bearing skates.

POPULAR PRICES—Afternoons—Ad-
 mission, 6d; skates, 6d and 3d; floor-
 age, 3d. Evenings—Admission, 6d;
 skates, 6d and 1s; floorage, 6d.

Watch paper for announcements.

Private lessons arranged.

W. B. TAYLOR, Proprietor.

SKATING! SKATING!

Mechanics' Hall,
 NUMURKAH.

"If you would be graceful, learn to Skate"

THE EVENT OF THE SEASON.

**Grand Fancy Dress and Adver-
 tisement Carnival,**

Friday & Saturday, August 6 & 7

**SKATING!
 SKATING!**

NEXT NIGHT—

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3.

MECHANICS' HALL, KOROIT.

From 8 till 11 p.m.

Admission 6d. Skates on hire 1s pair
 (three hours).

**MUSIC BY KOROIT BAND
 ORCHESTRA.**

Articles from Trove <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>

Bacchus Marsh Express August 16, 1919

Ballan Times August 31, 1911

Bunyip Free Press May 28, 1914

Horsham Times June 9, 1908

Koroit Sentinel May 30 1914

Lismore Advertiser September 16, 1914

Narracan Shire Advocate April 30 1913

Numurkah Leader August 6. 1909

Snowy River Mail September 28, 1911

History of Roller Skating—Encyclopaedia Britannica and
<https://www.emelbourne.net.au/>

Mechanics' Institutes and the Women's Suffrage Movement

By Heather Arnold

Read the original of this article, with footnotes, here <https://victoriaspast.blogspot.com/2022/10/mechanics-institutes-and-womens.html>

Mechanics' Institutes have been the heart of their communities for social, educational and cultural activities since they were established in suburbs and country towns throughout Victoria and they have also been part of the political process. Some Councils met in Mechanics' Institutes before Council Offices were built; they have been used (and still are) over the years as polling places and political candidates have held meetings in the buildings. However, I thought we will look at Mechanics' Institutes and their connection to the Women's Suffrage movement.

Women in South Australia gained the right to vote and stand for Parliament in 1894. In 1902, women Australia-wide were granted the right to vote and stand for election in Federal elections; the first election they voted in was the 1903 one. Victoria was the last State to give women the right to vote, this was in 1908 and they couldn't stand for election until 1923. As a matter of interest, the United States didn't allow women to vote until 1920 and the United Kingdom had introduced limited female suffrage in 1918 and extended the vote to all women in 1928.

The Suffrage movement began in Victoria on May 7, 1884 when a group of women met in South Yarra to form the Victorian Women's Suffrage Society. The next meeting was held at the South Melbourne Mechanics' Institute on October 28, 1884 and it was *very sparsely attended not fifty persons being present*. The following motion was passed *That in the opinion of this meeting, it is desirable that the Victorian legislators should pass an act legalising woman's suffrage*.

Many other meetings and debates took place around Victoria after this, often held in the local Mechanics' Institutes. The events were either a traditional debate on the merits of the issue or meetings advocating for or against women's suffrage. In May 1889, a debate was held at the Balmoral Mechanics' Institute; in August 1894 at the Upper Maffra (Newry) Mechanics' Institute and in July 1895 the Myrning Mutual Improvement Association



debated the issue at their local Mechanics' Institute. Also in 1895, at Longwood *two gentleman* debated the issue in the *well filled Mechanics' Institute*. In all these instances the vote at the end of the night was against women's suffrage, at Longwood, it *lost by a large majority*.

Upper Maffra (Newry) Mechanics' Institute.
Taken in 1963 by John T. Collins.
State Library of Victoria Image.

At Myrning the issue was debated again in August 1898 by the local Debating Society, in conjunction with Bacchus Marsh Debating Society. The audience was still was not convinced of the merits of the

argument and *upon a vote being take the champions for the ladies found themselves in a minority of 2, the numbers being - for, 12; against, 14*. Debates were still being held two years later; in September 1900, the Gisborne Mechanics' Institute hosted the local Debating Club and the topic was Women's Suffrage, and again the majority were against the idea.

In April 1897, the Narre Warren Literary and Debating Society was formed at the Mechanics' Institute and Women's Suffrage was the subject of their very first debate and *a vote taken was strongly in favour of the affirmative*. This is the only reference I can find where a debate produced a positive vote.

Alongside debates, many meetings were held in country towns with speakers advocating the extension of suffrage to women. In February 1892, the Reverend David O'Donnell spoke in favour of the matter at the Geelong Mechanics' Institute. He was a Congregational Minister at the time, though he began and ended his career as a Methodist Minister. He was also an advocate of the Temperance movement. In June the same year, John Vale lectured on Womanhood Suffrage at the Horsham Mechanics' Institute. John Vale was Secretary of the Victorian Alliance a group formed in 1880 to co-ordinate Temperance objectives as well as being the Secretary of the Independent Order of Rechabites.



It was no coincidence that Women's Suffrage advocates and other social reformers were also involved in the Temperance movement, as they believed that they could achieve their goals of restricting alcohol through political representation and that women would be more likely to vote for these measures.

Geelong Mechanics' Institute. Taken in 1866 by Eugen de Balk. State Library of Victoria Image.

In April 1894, Mrs Christopher, President of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, chaired a meeting on Women's Suffrage at the Geelong Mechanics' Institute, attended by 400 women. One of the speakers, Mr

E. Tennyson Smith clearly stated the nexus between Temperance and the Suffrage question; he was reported thus - *that he advocated the enfranchisement of women, because he believed that it would put an end to the evils of drink and gambling and other social vices. "Women would begin the exercise of their political rights by sweeping away the liquor traffic, and the gambling evil would follow, in its train."*

In June 1894, at the Nagambie Mechanics' Institute, Annette Bear-Crawford addressed the audience on Women's Suffrage. She was the founder of the Victorian Women's Suffrage League and the United Council for Woman Suffrage which co-ordinated groups advocating for the cause. She also organised the Queen's Willing Shilling appeal that led to the establishment of the Victoria Hospital for Woman and Children in 1896 (later called the Queen Victoria Hospital). Sadly, she didn't live to see either the opening of the Hospital or women receiving the vote as she died at the age of 46 in 1899.

In November 1898, the Attorney General, Isaac Isaacs, who later became the Governor General, spoke at a *well attended* meeting at the Castlemaine Mechanics' Institute. There were of course many other meetings held with local speakers but we will look at one more high profile speaker, Vida Goldstein. Vida, whose mother, Isabella, was a suffragist, tea-totaller and social reformer, was also an organiser of the Willing Shilling appeal. She was the first woman to stand for Parliament in the 1903 elections. Vida spoke at the Cheltenham and the Kyneton Mechanics' Institute in October 1900. At the latter it was reported that she *gave cogent reasons why women should be enfranchised*. She also answered *satisfactorily questions* from the anti-suffragists.

Because of course, there were many who objected to women being able to vote and one notable member of the Women's Anti-Suffrage League was Lieutenant-Colonel Goldstein, the father of Vida. Apparently although they lived in the same house he was estranged from his wife Isabella; but there must have been some interesting discussions on family occasions. Jacob Goldstein delivered an anti-suffrage lecture at the Beulah Mechanics' Institute in September 1900, in front of an audience of a 100 people, including forty women.

It was the work of these supporters of Women's Suffrage that led to it being enacted in Australia on a Federal level and later in Victoria and gave women the right to visit their local polling booth on election days, more often than not at the local Mechanics' Institute, and cast their vote.

Vale Lance Woodhouse

A tribute by Jim Lowden

Lancelot Ghwelf Clarence 'Lance' Woodhouse, the long-time President and stalwart of the Shepparton Mechanics' Institute (SMI), died at Shepparton Villages Aged Care on 4 June 2021, aged 96. There was a private funeral and later memorial service.

Lance was born at Prahran and educated at Scotch College, Hawthorn and then at the University of Melbourne, from which he graduated both in music and law, as well as an able cricketer and journalist. He joined Percy Feltham's legal practice in Shepparton in 1953 and later became a partner, before stepping back from the partnership in the mid-1980s to continue in the role of consultant until 2015.

Lance joined the Shepparton Mechanics' Institute in the 1950s and was a trustee from 1981-2019. He attended the 1998 Kilmore Mechanics' Institute Conference and Shepparton subsequently became an inaugural member of MIV. Lance later brokered the redevelopment of the Institute in collaboration with a Government agency, which in 2004 turned it into a regional teaching and meeting facility. He and the SMI hosted the keynote lecture by Professor John Langford at the MIV jointly-sponsored the pioneering Water from Where? Conference in Shepparton. More recently he oversaw the redevelopment of the lecture theatre, enlarging it and providing a street front entrance in 2012.

Lance was a visionary and steered, through his many associations and networks, the civic, commercial, educational, health and residential development of Shepparton from that of a country town to a large modern regional city. He also had a major role in the provision of aged care housing. His contribution to community service was recognised with an Order of Australia Medal in the 1993 Queen's Birthday Honours and two Paul Harris Rotary Fellowships. His memberships included Shepparton Rotary Club and Shepparton Theatre Arts Group (STAG), as well as the Melbourne Cricket Club and Melbourne Football Club.

A former business partner David Fordyce said 'Lance was a giant of the community and small in stature. He had enormous drive and everything he took on, which was a huge amount of work, he would see it through. Lance officially retired at the age of 92'. Lance is survived by Wilma, his wife of 72 years, and sons Bruce and Andrew and an extended family and our deepest sympathy is extended to them.



Shepparton Mechanics' Institute, on the left.

The Shepparton MI was established in 1877 and in 1888 the earlier building was replaced by the brick building, clearly see here behind the *modern frontage*, as it was called in a newspaper report of the proposed addition from August 1939.

Mechanics Institute. Wyndham Street, Shepparton. 1994. Photographer: Raymond de Berquelle. Image: National Library of Australia .