

Recollections of Community members indicating the social and cultural value of the Town and Community Halls to the local community, as well as reflecting the importance to the broader Victorian Community as the influence extends past the local community.

1. RECOLLECTIONS OF YARRAWONGA'S COMMUNITY HALL

By Noel Loughnan OAM

Another milestone in Yarrawonga's progress was passed on Thursday 18th June 1959 when Yarrawonga Councillor H.R. Prescott officially opened Yarrawonga's magnificent new Community Hall.

The hall built at a cost of 13,000 pounds (26,000 dollars in today's currency) is situated at the rear of the majestic Town Hall and together with the Infant Welfare Centre (IWC) and Preschool Centre formed what was regarded as a magnificent civic block of buildings.

The IWC and Preschool have recently been demolished by Moira Shire but the Community Hall which is also under threat of demolition has so far managed to escape the wreckers and still stands tall as a symbol of progress and community need.

The new Community Hall replaced a dilapidated building known as the Supper Room. This facility was used for meetings and social events and to support functions in the adjacent Town Hall especially when supper was served.

The run-down structure originally the office of the Mercury Newspaper looked anything but like a supper room and was most inadequate for the needs of the district. It's amazing how organisations coped at the large functions. This was especially evident at the Church of England debutante ball in the Shire Hall in July 1945 which attracted a crowd of more than 1000 people, a record that still stands and unlikely to be beaten. Such a large attendance required many sittings for supper in the old Supper Room which was tested to the limit as the final supper sitting ended around 2am.

When Yarrawonga Shire Council decided to build a much needed new Community Hall back in 1959 they were committed to providing a facility that would suit the needs of the local and wider Community for generations to come.

The Council got it right and achieved its goal with an imposing double brick building with massive foundations. The public was rapt and applauded the Council. Fast track 60 years – the Community Hall is sound as the day it was built and continues to meet the needs of the local and wider community.

The new Community Hall was a perfect fit for its big brother – the magnificent iconic Shire Hall.

Yarrawonga is proud of its Community Hall which has played a huge role in developing social and cultural values in the community over the past 60 years during which people have become attached to their hall – connected by feelings, memories and associations that are important to a community. Some may have been unaware of such attachment until their hall came under threat.

The Community Hall has had multiple uses over the last six decades – the list is extensive, here are some of them – wedding receptions, birthday parties, meetings, social events and gatherings, Champions of Sport Panel, Red Cross Blood Bank, political meetings and campaigns, polling booth for elections, dances and teaching dance.

Never has a public building in Yarrawonga been more aptly named than the Yarrawonga Community Hall which was funded by the community, for the community and is owned by the community.

Noel Loughnan is the former owner/editor of the long established newspapers Yarrowonga Chronicle (1883) and Corowa Free Press (1875). He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in June 2014 for service to the Print Media Industry and the Community of Yarrowonga-Mulwala.

2. Don Presley Yarrowonga Shire Secretary 1970-1988

YARRAWONGA COMMUNITY HALL

In my mind there is no doubt that the construction of the Community Hall in 1959 greatly complemented the continuing use of the Shire Hall as a wonderful community asset for a town the size of Yarrowonga at that time.

The many times the Community Hall and kitchen was used as a necessary Supper Room and food preparation area for the annual Debutante Balls together with the annual Fancy Dress Balls and other social functions held by many community organisations only confirmed its necessity when constructed by the then Council. For example the Yarrowonga Anglican Church held an annual Debutante Ball using both halls for over sixty continual years.

The construction of the Shire Hall and Community Hall are wonderful examples of the then "visionary thinking" which appears to be lacking in many of our communities today. The thinking of those responsible for the construction of the Shire and Community Halls was not for the next twenty or so years into the future, but for many years beyond that.

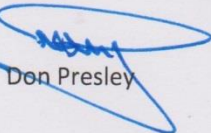
The Community Hall has since 1959 been not only used in conjunction with use of the Shire Hall, but also for many public and community meetings including Council, State and Federal elections, Wedding receptions and many family functions together with use by many local community associations.

The Yarrowonga Community cannot afford to lose its Community Hall as it has far too many memories for far too many residents over its sixty year period.

Our challenge lies in making more and better use of such a wonderful community facility at a cost that is within the ability of many ratepayers and organisations to pay.

It is not unreasonable to think that the alleged diminishing use of the Community Hall has more to do with hire costs than an opportunity to utilise this wonderful facility.

The Yarrowonga and district population has, I believe, more than trebled since 1959, and if building the Community Hall was justifiable then, its retention today is even more so.


Don Presley

3. Yvonne Davies – Inaugural Mayor of Moira shire 1997 and Councillor for approx. 12 years.

Attention Heritage Victoria 6.5.2020

The Yarrawonga Town Hall is the most impressive Heritage Building in Yarrawonga. It is set on the corner block of Belmore St. and ORR St. Currently the Yarrawonga Town Hall Precinct has a smaller Community Hall on ORR St. that complements the Precinct

This Community Hall is a solid building and has a substantial connections with its past community use. Was a Pre School for many years and lots of other users. It has also helped complement the larger events held at the Yarrawonga Town Hall

Demolishing this smaller Solid Community Hall would detract from this Heritage area

It Should be Saved.

The Moira Shire are in the process of planning to demolish the smaller community Hall. then building a replacement building that has a Much Larger Foot Print.

The new building is to be used as a Public Library, which would NOT enhance the Heritage Yarrawonga Town Hall or the Precinct. Parking in the area could also be a problem.

Sincerely Yvonne Davies
Inaugural Mayor of Moira Shire 1997
and Councillor for approx. 12 years.

YVONNE DAVIES
63 JEWELL ROAD
ST. JAMES. 3727
0357644323
0417799512

4. Joan Mullarvey (nee McCarthy)

Yarrawonga Town and Community Halls

As a past employee of the Yarrawonga Shire (1970-1982), I was directly involved with bookings related to the Shire and Community halls. Both halls were booked on a regular basis and it was very advantageous to be able to offer the Community Hall for functions and events that would not have been suitable to the size of the Shire Hall. The kitchen facilities were integral for many functions in the Shire Hall and the actual hall space served as a supper room or further work areas for many Shire hall bookings. A full time Hall Keeper was employed to maintain, clean and setup for these functions, which were many and varied, from personal use, community use and also used as an extension for local, state and federal events such as elections etc.

Also, during my time as an employee of the Yarrawonga Pre-School & Occasional Care Inc (1996-2008), the centre had a permanent weekly booking to use the Community Hall for the Occasional Care (Take-a-break Funded) and 3year old pre-school. Although our booking was permanent, it was agreed we needed to work within the perimeters of keeping the Community Hall available for public use. This meant all staff members would be required to pack down and store all equipment consisting of tables, chairs, mats, wall dividers and play equipment on a very regular basis and staff would need to setup again the following morning before Pre-School started. This was a huge job, but it enabled many stakeholders within the community to work together to keep the Community Hall a truly shared community space.

The Community Hall, being smaller, has always offered a flexible space for many diverse functions and events, such as, school events, concerts, monthly blood bank, dances and Blue Light Discos, 21st & 18th birthdays, weddings, kitchen teas, meetings, flower shows, church services, fundraiser, elections, monthly immunizations, conferences and many more. Generations of locals and people with associations to the Yarrawonga community would have memories of functions held within our hall precinct.

My recollection of attending ballet lessons being conducted in the Community Hall were to catch the bus across from Mulwala with my school friends and stop off at the local store to buy "broken biscuits" for afternoon tea on the way to our lessons...

Jack McCarthy was my great Uncle-closest thing I had to a grandfather, my grandfather was tragically killed a month before Molly (my aunt was born). His brother Mick coached a Stawell gift winner and was Athletic coach Xavier College. Jack held Poetry Recitals in the Community Hall conducted by the Apex Club of Yarrawonga in 1979 and 1980 as a fundraiser for the Yarrawonga District Hospital. (see flyer, Yarrawonga Chronicle Article & Joe Dixon recollection). Jack listened to Leonard Teale recite poetry and felt he did a "better job".

I was the Administration Officer, Shire of Yarrawonga 12.5yrs. and Yarrawonga Pre School Assistant for 12yrs. I have wonderful memories of the events and activities held in both the

Shire (Town) Hall and the Community Hall and would like to see the complex of both halls maintained and upgraded so they can be used to their full potential.

Joan Mullarvey (McCarthy)

12/5/2020

5. Ross and Anne Watson

In 1978, the Yarrawonga- Mulwala Apex Club ran a Wine and Cheese tasting in the Town Hall to raise funds for Mandy MacDonald who was running in the Miss Victoria Quest. It was a success and inspired the club to run a Wine Banquet in 1979 and 1980 in the COMMUNITY HALL.

I also recall the two very successful Jack McCarty nights that were organised by the Apex Club in 1980 when the Community Hall was packed hall listening to Jack reciting poetry..

I was the Apex Club Secretary in 1979-1980 and the Club President in 1980-1981. I clearly remember these events.

I am attaching a copy of the Treasurer's reports for the Wine tastings held by the Yarrawonga-Mulwala Apex Club in 1979 (donation to SIDS) and 1980.(donation to Ovens Valley Emergency Care)

These events were held in the Community Hall but that is not mentioned in the reports

Ross Watson
37 South Road
Yarrawonga

"I was a member of the Yarrawonga-Mulwala Apexiannes Club for many years while my husband Ross was in the Apex club. Apexiannes was a club of the wives, or partners, of the members of the Apex club. In 1979 and 1980, we held wine banquets in the Community Hall which was packed with guests. My recollection of the events is that the wives produced a 4 course meal for the guests. We did lots of preparations leading up to the event and many Apexiannes were busy in the Community Hall kitchen for the entire day of the banquet. The events were lots of work but also lots of fun for us and the community. The 1980 function raised \$500 for SIDS (not bad for 1980!) Unfortunately I don't have any photos of these events.

Anne Watson
37 South Road
Yarrawonga

We remember The Bush dances (for Yarrawonga Primary School) that were run in the Town Hall and it was bring your own nibbles.

We have fond memories of these and other events that we have attended in both the Town and Community Halls over the years and hope that both the halls gain Heritage Listing and are preserved to serve the people of Yarrawonga for many years to come.

21/4/2020

6. Bruce Pigdon



24 April 2020

My Reflections of the Community Hall.

The Yarrowonga Community Hall is an iconic building and represents a very valuable asset, especially when combined with the majestic Town Hall built in 1929.

The combination of the two halls in the way they have provided a community venue for the district has huge implications and represents the most significant asset because of their heritage and cultural importance to so many locals.

Five generations of my family have been afforded the privilege of frequenting the halls for reasons that range from community meetings to Blood Bank, to social dances as school children and even at voting time – to name just a few.

My own recollection began as a teenager in the original Supper Room, viewing a flower show with my parents in support of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind. My grandmother was a local committee member and would have been a very regular attendee of functions there before it was demolished to make way for the magnificent Community Hall we now have.

School socials were held in the new hall in the early sixties at least twice in a school year and we eagerly looked forward to attending and partaking of soft drink and cake that was provided whilst mixing with our school year group.

I attended dances in the Hall from the summer of 1963. Saturday evening dances were held in the Community Hall accompanied by live music. Electric guitars had become available that added to the sound that by then featured the Beatles music together with the British Invasion of popular songs as well as the California beach songs from the "Beach Boys" and others including Elvis.

These times were amazing and fun-filled with no violence or alcohol influence that I can remember. The 1960s, when we were in our 20s, and being able to congregate in and around the Town Hall precinct was for me an unforgettable social and cultural experience and one we look back on fondly as a time when our young minds were being shaped and a sense of community was being forged.

During my lifetime I have been to many dozens of receptions, functions, events, meetings, presentations and exhibitions. The Community Hall is an integral part of this community and I cannot imagine our community not having it there to enjoy and make use of.

I consider the demolition of the Community Hall when it serves so many functions in the community is a disservice to the community and dishonouring our forefathers who built it. Together with the Town Hall, these halls of solid brick construction will, and should, continue to serve the needs of our community for another 100 years. The Community Hall was built for a purpose and continues to fulfil that purpose with dozens of functions held there each year.

One cannot easily put a value to the cultural experience that a meeting place like our Community Hall offers to a community, but I for one am very thankful for the past 60 plus years when I have had the benefit of meeting friends at our local hall and in that place participating in so many local events and happy occasions.

The twin halls have been a centre of cultural experience for the community at large for nearly 100 years and must be kept for future generations to enjoy.

Bruce Pigdon - OAM
2 Hawkins Drive
Yarrowonga

7. Frank Keenan (son of Cr. Frank Keenan, President of Yarrawonga Shire for 3 terms)

371 Whites Rd
Yarrawonga
3730
12/5/20

To whom it may concern,

I have been asked to jot down my memories of the Yarrawonga Community Hall. I am old enough to remember the previous hall, called "the supper room" and I can recall the opening of the new hall, and our community satisfaction with it. My father, who was on the shire council for 30+ years, was very involved with this project.

I have attended wedding receptions there, but my main memories are of the many dances held in this hall in the 1960s. These were the highlight of the week for the teenagers of the district and were very well attended — we always had live bands — we certainly looked forward to Saturday nights. Local clubs (eg Rowing Club, pony club, table tennis club, Apex etc.) took turns at staffing these dances to raise funds for their own projects.

I am saddened to think that this building is to be demolished — I see this action as vandalism to be financed by the rate-payers of the future. (It's always good to spend someone else's money!)

Yours Sincerely
Frank Keenan

Barry Francis Keenan.

8. Vicki Ramsdale

My name is Vicki Ramsdale, and I grew up at Lake Rowan. Yarrawonga was always our 'home town', and provided me with all my schooling. I fondly remember my kindergarten teacher, Mrs Stornibrink and thoroughly enjoyed my kinder year in the (now demolished) kindergarten. I distinctly remember the home corner being my favourite activity.

My primary school years were spent at the old Tom Street primary school, and, along with my two sisters and brother, I attended Yarrawonga Secondary College.

Yarrawonga has been a great source of youth entertainment over the years. Living in an old farmhouse with no air conditioning in the middle of summer was not much fun, but our family spent many evenings (along with the rest of the farming communities and half of Yarrawonga) having 'tea at the lake'. As it is now, the foreshore was a much more pleasant temperature even on the hottest of days, and our family still regularly have meals together along the lake.

I remember going to the outdoor picture theatre and sitting on the deck chairs to watch movies in the early sixties, and after that closed, my older sisters were allowed to go to the picture theatre in the Shire Hall. They still laugh about Don Forbes, Oscar Seccull and staff trying to maintain order whilst keeping the movie going.

My sisters and brother were a bit older than me and the car trips with Mum to take them into Yarra on a Saturday night for the regular dances held in the Community hall were a highlight. In the 25 minute trip, Carol was often finishing up sewing her outfit to wear for the dance, whether it was final touches to a hem or sewing on the buttons. Mum would drive a carload from Lake Rowan, and one of the other parents would go in later to bring them home.

When my brother was old enough to drive, I can remember stopping on our way into Yarra for him to have a shot at some ducks on a dam close to the road. The image of him commando crawling over the dam bank in his good dance clothes will stay with me forever!! In those days, all the farm vehicles had guns up the back seat, which is hard to imagine now.

I was so excited when I was finally old enough to attend the dances in the Community Hall myself (in about 1969) and all my friends from Yarrawonga and Mulwala would attend. The purple lighting would show up every bit of flint on our black clothes and all the white clothes would glow brightly (along with our teeth), but we absolutely loved those carefree days.

My husband, Jeff, and I were married on October 6th, 1973 and we, along with many of our friends had our wedding reception in the Community Hall. No doubt the memories will last a lifetime. The hall was an ideal size for smaller functions and later on some of the larger weddings were held in the Shire Hall, but the Community Hall was integral to the event because of the kitchen facilities.



9. Recollections of Doris Head – 103 years old

2 Kingsley Court

Yarrowonga 3730

11th May 2020

Debutante Balls for St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church were held in the Yarrowonga Shire Hall and the Supper in the Community Hall. I was the Debutante trainer for 5 or 6 years. The Shire Hall had the best dance floor. The supper was served in the Community Hall. Mr. Heatley boiled the coffee on a kerosene burner/stove before supper was served. The cups were wheeled around in wheelbarrows and the coffee served into them via a "whitewatering can".

The Tennis Club also used the Town and Community Halls for Balls.

Whilst I was training the Debutantes, Heather Menzies received the Debutantes at the Anglican Balls. Her brother was Ian Menzies (of Tungamah) son of Sir Robert Menzies who packed his Ball clothes into a sugar bag to take home.

In those days no food was allowed in the Shire hall as it would damage the floor. The suppers were served in the Community Hall in about 3 sittings(i.e. sit down) of about 100 people. They had different coloured supper tickets to indicate which sitting they should attend.

The music for the Debutante Balls was provided by Morelle's from Melbourne, Norman Azzi from Brocklesby (who played in the middle of the hall) – both pianists and the Wangaratta Band. Miss Lucas made the Debutante's frocks and flowergirls dresses.

The stage had 2 entrances and the girls entered on alternate sides whilst the partners waited at the bottom of the stairs to receive them.

The Community Hall was built by the Oakley Bros to provide a supper hall to replace the old one, to make sure the Town Hall floor was not damaged by food. Tables at the balls were down each side and across the back.

Wallace Bruce was my daughter Leslie Maxwell's debutante partner. The Balls were a lot of fun. Frank Keenan Senior was Shire President and a great supporter of events in the Shire (Town) and Community Halls.

Mr. Chappell built the Shire (Town) Hall and it should be left as it was built. It is very important to me that such an asset as the Community Hall which was built to support the Shire Hall remain. It is ridiculous to contemplate demolition.

The Bachelors and Spinsters Balls, which became the Bucks and Does Balls used the Town Hall.

There is a plaque on the corner of the Town Hall indicating there is a Time Capsule that has been covered over by concrete .

Graeme Stephens who was an apprentice to the Oakely Bros. who built the Community Hall has indicated it will take them 2 years to dig out the concrete that supports the Community Hall Foundations.

It is essential to leave the Community Hall it has lots of other uses as a small hall, such as for elections. It is an asset to the town of Yarrawonga.

Doris Maxwell married Cr. Keith Head following the death of her husband.

N.B. all these photos taken below are in the dressing rooms in the Shire(Town) Hall – the carpet is still the original in the hall today.



1953 St. Cuthbert's Anglican Debutante Ball Set.

Back Row: Des Tuttle, Ken Williams, John Shaw, Brian Keenan, Wallace Bruce, Malcolm Boag, Neil Nicholson, Robin Briggs, Bob Rofe.

Middle Row: Neil Mallows, Mary Lord, Rose Martin, Pat Cox, Lesley Maxwell, Pam Douglas, Margaret McMillan, Nancy Carmichael, George Irvine.

Front Row: Mary Matheson, Marion Mallows, (Gilbertson Twins), Mrs Doris Maxwell, Valda Lewis, Marina Pappas.



St. Cuthbert's Anglican Debutante Ball 1955

Back Row: Des Tuttle(plumber), Noel Bruce, Dennis Dowling, Ray Martin, Neil Walker, Howard Judd, Bill Carter, John Bown, Kevin Spencer, Kevin Hughes, Bill Essex.

Middle Row: Bruce Lawrence, Jill Williams, Betty Tuck, Marj Dobby, Julie Grenfell,,Gwen White, Joan McFarlane.

Front Row: Graeme O'Bryan, Margaret Whinray, Joyce Lewin, Doris Maxwell(trainer), Elain Pierce, Marie Wood, George McNulty.



1955. Heather Menzies receiving Debs. To left Fr. & Mrs Freda Coysh; then Ian Menzies (son of Sir Robert Menzies) and to right Doris & Ern Maxwell. Page Box Trevor Hargraves.



1955 Tania Vertak (Miss Australia), Doris Maxwell, E. Tassicker, Effie Johnson, Lyle Armitage



1955 St. Cuthbert's Debutantes



1956 St. Cuthbert's Debutantes

Back Row: Marie Holland, Fay Langford, Pam Thompson, Nellie De Jong, Judy Woods (married George McNulty), Val Davis, Bev Nicholson, Judy Bradshaw.

Front Row: Jeanette Hammon, Lynette Douglas, flower girl, Doris Maxwell(trainer) Helen Watkins, Wilma Jones(married John Ridley-builder)

Photos supplied by Doris Head (nee Maxwell)

10. Bob Jeffcott.

Comments on Yarrawonga Community Hall

The Community Hall was known for many pleasant dances, parties and entertainments. Even though I lived out of town I would come in when there was a special occasion.

The events I enjoyed most were the auctions. They always attracted a lot of people who liked to find out what prices were being paid for properties in the district. It was easier to attend the hall than drive out to the site on the day. Most of us knew the places being auctioned the Hall in town was a good place to hold the sales.

11. Wendy Davis

Yarrawonga Community Hall

Yarrawonga Community Hall Saturday dances in the Yarrawonga Community Hall. It was a wonderful gathering place for young people to socialize with their peers. Live bands such as the Dominoes from Wangaratta played regularly. People came from Cobram, Corowa and other neighbouring towns. Many lasting friendships developed due to this interaction. We were very fortunate to have these dances during our youth. I attended regularly from about 1966 -69 prior to going away for tertiary education. I shall feel that an important part of my life has been erased if the Community Hall is demolished.

12.

Recollections of Jeannette Newsom (nee Thom).

I worked for the Shire Secretary Ron Soulsby and then Don Presley for a total of 14 years and fondly remember both halls. Dances, flower shows, furniture sales (conducted by the auctioneers in town. Some of my parents furniture was sold there). Immunisations in the 70's and my husband who taught at the High School remembers school socials.

I know that progress has to happen in a town, but looking at Yarrawonga since Geoff and I left in 1983, it is quickly becoming unrecognisable. The shopping centre to begin with has very few shop fronts that look the same, the Primary School should definitely be preserved, also the railway station and oh what about the bridge. If the Shire & Community hall disappear along with the Primary School and bridge, the churches and hotels will be all that remains of the Yarrawonga we knew. I loved my working days at the Shire, polishing up the counter for when the Governor of Victoria came to visit (Sir Rohan Delacombe). I could keep on as memories keep flooding back but hope this helps,

Regards Jeanette

13. Recollection – Valerie Loomes

14th July 2020

Our iconic town hall with its semi attached Community Hall has been in my life since moving to Yarrawonga/ Mulwala since 1956.

Wonderful memories of being taken to the hall for the pictures (movies) and viewing the debts from upstairs balcony and other functions.

The opening of the Community Hall in the early 60's was monumental for me as a teenager, our Saturday night dances with live bands (the Goldtones from Wangaratta & The Dynamos from Albury) and not forgetting our Annual Beat festivals held in the Town hall with all of our big name Aussie music icons playing including Johnny Chester and the Chessmen.

The Community Hall hosted so many functions from wedding receptions, dancing, musical renditions to craft shows etc. So many people have memories of using this hall as it was smaller and cheaper to hire.

Today's needs aren't that much different from then.

Hiring the smaller hall and kitchen fit the bill for so many more functions than the large hall does.

I implore you to keep our Community Hall as a stand alone hall.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Valerie Loomes

Yarrawonga

14. Jim Drysdale

In the late 1890's David Drysdale purchased the old Post Office site on the corner of Hovel and Piper Streets, beside the Yarrawonga Primary School. He was Proprietor of Drysdale Brickworks (Drysdale Bros Brickworks or Phoenix Brickworks). He had a great interest in the education of his children and was proud of the fact that he had made the bricks for the first part of the "Red" School. David had 7 children, one adopted, all attended the "Red" School.

He also made the bricks for the Water Tower on the North East Corner of the former Yarrawonga Primary School Site. He was always available for projects round in the school area.

He came to Yarrawonga in 1883 immediately after getting married at the age of 20. He had spent his working life as a brickmaker in Shepparton Victoria. He and his brother had procured land on Bull Plain Rd, NSW but he found that after some months trying to be a farmer, he came to Yarrawonga and started making Bricks, because he thought that farming life was not active enough to keep him busy! Some of his Bricks went to the Yarrawonga Railway Station, the Yarrawonga Convent and the Seymour Railway Station. He gained a reputation so that Victoria Rail recommended that the Drysdale Bricks were the preferred bricks for the Victorian Railways if they could acquire them.

My Great Grandfather (G J Wills) and his children attended the Red school (Yarrawonga Primary School) - he had land in Burley Rd and Pearce St Yarrawonga.

I support the nomination of the Yarra Town Hall and Community Hall and former YPS site for Heritage Listing as they are all important buildings/sites for the local community and need to be preserved for future generations to be enjoyed.

Jim Drysdale

Member of Yarrawonga Mulwala Historical Society Inc.

13/5/2020

15. Joe Crothers

In the 1960s, I was on a committee with Bill Whyte, Les Hawkins, Bob Ward and the local police organising dances in the Community Hall every Saturday night for the teenagers of that time. These dances were run as fundraisers for local groups seeking financial assistance while giving the children something to entertain them.

I also organised functions in the Community Hall for a number of years and was employed as a barman on many occasions for Weddings, Birthdays etc.

It would be criminal to demolish this middle sized hall which is in excellent condition and still used frequently and over the years been used by many organisations leaving lots of happy memories.

This Hall is VITAL to the Yarrawonga Community where the population is growing rapidly.

Joe Crothers.

16. FAYE COX

MEMORIES OF THE YARRAWONGA COMMUNITY HALL from Faye Cox

I remember the opening of the new Community Hall in 1959. It was wonderful to have a spacious new building to replace the ageing supper room. It was essential when events were held at the Town Hall. It had a good kitchen and there was room for tables and chairs where people could be served food. Also, there was a need for a good sized hall for all sorts of other functions.

Over the years there have been many different and special occasions I have attended in the Community Hall. Wedding receptions, Birthday Parties, Flower Shows and Baby Shows to name a few. My daughters used the Hall to put the finishing touches on their outfits and hair before they did their debut in the main Town Hall. Very exciting nights. The Community Hall continues to be important to Yarrowonga and district. Its central location is marvellous for dances, concerts and meetings.

17. GWEN YOUNGER

YARRAWONGA COMMUNITY HALL.

During my time living in Yarrowonga in the 50's-60's I attended many and varied functions in the Community Hall. The one that is SO special to me is our, wedding reception (Hilton Younger and Gwen Vasey's wedding) This was held on 11th June 1966 after our marriage at 2pm at the Methodist Church, Yarrowonga. To create a reception area we had carpet squares on the floor inside the entrance then screens before the tables for the Wedding Breakfast.

The bridal party attendants were Louise Hammon, Jeanette Thom, Winston Golding and Gary Younger. The catering was done by the local Boy Scouts Ladies Committee as they were gathering funds to build the current Scout Hall. (see photos & wedding invitation)





There were many other wedding receptions held in the Community Hall.

In the 1956 I remember family pictures in the Shire Hall; the “orange lights” for the welcome back for Bev Long (nee MacFarlane) as Miss Victoria; the annual Christmas Paegent at the Shire Hall in 1957/58 when I was an Angel with Wallace Bruce directing.

In the 1950’s the Yarrawonga High School held its Speech Nights in the Shire Hall – the teachers all wore their academic gowns regardless of the heat!

Des O’Meara Real Estate had monthly Auctions in the Community Hall.

Leonard Teale presented Bush Poetry in the Shire Hall in the 1990’s. The film area of the Shire Hall was used for fundraising events for the Miss Australia Quest for the Spastic Society in the 1990’s.

The Yarrawonga Young Farmers conducted the Annual Show night dance in the Hall, along with many other organizations that was ‘The Place’ for local dances. I have attended dozens and dozens of activities in the Hall which bring back happy memories to name a few, Birthday parties, weddings, Quilters displays, Arts displays, Flower Shows, Blood Bank, Baby Shows, dressing our daughter for dance concerts in the Shire Hall, worked for Country Women’s Association at High Teas, auctions and music concerts.

The CWA had a “Wool Day” with “Merema” woollen garments from Geelong and Finlay in the Community Hall and I remember the Drug information night held in the Community Hall.

The CWA 50th Birthday celebrations was attended by State CWA Dignatories in the Shire Hall. Recently, the CWA organised the “Are you OK” Day held in the Shire Hall (see Yarrawonga Chronicles) to support mental health.

Our son Chris, as a student at the Yarrawonga High School, became involved in setting up the sound for Speech Night which was held in the Shire Hall. This kindled and interest in lighting live theatre productions in the Shire Hall with the local Allegro Theatre Company.

Later this hobby became Chris’s work as he used his talent in Australia and many countries around the world, including the Opening Ceremony of the London Olympic Games.

18. Marg Adkins

Yarrawonga Community Hall Memories

In about 1953 I went to a Highland Dancing Lesson in the Old Hall which was referred to as "The Supper Room" – Mrs Hain was the dancing teacher- I only went to 1 lesson as it was very hot and I couldn't get to the lake quick enough for a swim!

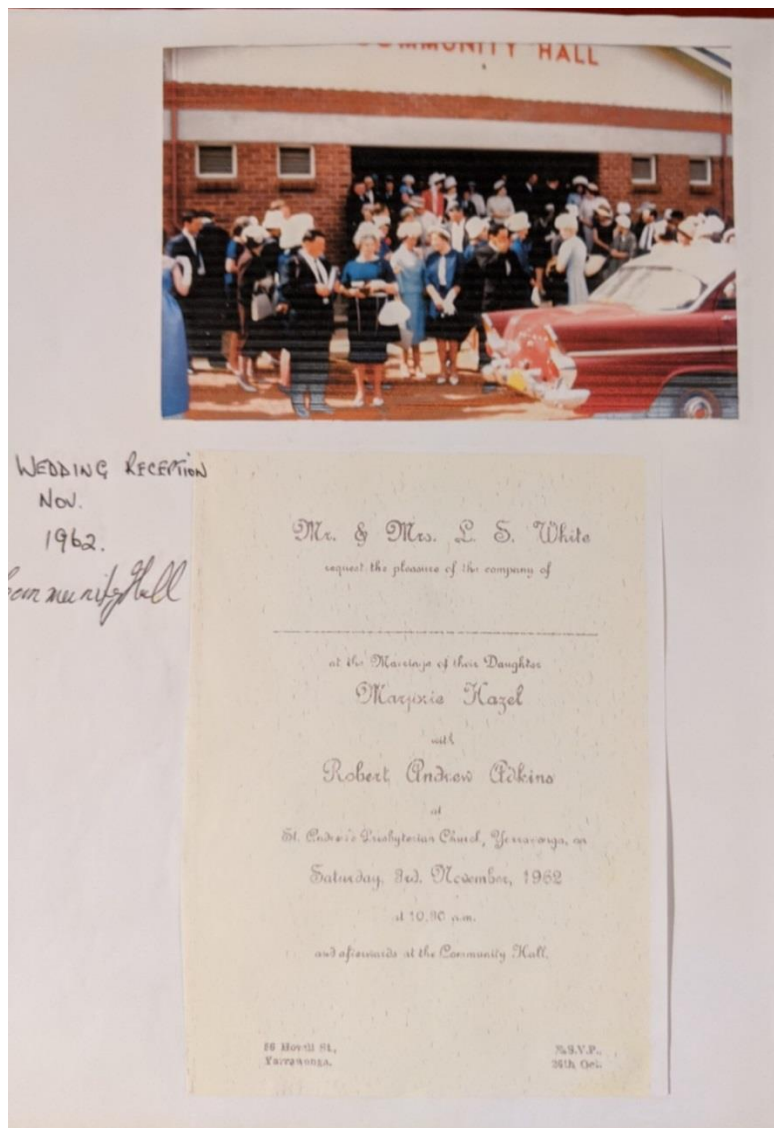
The Community Hall was built in 1958/59. There were regular dances on a Saturday night (probably monthly) which were great- local musicians provided the music- Hughie Ferguson, Noel Loughnan, Ralph Stone and Frank Poll & others. I met my husband at one of them.

When Balls were in the Shire Hall a sit down supper was provided in the Community Hall with 2 or 3 sittings – you were given a coloured ticket for your sitting on arrival at the ball – this all happened before Cabaret Balls came on the scene. There were lots of Wedding Receptions held in the hall including ours on 3rd November 1962.

Baby Shows were held in the Community Hall in the 1960's. High School Socials were held there each term during our kids High School years (late 70's early 80's).

Quilt Shows have been held in the hall too. Voting on Election Days. Blue Light Discos were also held in the hall in the 70's & 80's which our kids attended.

Marg Adkins 30.5.80



19. Bill Gleeson

MEMORIES OF YARRAWONGA COMMUNITY HALL

My love for the old building that the Moira Shire wants to destroy comes from my time working on the plumbing. Tuttle's were the plumbers and Oakley Brothers built the building. The cast iron sewage plumbing on the front of the building was a time before plastic pipes, as cast was made to last. (see photos)

Also dear to my heart was when I had my surprise 50th birthday in the Community Hall on 2nd July 1987 with over 100 family and friends packed in. I had no idea and was told it was another function I was going to on that night. It was a great time and the music was played by Nobby & Joy Cooper and another bloke. The musical instruments were piano accordion, saxophone, drums and the musicians were singers also. Everyone enjoyed the old time music and it was a great night.





“Gorilla-gram”



Also, the kitchen facilities were great and adequately served the purpose for catering for over 100 family & friends on the night.

In my opinion I cannot understand why they want to destroy a lovely building like this and how on earth are they going to organise parking for the new library that they propose to build there!!

Yours sincerely,

BILL GLEESON (former Plumber for Bill Tuttle Plumbing)

20. Trevor Lagstrom

Some 20 years ago I had a term as President of the Garden Club.

As the clubrooms were too small for the event, the annual Garden Show was held in the Town Hall and Supper room (Community Hall). It was a major event on Yarrawonga's calendar, and one of Victoria's leading garden events.

At the time, Brian Payne was the club's Show Manager and a leading exhibitor. Both Town hall and Community Hall were used for the Garden Shows. I have the brochures that show these events.

They were two-day events:

18/19 March 2000
28/19 October 2000
17/18 March 2001
27/28 October 2001
16/17 March 2002
22/23 March 2003

IN THE CENTENARY BOOKLET OF THE GARDEN CLUB 1893 - 1993
SHOWS THE FIRST AUTUMN SHOW HELD IN SHIRE HALL ON MARCH 18TH, 1937

I also have a brochure on the Yarrawonga & District Horticultural Society holding a Spring Show on Friday October 22nd, 1976 which had a record 432 entries.

Hoping this information is helpful in supporting the Heritage Listing of the Town and Community Halls as entries for the Flower Shows come from a wide area, as do the visitors who come from far afield to see the magnificent blooms, floral arrangements, plants and produce.

Trevor Lagstrom

21. Betty Seymour

Recollections of Betty Seymour

Betty Seymour is a long standing and very successful exhibitor of the Yarrawonga Garden Club and remembers all the flower shows that have been in the Town & Community Halls. Especially of note it the 100th Anniversary Spring Flower Show and Garden Competition.

Betty's husband was a football coach with the Yarrawonga "Pigeons" and she attended many balls at the Town and Community Halls organized by the Yarrawonga Football Club, including the Premiership Ball 19th October, 1959 and the Centenary Ball on 13th August 1983. Betty's husband Frank was Player and Coach of the "Pigeons" in 1959. Betty recalls that Lou Richards attended the Centenary Ball held at the Shire Hall. Invitations/tickets attached.

She remembers the Sportsman's Dinner held in the Community Hall on 31st July 1972 when the Football Ladies were catering for a packed hall. Lou Richards & Jack Dyer came out into the kitchen to thank the ladies for their efforts.

22. Jenny Powell

I was an original member of the Allegro Theatre Company and was part of the first production of "Trial by Jury" in 1978.

I was also a member of the Yarrawonga Arts Council and attended many shows. The highlight was attending the performance of the Nutcracker by the Queensland Ballet in the Shire Hall. I attended many Balls in the 1970's and 1980's – especially the ones organized by Jaycees.

As a Yarrawonga Primary School teacher there were Bush Dances for the Primary School held in the Shire Hall which were enjoyed by families.

In the 1970's there were also movies in the Shire Hall.

Wedding receptions, some Baby shows, many Blue Light Disco's on Friday nights run by the local Police. Both halls held immunization sessions, but they were mainly in the Community Hall for children.

The Community Hall was the venue for end of term school dances and socials in the 60's.

The Community Hall was built to be part of the facilities at the Shire Hall to serve the needs of the Shire Hall. Both Halls work together and need to be maintained as community facilities.

Jenny Powell – a former Yarrawonga Arts Council President, Inaugural Allegro Theatre Co Member.

23. Graeme Stephens

In December 1958 tenders were called to build a new Community Hall with a kitchen to service both halls and the plans were designed by Jack Dempsey. Oakley Bros were the builders and the huge foundations were dug by hand by Bill Taylor and one other, with picks and shovels. It took 3 days to fill the foundations with 2 concrete mixers and barrows. There were 2 teams working from 6am to 3pm or 8am to 5pm.

The Community Hall is a double brick building. It was possible to walk in the trenches as were 'above the knees deep' approximately 2 ft. 6 inches wide.

The floor joists are of red gum and are 5 x 2 inches in size (normal are 4 x 2 inches), as they knew it was going to be used for dancing. The Flooring is KD (kiln dried) hardwood and thicker than normal – 21/23 mm thick. Hence the floor does not move and is a delight to dance on. The concrete for the building used Rutherglen gravel which is white, hence the colour of the concrete. There is a chip in the front step that occurred when it was built which remains. To build the roof there were 2 guys at the bottom passing materials up to the 3 on the roof. I believe the roof is pitched but not trussed.

The plans for the removal of the Community Hall and replacement with a Library shows no vision in planning. There would be no light, no views from the building, little green space and no parking.

24. Paula Whitty (Ballet Student 1982-1988)

I have fond memories of my final ballet concert in the Town Hall in 1988. Kerry Gutteridge returned to Yarrawonga to perform as a guest artist, bringing real magic and class to the night. We used the change rooms off stage in the Town Hall complete with makeup mirrors framed in lights to warm up.. It was such a magical experience to be able to perform on a large stage in front of an audience in the Town Hall. It was one of the highlights of my years growing up doing ballet.

I was also fortunate enough to have made my debut at the Town Hall in 1990 with Sacred Heart College. Val Clancy was our patient dance instructor who guided us through our routines in the lead up at the Hall. On the night we entered from the stage before being presented in front of friends and family. The grandeur of the Hall added to the formality and its age impressed the significance of the evening as we recalled debutante's of bygone years.

It is so important to have a dedicated space where people can explore their artistic side and share their love and passion with the community.

Paula Whitty (nee Cummins)
Ballet Student of Judy Gutteridge



Matilda Rooney to the left, Judy Gutteridge & Paula Cummins

Penny Gutteridge:

That last concert in 1988 was "The Christmas That Nearly Wasn't"- a story ballet written by Mum and I, and choreographed by Mum, Kerry and I.

Kerry was back from the UK for her wedding. Paula was a Senior that year and would have used the Shire Hall dressing rooms. The juniors - that year we had from age 3 to 10 in the juniors - they used the Community Hall as a dressing room. Because most of the school were in the story ballet which was Act 2, they would have waited backstage for their cues to perform. Warm up that year took place onstage for the seniors.

25. Penny Gutteridge

YARRAWONGA COMMUNITY HALL

The Yarrawonga Community Hall has served an important role in supporting the Arts, and as a venue for temporary community services within Yarrawonga for many years. It is a venue that works well because it is an independent building and has its own kitchen and rest rooms. It does not require access via a separate building. It is a good size that suits dance classes, community meetings, and small functions that would be lost in the larger (and colder) Shire Hall.

It is the last of a set of three buildings built in the 1960s to serve the community of Yarrawonga. The Pre-School, and Mother and Baby Clinic were demolished earlier this year (2020).

I do not believe that the loss of the Community Hall will be able to be recompensed in the design of the new library. There is no definite space in the new library that is large enough for the uses that the Community Hall provides for today.

My earliest memory of the Community Hall was going with mum to her ballet classes in the 1960's, which were taught by Mr Shevlugin. I was a toddler and would be allowed to join in the class, or I could play quietly on the little stage area that used to be at the northern end of the hall. Later on Mum took over the School from Mr Shevlugin and took classes also in this venue until she acquired her own studio in the old Shire Offices in Belmore Street.

However, the Community Hall was used often in our world of Ballet.



Each year it would serve as a dressing room for the juniors for the annual concert, and after the concert, it would be the supper room with long trestle tables down the centre of the room. It was used sometimes for the annual ballet exams – the kitchen serving as change and waiting room for the examination in the main hall.

Visiting professional modern dance company, Danceworks, from Melbourne gave Modern Dance classes to local dance students there as part of their Victorian tour in 1987.

Other cultural users were Mrs Ralph's choir recitals in the 1970s, and the Childrens' Book Week displays were held there as well during the 1970s. There were Brownie and Girl Guide craft stalls, Ballroom dancing lessons, and I remember having my AMEB piano exams in the Community Hall. The hall was also a venue for external exhibitions such as model railways, antiques, and craft.

The Yarrawonga High School socials were held there – I think The Edge of Sound was the band in 1976, and it was used as a supper room for the B&S Ball in 1988.(photo)



I have been to wedding receptions, 21sts and engagement parties there. I have been to 60th and 80th birthday afternoon teas and celebrations. The fact is that the building has witnessed many milestones in the Community at large, and is regarded with affection by many.

On a different vein, vaccinations were given there.

More recently, it has been used for rehearsals for Allegro productions and as a polling station for local, state and federal elections. It has served as a venue for Community meetings to debate matters of concern to the town.

My brothers all remember it being used for the ballet school concert suppers – very important (if not the most important) part of the evening!

One brother remembers a sex education class being held there in his High School days.

The Yarrawonga Community Hall has certainly played a huge part of my life growing up in Yarrawonga until I left for university in the late 1980's. I think it would be a great pity if its contribution to the community was not recognized, and it suffers the same fate as the much loved Pre School, and the Maternity Clinic.

Afterthought: This could happen as Moira Council has largely left the building to its own devices. It is not cleaned regularly as is the Shire Hall. Those that hire the Community Hall have generally kept up the cleaning.

Penny Gutteridge

May 2020

26. Ilba Prosser & Beryl Ledger – Community Hall

Community Hall Uses.

At least - 1979-80

? 40 years ago - Good quality Furniture Auctions were held Monthly by Keith McPhail, Auctioneer Des O'Meara.

Last approx 20 years - Ballroom Dance Weekend held - catering Fri & Sat nights, & Sunday lunch for 200 odd people. Several Service Groups & Charities have had this task, raising funds for our own community & charities as well as

Allegro Theatre - Have used Community Hall for rehearsals as well as cast changing areas etc.
= "The Green Room"

Crafts & Quilt Shows were also held there on occasions.

I attended a National Party Meeting in 1990's (after 96).
The Community Hall is important to the people of Yarrawonga now and always.

Notes from.

BERYL LEDGER

ILBA PROSSER

Ilba Prosser

27. Jennifer Hammon

To Whom it may Concern -Recollections of my attendance for various organisations in the Community Hall, Orr St., Yarrowonga, August 2020

Country Women's Association:

Two State Competitions have been held in the Town Hall, in October 2002 and 2011. With each competition, over 200 women attended either as audience or participants, from all over Victoria. Some spend months in practise and costume design to wonderful effect.

For meal breaks, either morning tea, lunch or afternoon tea, the Community Hall was filled with women, cups of tea, sandwiches, cakes and lots of chatter. We could not have held this event without the facilities of the Community Hall.

More recently, and for the last 6 years, our local Branch of the CWA has catered for the Northern Suburbs Hot Rod Women's Gala High Tea, once again with delicious morsels, sandwiches etc. They have loved coming here to be treated to this wonderful afternoon, and participate in various competitions / games /raffles, whilst their men folk polish their cars ready for the parade down the main street. We catered for 120 women from the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

Allegro

Allegro, our local theatre production group, started in the late 1970's. I have been in several productions and found that the change rooms, in the Town Hall rather cramped for many of these nights. However when Allegro staged The Sound of Music, with a huge cast, we had to commandeer the Community Hall. If you can imagine 20 nuns, the Von Trapp Family plus soldiers, an uncle etc... it was very necessary to have the space. The cast worked well together, with changes of clothes and make-up all handled in this hall. Regional attendance was evident and the theatre group won several awards for their efforts.

Choirs

Singing Workshops for choirs have been held in the Town Hall. The first year 2018, with Jonathan Welsh and the Choir of Hard Knocks. The following year further choirs attended with different presenters and gained much information on technique and production. Once again, the Community Hall came in to its own as a most suitable venue to feed The Choir of Hard Knocks by the local CWA. It was most useful for the various choirs to dress for their performances for the Saturday evening concert.

Community Functions

Finally, the Community Hall has been the venue used to conduct many meetings, especially when the public was asked to review the reasons to move to a P – 12 School, from the previous Primary site and Secondary site. Polling Booth, as well. In summary, I have found that the Community Hall has been used by a great number of people in our community from child minding (early education), wedding receptions, high tea venue, dances – monthly, as a super room for bigger dances held in the Town Hall, exam venue for secondary schools, injection sites for immunisation day and many more activities.

I have lived here since 1975 and have been involved in organising many community events including venues for Yarrowonga Adult Education, the Yarrowonga and Border Branch of the Country Women's Association, Red Cross and the local Ecumenical Choir. The Community Hall is a great venue and I believe has many years ahead as a great venue for all.

28. Submission by Jacqueline Crothers Moira Shire Councillor 2005-2007

The Yarrawonga Community Hall has played a prominent role in the lives of the residents of Yarrawonga for several generations. It is and has always been, first and foremost, as its name denotes, a “community” space. Yarrawonga was once rich in halls, that belonged to specific organizations or churches and not everyone was comfortable in the “others’ space”. The Community Hall is sizeable yet manageable, flexible, centrally located and most importantly non-denominational. It is a place rich in social capital where children from around the district, from every socio-economic and religious background have been able to come together to attend Ballet School and Karate School, to learn ballroom dancing and calisthenics, to display their art, watch interactive theatre, play with others and share experiences like gorging on ginger-fluff and jelly cakes when the supper tables were rolled out.

As those children have grown the Community Hall continues to cater to their needs. It was a safe space in which to attend Blue Light Discos and school socials, a comfortable place in which to sit external exams. We attended 21st birthdays, engagement parties and wedding breakfasts, catered by the Guide Ladies, The Lions’ Ladies and the Catholic Mothers’ Association. It has been a place where friendships have formed as women new to the district and old volunteer their time, skills and produce to support community causes. It has been a place where people have learned the value and seen the fruits of Community Service.

The Shire Hall is a magnificent structure. It is a building of which every resident is proud and by which every visitor impressed. It was built at a time when grand structures were seen to be the jewel in the crown of successful communities. It is the perfect place in which to hang memorials in gold leaf to the forefathers of the town, or events that draw large crowds, but for a significant number of events and occasions, unsuitable: it is elegant, capacious and hollow. It lacks the intimacy and authenticity of the Community Hall. We’ve all put on our best bib and tucker and attended gala events under those inexplicable chandeliers but it is the Community Hall that is the place where, in particular the women and children of this town, explored new skills, discovered and exhibited new talents and found each other. They still do so.

The people of Yarrawonga continue to need our Community Hall: it ticks the boxes; it is an accessible, sizable, manageable, flexible and acoustically excellent space. It is a place woven into the fabric of our community.

29. Recollection - Joe Dixon.

Joe Dixon is a Life Member of both Apex and the Yarrawonga Football and Netball Club. Joe remembers many functions in both the Shire (Town) and Community Halls. He was an active sportsman and remembers Basketball being played in the Shire Hall in 1959 (previously it had been in Boag’s Woolshed) and the fittings and floor getting damaged. The hall was not as wide as a normal basketball court, so there was heavy traffic on a small area. Play at the Shire Hall was eventually banned and was played outdoors until the ECA centre at the Yarrawonga Secondary College was built.

Joe believes the Sportman's Dinner flyer with Bob Skilton attending on 6th November & year unknown was probably in the 1970's, as Joe was also a Number 21 (at Benalla) as was Bob Skilton, who played for South Melbourne & won 3 Brownlow Medals.

The Yarrawonga Football Club held a presentation and Ball each season – usually in July and held at the Shire Hall until 1996 when the “Clubrooms” at JC Lowe Oval became the site for celebrations. The Invitation for the first Ovens & Murray Premiership Ball in 1959 in which Joe Dixon & Frank Seymour were part of the team is attached under Balls and provided by Betty Seymour (Frank's widow). See the Yarrawonga Chronicle report from October 1959. Ovens & Murray President Clem Hill was the Official Guest.

The 50th Anniversary Ball was held on 28/8/79 at the Shire Hall and Clever Button (Ovens & Murray Treasurer and former President) was an official guest, along with Marty McDonnell (coach from 52-54 and player . Yarrawonga had joined the Ovens and Murray in 1929. The Cabaret Balls were BYO alcohol and catered for by the “Witt St. Warriors” – Barry & Maureen Norman and friends who used the Community Hall and kitchen to provide the meals including a pig on a spit and Joe Crothers in charge of the bar.

The Yarrawonga Football Club Centenary Ball in 1983 was held at the Shire & Community Halls with Joe Dixon as a Member of the Board of the Ovens and Murray (in his 5th year) who acted as MC for the evening. Again Clever Button from Albury was on the official table, with Ken Jasper MLA and Lou Richards. Usually there were 26 tables of 10 people in the Shire Hall.

Joe remembers the Apex Wine Tastings in the Community Hall where “Old Man Brown” from Brown Bros. Winery introduced each wine. He particularly remembers the Petit White Frontenac! He also recalls the after the Apexiannes Meetings get together including Mary McDonald, Judy Dixon, Nancy Wright, Bronwyn Lloyd and Aileen Mitchell having a sing song on the piano until 4 pm in the morning. Rex Wright would get out of bed to check on them & go home reassured that all was well.

The Apex Cabaret Balls were great evenings, particularly those that were dress ups; notably the one that would no longer be considered appropriate – “The Black & White Minstrel Show”.

On December 3rd 1979 Joe organized the first Australian Bush Poetry recital by drover Jack McCarthy aged 79. The Community Hall was decorated with gum leaves, hay and a mock fire. Advertising Poster, Tape and discs of the recital are available (recorded by John Barnes- a member of Rotary and a community minded man). His first recital when for 2 hours straight. At his second recital on 2nd March 1980 he also told his stories. The Community Hall was packed for both recitals. Jack had lived at 18 Hunt St and Joe nearby and had heard him tell his stories in the 1950's and 60's.

Joe also remembers the Community Hall being used for many private functions such as weddings, 21st and Birthday celebrations.

3rd August 2020.

30. Recollection – Joan Thom

When I came to Yarrawonga in 1973 I became a guide leader during the time of Terry Lyons firstly and then Dawne Judd as District leaders. Morrie Montrose preceded Terry. In those times there was a strong Local Association of parents who supported the units financially. As a leader my efforts went into running the meetings for the girls. All the mothers and fathers involved them selves in the fundraisers the focus of which was raising money for the building of a new Guide hall. At one stage Dawne was President of LA. Kaye Forge, was in there too. Joan Selby was the Christmas cake and pudding cook. There were others I can recall who have either passed on or moved from the district.

There is an event in the Shire Hall that I do remember. They were the annual Christmas Festive Fairs started by Morrie Montrose in 1966 and going into the mid 70's. Each year the shire hall was arrayed with Christmas trees, table centres and decorations. A huge number of homemade Christmas cakes and puddings were sold along with toys and gifts donated by local businesses. Santa Claus arrived during the afternoon. The Christmas tree, table centre and card competitions were very well supported by businesses and the community groups. Though the main purpose was to raise funds for a new Guide Hall, the Festive Fairs were wonderful occasions which brought the Yarrawonga community together before Christmas.

I have a book of paper cuttings relevant to Guides which have references to the Shire Hall before my time. According to the Chronicle of June 29 1967 the Girl Guides conducted an antique exhibition of silver and chinaware, a children's nursery, a costume display and a display of antique firearms!

Another event of note was a Revue arranged by the Yarrawonga Guides and Brownies held in the Shire hall and reported in the Yarrawonga Mercury and Tungamah Express December 2nd 1932. The programme was amazing with an orchestra, dancing, marching, calisthenics, singing and acting, all provided by the Guides and Brownies. Copy of the articles attached..

A memory that I do have is attending the Community Hall for the quarterly visits of the Red Cross Mobile Blood bank. My first donation was in 1976, however I cannot remember how many years it was before moving to the High School. It was conducted in the evening after the team had set up beds and donation stations during the afternoon. Trained volunteers took blood, overseen by one of the local doctors. The ladies of the Yarrawonga Red Cross Auxiliary provided refreshments for the donors during the evening. They also provided a supper of sandwiches and cream cakes for the volunteers after everything had been packed away around 10 pm. My mother in law was one of the Red Cross ladies. I remember blood bank as being a great social time and looked forward to it as being the place to catch up with friends, especially the young farmers from the district.

During the past twenty years I have also been worked on many State and Federal elections as an ordinary or Declaration Vote Officer in both the Shire and Community Halls. Both provide plenty of space to allow members of the public to move around and vote independently. I enjoy election time as it provides a connection with many people I know and some I rarely see otherwise.

I hope that my few paragraphs are of help to you. As Yarrawonga only has one heritage listed building, it would be great if all the work of your committee is rewarded in recognising both the Shire and Community Halls

With best wishes

Joan Thom

Guide Leader and Treasurer of Yarrawonga Mulwala Historical Society

31. John Connell

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in the regard to the Community Hall.

An important function for the hall is having the kitchen and space to allow catering for/in the main hall.

Local trade's people, built the hall in the 1950's, for the community. It is part of the history of Yarrawonga .

Too often we forget that we need to save our history for future generations, because once it has gone it can never be replaced.

I remember attending Auctions, Dances, Balls, Fundraiser for the Convent, Debutante Balls which were held in the Shire and the Community Hall. Often the function required the use of the Community Hall to "support" it, if it was not a "stand alone" event in the Community Hall.

Over the last few years, it has been disappointing to see that the building has lacked upkeep; I think with proper maintenance, it could serve the community well in the future and is important to the community of Yarrawonga and to the social history of rural Victoria.

Yours sincerely,

John Connell

32. Lorna Martin – Warrina Hostel

Loran remembers her daughters making their Deb with the Catholic Church at the Shire Hall.

The Shire Hall was also used for Concerts for both the Yarrawonga Primary School and the Secondary School.

As a parent the Scout Group catered for many weddings in the Community Hall, whilst the reception was often in the Shire Hall during the 1960's. The Community Hall was the new "Supper" room. They attended dances in both halls.

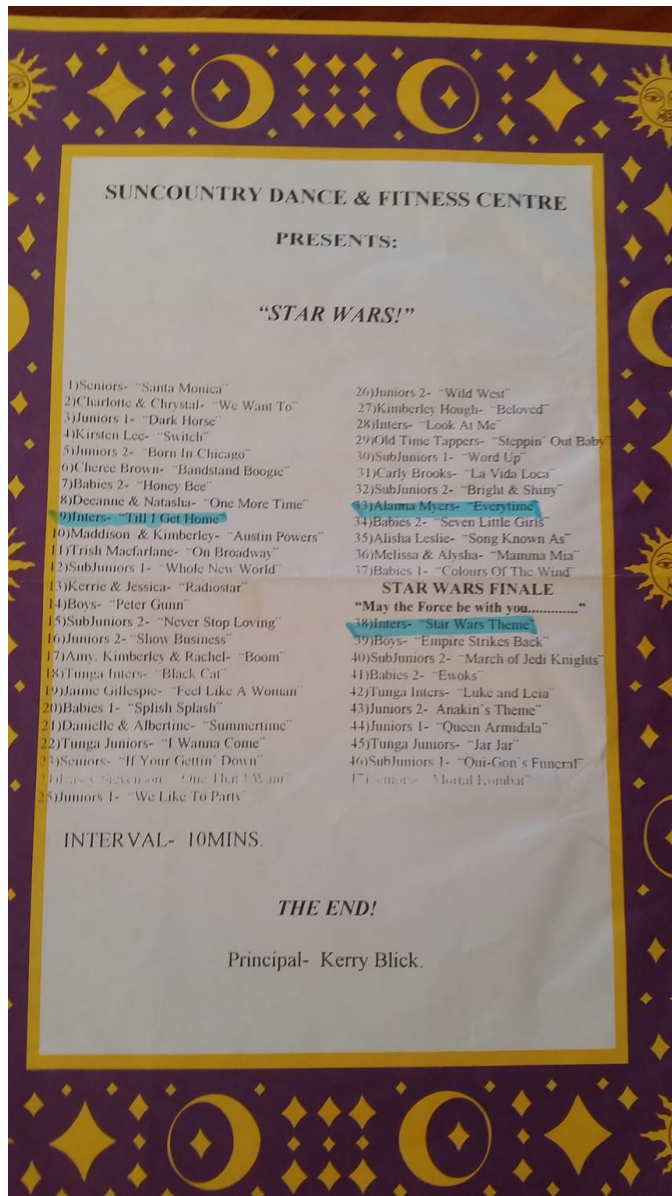
Lorna remembers the reception for Miss Victoria and Bev McFarlane's return outside the Shire Hall.

Lorna suggests that the new Library should be on the former Yarrawonga Primary School site and that the Town & Community Hall be upgraded so that the community can use these buildings.

33. Janine Myers - My association with the Community Hall in Yarrawonga.

Our daughter belonged to Sun Country Dance for eleven years, from 1994 to 2005. Belonging to a community dance group such as this is a bit like belonging to a sporting team. Discipline, work, concentration, physical fitness and flexibility, punctuality, self esteem, friendships and personal positive growth are all enhanced by participating in group activities.

The troupe practised at a private venue and used the both the Yarrawonga Town Hall and Community Hall twice a year for concerts.



The age range of females and males was between four and senior adults. I don't know the figures of the dancers involved except that in the year 2000 there were 95 participants and this was probably a typical number. This program shows forty seven dance items and that was a typical number.

The Town Hall has two extremely tiny dressing rooms beside the stage. These each accommodate a handful of people and any noise made in these rooms filters straight to the stage. I know this from many years as a teacher back stage at school concerts. Therefore Sun Country used the

Community Hall as a dressing room for the younger dancers. Each dancer would have between two and maybe 5 costume changes depending on how many solo items they performed. The atmosphere in the Community Hall was very like a scene from 'Strictly Ballroom', lots of hustle and bustle organising make up, hair and costumes! For every little dancer, a hovering parent. The noise from scores of excited and nervous youngsters talking and warming up was extraordinary, especially when those with tap shoes on began to practice! This photo shows a troupe up one end of the hall having a 'run through' while the other end contained everyone getting dressed.



I can't imagine how you could prepare for such a concert without a room such as this. The reason we coped with the small change room during school concerts was that students had one item only to perform and either came dressed, or teachers added costume 'bits' before it started. Sun Country performances were a different story, as the makeup and costume was always very professional. This was in keeping with the standard when the troupe or individual dancers performed at dance festivals and eisteddfods.

For any dance troupes now and in the future, a venue of this size, in addition to the main performing area is essential.

Janine Myers
bj3myers@gmail.com

34. Recollection – Kerry Seamer

I opened Suncountry dance in 1992 at the age of 17 years and still continue to run it 28 years later. I use the Town hall for Dance concerts and the Community hall works well as the dressing room area. For the first few years I held concerts in July and December but that changed once my family grew and ever since have only held the concerts annually in December. I have held 2 dance competitions there (both over 10years ago) and danced on the stage from a very young age.

Bev Marsh's dance school was called Sundance Academy (not Suncountry dance). I tried to get that business name originally as I thought it would be great to bring that back into the town after it had closed years earlier (things changed after her husband was killed). Bev did hold her concerts at the hall as well. A lady named Merrin Hand ran a Dance School in between Bev closing and mine opening which I attended. She also held her Dance concerts at the Shire Hall.

35. Joanie Seccull

Town & Community Hall Recollections

“I have wonderful memories of the Community Hall. The suppers were beautiful. Also, it was a pleasure to work in the kitchen for the Fire Brigade. The amenities in the kitchen were fantastic.

Also, Bill Gleeson’s Surprise 50th in 1987 was a wonderful celebration and it was great to catch up with so many friends and ex Yarrowonga people on the night. My daughter Amanda’s wedding reception was in the Community Hall on 16/11/88.

I also have very fond memories of going to Old Time Rock and Roll Dances and one time after a Rock & Roll Dance we had a Basket Ball Social the following night. The band was Hughie Ferguson & his band which also consisted of Snowy McLeod, Kevin Spencer and Noel Loughnan. These memories were in the 1950’s and 1960’s.

One particular great memory was attending the play “Dimboola”. It was just fantastic.

Also, I was an Usherette for the Grove Pictures in the Shire Hall when I was a teenager. I was born in 1940, so this was a long time ago. The Balls that I attended with my late husband in the Shire Hall were just wonderful.

It would be just terrible if the Community Hall was demolished.

Anyway, if the Library was to go ahead there, where would people park as the room for parking would be minimal?”

Thank you,

Joanie Seccull 0459 140940

36. Recollections: Community Hall & Pre-School

Jennie Dyson: 5/5/2020

I was speaking to Jennie Dyson yesterday. She fondly remembers the Community Hall when her children were in Pre-School. She said it was great for them to have a large space for activities, dance and games. She said that Donna kept the floor spotless. She said it was always gleaming and a great example of how well it responded to regular maintenance
Kate Adkins

37. Brian Keenan

Brian Keenan is a former Moira Shire Councillor. His father was Frank Keenan –former Shire President and Councillor of Yarrowonga Shire.

Brian remembers the Balls and Suppers held in the Shire and Community Halls. His wife Shirley was Belle of the Ball three times.

He was a frequent Blood Donor in the Community Hall. 76 times.

He believes the Town and Community Hall should remain and be better maintained and upgraded. Brian was instrumental in acquiring the chandeliers for the Town Hall.

38. Recollection of Pat O’Kane (Bricky’s Labourer)

I was a part time Bricky’s labourer in between shearing jobs for Tom Richards who was Contracted to Oakley Bros. to build the Community Hall. The sand for the mortar between the bricks came from Tungamah at a special sand bank as it was “fatty” sand.

I remember the Community Hall being the Supper Room for Dances/Balls in the Shire Hall with 1st, 2nd and third sittings. There was a guy on the door to check your tickets. There were many 21st birthday party’s including Geoff Long’s held there. Dances were held there every Saturday night – once 10 o’clock closing was introduced in hotels there was not many guys there until 10 pm.

Voting has been held in the Community Hall for State, Federal and Council elections since before 1977.

There was a Concert Group called “The Holloways” (a father, wife and son) Musicians who used to perform at the Shire Hall for the Blind Institute and tickets were sold through the schools.

I remember the many Balls held in the Shire Hall, as well as the pictures shown by Don Forbes and Harry Haebich – both in the Open Air Grove Theatre, inside the Grove Pictures and then inside the “new” Shire Hall.

I believe there is a need to both retain both the Town (Shire) Hall and Community Hall and improve them both for the future and make them more accessible with a caretaker for use by all people of Victoria.

39. Pam Rooney - (assistant Yarrowonga Pre-School Teacher) Part 1.

Yarrowonga Community Hall

a) Red Cross Blood Bank

For a long period of years the the community hall in Yarrowonga was used on a regular basis for the the Red Cross Blood Bank. On the evenings for this purpose there was always a big number of people donating blood. The hall would be set up with equipment and furniture by volunteers. A nursing team from the blood bank would arrive and organise and control the collection program. In those years many local people, young and old donated blood to this vital service. The use of the hall for this purpose finished (with disappointment from the local community) when the Red Cross Victoria changed their policy for the collection systems.

b) Blue Light Discos

Local primary and secondary schools from both Victoria and New South Wales combined with both state police services to run very successful discos in the community hall. The community hall had a good size dance floor, a kitchen with servery to provide the provision of snacks and drinks and secure toilets. The hall was an ideal venue providing a secure space for families to give children opportunity to adventure into the social world. The community hall was used for a long period for this purpose until the discos were taken over by the various clubs venues, situated in our border towns of Yarrowonga and Mulwala.

c) Dance Schools

Yarrowonga has always had dance schools representing various disciplines of dance. These dance schools have used and are still using the town facilities for concert performances. This involves the combination of the Shire Hall, with its concert stage and audience seating and the Community Hall for costume storage, costume changing plus the space for the performers waiting area. The linking of the two buildings for major events has long been an important cultural focus point. These concert performances at times have included the individual dance studios coming together to present major performances. Thereby cooperatively providing to our country community, exposure to a broad variety in dance history.

d) Callisthenics

The community hall was also used for junior callisthenics classes and combined with the shire hall for callisthenics competitions and concert presentation events.

e) Children Services Fete

An information and fund raising event, held in the community hall also using the garden of the adjoining preschool. The fete involved cake stalls, lucky dips, book displays and sales, morning tea and lunch refreshments. Play activities and painting for children with all activities provided by volunteers and early childhood staff. A lovely day of fine weather and the coming together of happy families.

f) Occasional Care - 1990's

At a time when there was no privately operated child care facilities in Yarrowonga. Community members associated with the Yarrowonga Preschool embarked on establishing an occasional care service for families with young children. The community hall was the perfect venue. Volunteers organised suitable equipment for the children to use in the hall and storage for the packing away of the equipment when the hall was being used for the many varied other purposes. A successful planned program then operated and continued until private childcare developed in the town.

g) Activity Group

In conjunction with the occasional care program was an activity program. This program provided for the children, a learning through movement education approach. A very active program with movement skills using equipment such as balls, hoops and interpretive dance with music. This movement program also presented concerts to families. Both the linking facilities (shire hall and community hall) provided the space required for these concert performances. Good memories for the children who participated.

h) Fundraising Quilts

Over the years volunteer members from the Yarrowonga Preschool and the Lake Mulwala Quilters club joined together to produce quilts for fund raising purposes. The community hall was the venue of these gatherings.

Photographs

e) (*Trish Hocking has photos of the Children Services Fete, some showing inside of the hall).

f) Occasional Care



Painting as part of the occasional care program

Children sitting together building with Duplo



g) Activity Group



Children sitting and standing on the small community hall stage and watching a dance performance.

g) Activity Group - Group Photographs 1991 and 1992



h) Quilts
One of the fundraising quilts



39. Part 2 Pam Rooney Community Hall being used for Occasional Care & Pre-School Group, plus Activity Group. 1991-2006



40. Recollection- Betty Jones (nee Weston)

Betty Weston came to Yarrawonga as a 13 or 14 year old at attended the Yarrawonga Elementary School (former Yarrawonga Primary School). Her father was a farmer at Goorambat and Betty was an only child. So, he moved to Yarrawonga when he was older and worked at the Mulwala Explosives factory.

Betty married Sterling Jones in 1952 and had her Wedding Breakfast was in the old Supper Room (the precursor to the Community Hall) which was "just perfect". The walls were decorated with palm branches made into arches! It looked wonderful as it was only a small gathering, as they were not a large family. Her Aunt Edith Saunders and other ladies did the catering. Edith's husband Harry worked on the steamers that went up and down the Murray River and used to dock on the "high banks".

Betty remembers fabulous concerts in the Shire Hall. In particular she remembers the Children's Fancy Dress Balls organized by Bill Brond who had a daughter the same age as Betty. She would have been in her early teens and her mother "made me a long dress out of mosquito netting" –she was so excited. The one I particularly remember is the one when WWII ended (? VP Day Ball) which was a bit like a Debutante Ball. The boys and girls came out onto the stage from each side & met in the middle and curtsied to a sign "Peace". The Bank Manager's wife was always organizing balls and concerts. She made everyone join in and the ladies all took part and it was full of fun.

Betty is definite that the Town and Community Halls should be saved with a Heritage Application and that the Community Hall should be retained for the future as a public building.

Betty Jones
Resident
Wood Point Aged Care.

41. Recollections of Nancy Wright (wife of former Mayor and Councillor of Moira Shire Rex Wright)

Nancy remembers the Balls that were held in the Shire Hall when she & Rex were courting. The suppers were 3 course meals held in the old "Supper Room" and there were a number of sittings, that lasted well into the early hours of the morning. During the "Ball Season" they would have attended every ball that occurred in the Shire Hall. There were 6-8 different groups that ran the balls as fundraisers for community groups.

Balls with full suppers changed to being Cabaret Balls, some were run by the Apex Club of which Rex became a Life Member , which required the Community Hall and Kitchen for preparation, but were served in the Shire Hall.

In the 60's & 70's there were lots of Dances in both the Shire & Community Halls, however, at that time I was busy looking after very young children.

I do, however, remember the Baby Shows held in the Community Hall.

Nancy Wright

42. Recollection of Susan Matthews (Textile Artist)

David and I were members of the Yarrawonga Arts Council. I was a Committee member from 1991 to about 2000/2001 and then David (husband) went on the Committee and we kept alternating for several years. Dianne Wiadrowski WAS the Arts Council for some time and Jenny Powell was a Committee Member during my time on the committee.

We remember many events held in the Shire Hall. We remember the visit of the Victorian Concert Orchestra (? in 1994) whilst Sue and Rob Dowdell were living in Yarrawonga (former members). Other things I remember are the "Talent Quests" organised by the Yarrawonga Arts Council; A Henry Szeps Show, The Rotary Art Shows (which disappeared before the early 1990's), John English's one man show.

In 2003 in association with the "Bandfest on the Murray" Lady Landy visited Yarrawonga and saw my textile designs (quilts). – see letters

An exhibition I helped run and organise in 2005 "Beyond the Border" was in association with the Yarrawonga Arts Council and in 2011 I had a large solo exhibition "Past & Present" (see flyer) in the Community Hall over 4 days, again that was run through the Yarrawonga Arts Council. I believe there was well over 200 people through the doors.

Best wishes with your Endeavours.

(see CV in Arts Council Section)

Ocean Grove

Victoria.

43. Memories of Yarrawonga Shire(Town) Hall & Community Halls.

Staff at the Yarrawonga P-12 College.

The Community Hall was the social hub for my generation with the very popular Blue Light Disco's being held there on a monthly basis.

Wedding receptions were also popular in the hall due to its ideal size and kitchen facilities.

Many events held at the larger Shire Hall were reliant on the Community Hall kitchen facilities conveniently located next door.

Over the years I remember donating blood to Blood bank and voting in public elections at the Community Hall.

One of my most vivid memories of the hall is attending a Poetry recital by Yarrawonga local Jack McCarthy, who was adored by generations of Yarrawonga locals.

Both my children attended 3 year old Kindergarten in the hall when it first commenced in Yarrawonga which was the ideal location as it abutted the Community Kindergarten.

The larger Shire Hall became more important as we got older as it hosted the popular Cabaret Balls, School concerts, School Award Ceremonies, Art Exhibitions, Allegro Theatre Productions, Antique auctions, the list is endless.

The Shire Hall of course is remembered by locals for its bell (when it used to chime on the hour) that rang out over the township.

Even in the age of google maps, the Shire Hall is still used to direct visitors to shops in Belmore Street (across the road from the Shire Hall, up the road from the Shire Hall towards the bridge, if you get to the Shire Hall you've gone too far, etc.)

It's amazing when you sit down to think of what both the halls means to locals, how many of our memories would not have been possible without them.

Sharon Powell (nee McQualter)

Sandy Lee can remember going to the school socials at the Community Hall. Great memories of dancing with the teachers.....Trish Barclay

Sandra Lee

Year 12 exams HSC. Plenty of nervous, anxious, calm, confident – and loved the conversations on the steps afterwards!!!

Bev Munro

From my perspective as a teenager growing up in Yarra the halls were significant hubs of our social lives. We had only 3 school terms per year and a school social was held in the Community Hall at the completion of each term. 'Edge of sound' was the only local band so they played quite frequently.

The Shire Hall was (and still is) eternally the venue for the Debutante Balls, but other balls and dances were held there as well.

Lynne Ferguson (nee Smale)

My memories of the Community hall are filled with dancing competitions and costumes when both my girls attending regular dance meets in that hall..or getting dressed in that hall to go on stage in the Town hall!! Also I used to always go there to vote until I could at the school....years ago when I was about 16 we used to go to old time waltzing Balls (which was a very DRY AFFAIR)at the Community hall back in the day...great for checking out the local talent!!!lol they were all good times....

Sharon Stevenson (nee Murphy)

44. Des Lonergan

Both the Shire Hall and the Community Hall were the home of the Saturday night dance in the Mid 60s which provided social outlets for young people 15 plus age group. This was the only form of entertainment in that era as the Picture Theatre had closed, age limits at the licensed clubs was 21 plus hence the dance was the social hub for those under that age. Bands came from wide and far-Shepparton, Wangaratta, Albury and some lesser known Melbourne Bands looking for an outlet for their music and to play in front of crowds. The Shire Hall was used only if a prior booking for a wedding, party etc took precedence. Shire Hall also used for "Big Holiday" crowds. In that respect the Community Hall was an important building in that it was a place young people could meet, form relationships and take that step into society.

Many people that one meets particularly who have/had Yarrawonga /Mulwala roots, reflect on the great times they had at the Yarrawonga dances. Many having met their life partners there, it can be a common thread of communication.

With two High Schools it was an opportunity for those students to meet socially as well as students from out of town boarding schools to re connect with friends. Many students went to Boarding Schools in Year 9 r 11 to Albury, Kilmore, Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat. The Community Hall was an important meeting place and the fact it was so central- with not everyone having a car it was generally accessible to all.

The Saturday night dances were so popular with both patrons and organisations a Yarrawonga Dance Committee was formed which allocated nights to the organisations. They also engaged the bands. Mr Bill White (dec'd) was the co ordinator- he was the Cellar master at Permewans(now Hunter's Hardware & Timber)) as it was then. Oscar Seccull (dec'd) was the doorman/ bouncer.

45. Jim and Dawne Judd.

Heritage Victoria

Application for Heritage Listing of Yarrawonga Town and Community Halls.

Memories of the Community Hall over 60 years.

From 1959 with the opening of the Community Hall it has proved to be just that, serving the people of Yarrawonga in many and varied ways.

Our early experiences were with wonderful Balls held on many Tuesday nights during winter. The Hall was used in conjunction with the Shire Hall for the serving of a splendid country supper. There would be 3-4 sittings starting at about 10.30pm. The older folk would go early to get tickets for the first sitting being not inclined to dance until 2am.

The Anglican and Catholic Balls were Debutante Balls held annually, along with Presbyterian, Agricultural, Firemans, Footballers, Apex and Jaycees Balls. The system worked well until the coming of Cabaret Balls. The kitchen in the Community Hall continued to be very necessary to prepare the supper to be taken in to the Shire Hall for the new format.

The Community Hall kitchen has been useful for fundraising for many organisations. In the late 60's & 70's the Girl Guide movement cooked dozens of Christmas Puddings there in conjunction with the Festive Fairs in the Shire Hall. These occasions were productive happy times fundraising for a Guide Hall.

Lamington Drives were assembled in the Hall for much needed funds for School and Pre-School.

Flower Shows held in the Shire Hall were a popular event and afternoon teas were set up in the community Hall. A pleasant finish to a day out.

The Anglican Community have memories of Ladies and Men's Dinners in the 60's & 70's and Parish Dinners for "Wells" planned giving launches. Much loved Priests were also farewelled in this period.

As our children grew many happy hours were spent in the Hall at dance classes. Dance concerts are still held in the Shire Hall but the Community Hall is still much needed to prepare the excited participants before going on stage.

Over the years "Deb" practice has been held there. Having two daughters involved it was a very special time for them. How fortunate to have somewhere to practice with a suitable floor and space.

Memorable occasions for us have been many but special times have been two 21st birthday parties in the form of Bush Dances in 1981 and 1983 – Wonderful gatherings of family and friends.

Many wedding receptions have been held in the Community Hall and we have had the pleasure of attending the Reception of Mary and Gerald Judd.

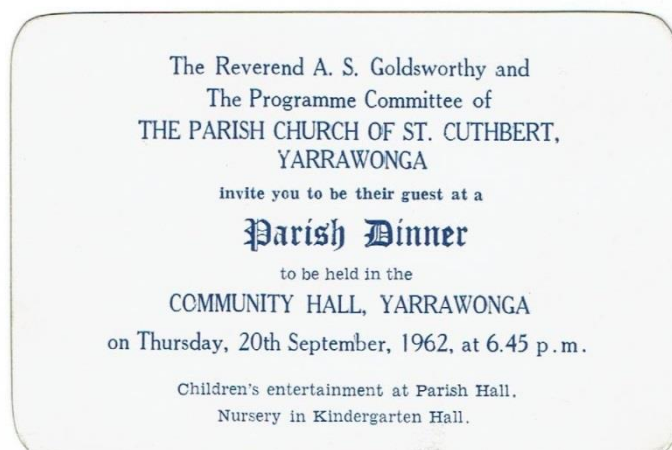
Blood Bank took place over many years and we were glad to have the opportunity to participate. The team came from Wangaratta bimonthly.

State and Federal elections were another reason to bring the community together on polling days and it continues today.

The Community Hall in it's own right and often in conjunction with the Shire Hall holds a special place in the hearts of many Yarrawonga citizens over 3 generations. The use of the Hall has been more extensive than the events mentioned.

Times of fun and togetherness remain with us.

Dawne & Howard (Jim) Judd O.A.M.



46. Barbara and Karl Schirmmeyer
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I learnt with much sadness that the little Ancillary Hall attached to the Town Hall may be demolished and a Library built. Whilst the Library is an important building to have in the town the Town Hall without the small Hall would not hold the same attraction.

I am speaking from the point of view as a annual Visitor to your Community. I along with approximately 100 dancers from Melbourne and at least another 100 dancers from other parts of Australia look forward each year to the Yarrowonga Dance Festival. A major part of this is catching up with the locals who over the years have become firm friends. At each dance (there are three in all during the weekend, two held in the Evenings and one during the day), the highlight I have to say are the suppers which are held in that little Ancillary Hall. This is the time we look forward to, this is the time we can really catch up and socialise with our friends. The Lionesses usually make a lovely warm supper with beautiful hot cups of tea and coffee, the atmosphere is wonderful, without this, I don't think the Dance Weekend would last much longer.

We are all fairly elderly people and most of us generally dance with our own partners. Even if we share, we can't really chat in a conducive manner.....the supper is when this can happen. The dancers visiting Yarrowonga that weekend not only aid the economy of the town, but quite a number stay on for the week and spend their money on extended accommodation, food, frequenting local Restaurants, the local R.S.L., the Golf Club, enjoy shopping at the local shops and visiting the Wineries.....it's a wonderful week.....but the attraction in the first place is the Dance at the Town Hall and supper at the little hall behind. I can't imagine how we could have one without the other.

I implore you to think twice about demolishing this gorgeous little cosy hall, it is a real asset to the Town Hall and the Community. I am sure other than the dance weekends there are many other functions this hall could be used for.

A LIBRARY CAN BE BUILT ANYWHERE.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara and Karl Schirmmeyer, 16 Newton Street, Ferntree Gully, 3156. Telephone
0408997495

47. Carole & Reg Crawford.

In the 1940's supper was provided in the Old Supper Room for Fancy Dress Balls held in the Shire Hall. During the 1950's Sacred Heart Convent use to run School Balls in the Shire Hall and the supper was in the Supper Room. My husband Reg used to attend these balls as well as Dances in the Community Hall in the early 1960's.

In the 1960's the Catholic Parish Hall was pulled down and the Church Sunday Dances were then held in the Community Hall.

Debutante Balls commenced for Sacred Heart in 1947 (or maybe earlier) and they were held in the Shire Hall. Supper was prepared and served in the Supper Room. Later on these Balls became Cabaret Style, but the Community Hall was used to prepare the food.

The Catholic Debutante Balls from 1979 – 1991 held training in the Shire Hall when Reg & I trained them weekly for 12 weeks. In later years they trained daily for 7 days in the school holidays, as many of the children went to boarding school in the latter years of High School, but wanted to be part of their local community for their Debut.

From 1987 until 1991 we trained Sacred Heart Students from Year 8 to 10 for the Sacred Heart Annual Social Ball. Supper for these balls was prepared in the Community Hall by the Sacred Heart Mothers Club.

During the 1970's and 80's the Catholic Mothers Club used to hold an Annual Casserole Luncheon in June or July for the Community. All the Community supported this venture. (the Anglican Church also used to use the Community Hall for their luncheons and dinners until they built their own hall.)

In the early 1980's to the mid 1980's Blue Light Disco's were held in the Community Hall. Reg and I were involved for one year to raise funds to purchase jumpers for Mulwala Junior Footballers. We were paid \$200 to man the door. There were other fundraisers as well for local charities.

During 1994-95 Reg and I were involved in fundraising for SIDS – running Sash balls in the Bendigo, Kerang and North East communities. We held the final in the Yarrawonga Shire Hall. The supper was prepared in the Community Hall and served there as well.

The Sundance Academy run by Bev Marsh (& Dianne Wiadrowski) – from 1979 until 1991 Reg and I were involved in helping Bev with her Annual Concert in the Shire Hall as well as the Dress Rehearsals. The Community Hall was used for Costume Changes/change rooms as those in the Shire Hall were way too small to accommodate the large number of students and costumes required.

As a member of the Catholic Mothers Club, which later became the Parents & Friends we catered for Weddings, 21sts and other functions on a very regular basis during the 1970's, 80's & 90's which were held in the Community Hall. We would spend Friday setting up, Saturday catering and Sunday cleaning up.

I remember attending immunizations in the Community Hall in the 1970's through to the 1990's and they may have been given there earlier than that. The Blood Bank was also a regular booking at the Community Hall and the Garden Club Flower Show was often held there too.

48. Carol Henderson

As a resident of Yarrawonga (33 years) but not yet a local! my memories of the Community Hall were first of child and adult Immunisations, advertised in the Yarrawonga Chronicle. Then, as a member of the Pre-School Committee the angst that there were not enough places for Pre-School children to attend before they were due to enroll for School in 1991. Thus, with the help of the Yarrawonga Shire we were able to get funding under the Occasional Care Programme to utilize the Community Hall next door (with some modifications) to ensure equitable pre-school education for all children. Otherwise it would have been the youngest that were not entitled to a pre-school time slot.

Following the pre-school years I attended School and Social functions in both the Shire and Community Halls. Callisthenic Classes and Concerts in 1990's which gave many young girls an opportunity to acquire acrobatic and dancing skills, as well as stage confidence that helps them into their teenage years to have self confidence.

What fabulous facilities for a country town! Flower Shows, school dances, lamington drives, election polling, balls, Anglican Deb Balls, and more recently Community Meetings, Kids Week – Kids Open Play and Family Support Expo - (just a great way for the ever increasing number of newcomers to find support services) most appropriate in the Community Hall rather than the Town Hall due its size and acoustics for noisy youngsters.

49. Recollection from Des Tuttle – Apprentice Plumber for Bill Tuttle Plumbing – Community Hall

Our family business was the Plumbing Contractor to complete the plumbing on the Community Hall. Bill Tuttle was my father (see photo of induction into Rotary). We also helped with the foundations. Some of our staff helped with the digging and concreting. We all helped wheel barrow load after barrow load of concrete onto the site.

Oakley Bros. were the building contractors. At the time Oakley's were the leading builders in Yarrawonga-Mulwala. (Yarrawonga Chronicle 17th February 1988) They would have built most of the new homes in the towns including prominent buildings such as the National Bank, Terry White Chemmart Chemist Shop, Hargraves Solicitors Office (now Canning Art Gallery & Toy Shop), they also rebuilt the Coles Building after the fire which became the second Hargraves Solicitors Offices (then Permewans Hardware, now Rivers and Yarrawonga Outdoors).

Bill Tuttle (Des's father) came to Yarrawonga from Shepparton to do the Plumbing on the Shire Hall after the builder went "broke." The Chappell's took over the completion of the Shire Hall and the Architect told Mr Bill Tuttle that he wanted him to complete the plumbing on the Shire Hall. Mr. Tuttle was at the time based in Shepparton and also played violin on his own & in bands. He played on South St. in Melbourne, the Shepparton Picture Theatre with the silent movies and went to a violin exam expecting to obtain a good result but was told "that he had better go back to plumbing." Bill played the Violin in the band for "The Sparklets" performance in the new Shire Hall in 1930.

Des Tuttle recalls that there was originally no toilets in the Shire (Town) Hall and that the old toilet block was on the Community Hall site. When sewerage was connected to the Shire Hall Tuttle Plumbers were asked to complete the works.

The Community Hall kitchen originally contained a big copper which was used to boil the coffee for the suppers. Des remembers installing the flue which went straight out the back wall and then vertical and he put it in the wrong place!. He thought it could be patched up with a bit of tin, but he was told that he had to take it out and put it back in the correct place and the bricklayers were called into to repair the damage.

I remember going to the Community Hall for Community Dances, Apex Meetings, supper for many balls, plays like “Dimboola”, voting and public meetings. I even remember the “Ugly Man Competition” held in the Shire Hall as a fundraiser in the 1960’s (including Bob Nevin!). The Apex Club began their balls with 2 bands & they played music continuously, however this was too expensive, so they changed to engaging only one band.

There were many fundraisers in both the Town Hall and Community Halls in the 1960’s & 70’s including Annual Festive Fairs where everyone had a stall. There were also the Annual Table Setting competitions – (see Girl Guide notes) they were all voluntary competitions as fundraisers.

The Community Hall is a well built building and with some maintenance and improvement it would serve Yarrawonga for many more years. The work would not cost as much to do as it would to replace!

* * * * *

References to W. Tuttle Plumbing are found in the Yarrawonga Chronicle May 23 1950 with an ad for Southern Cross Farm Engines; Bill & his wife Jess’s 50th Wedding Anniversary- 2nd April 1972 (Yarrawonga Chronicle 7/4/82)as well as a Clearing Sale for W. Tuttle and G. Stephens (building apprentice for Oakley Bros. of Community Hall.)

Des was part of the 1951 St. Cuthbert’s Anglican Church Debutante Set – being the only one that owned a Dinner Suit! (photo)

In June 1953 there was a Parade down the Main Street of Yarrawonga for Coronation Day. Attached picture of the “S.S. Murray Mud” the Yarrawonga Yacht Club Float outside the Yarrawonga Shire Hall. On board – S.T. Bowles Pty Ltd. Truck was Roy S. Bowles Driver, Graeme Burley, Barry Moon, Ken Williams, Keith Robinson, Basil Smith (History of Yarrawonga –written in the 1990’s) & Des Tuttle.



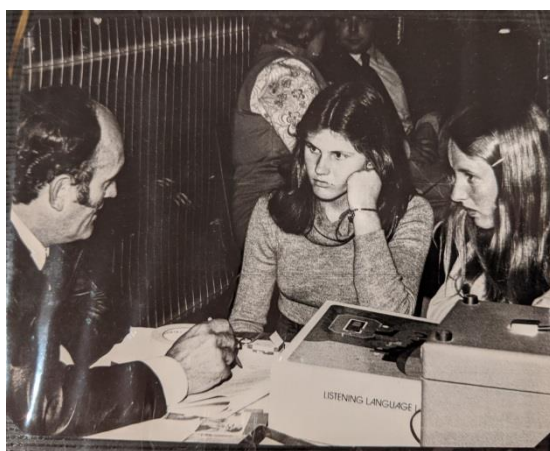
Des Tuttle was a member of community organisations as were the Oakley Bros- Norman and Gordon Builders of the Community Hall, Infant Welfare Centre and Pre-School (now demolished). See Yarrowonga Chronicle Articles re Paul Harris award for Rotary 7/7/97.

Des was President of Rotary in 1975/76 and was instrumental in organizing the Trade Fair of 25th/25th February 1977 which was in both the Shire & Community Halls and outside in the street held over 2 days. (see photos, Rotary Report, Y.C. 22/2/77).





He was also responsible as President for the Careers Night held in the Shire Hall (see photos & Y.C. 26/10/76). Which approximately 1000 young people attended with the guest speaker Mr. Paul Farrelly from the Commonwealth Careers & Reference Centre in Melbourne. The Trade Fairs and Career's night were an Annual event in the Shire Hall and attracted people from all over North East Victoria and southern NSW.



Rotary Film Matinee's – by John Barnes, Stan Victor & Harry Haebich in Shire Hall were important to the community - 20 matinees for the year & 2000 in attendance according to the Rotary Report for 1976/77.

The "Back to Yarrawonga" Celebration in 1968 culminated with 1000 people attending a ball in the Shire Hall. The four queens were on stage and Des Tuttle as M.C, was on stage needing to make "small talk" as Miss Wood (Miss Victoria) was to make a presentation and was running late! He was filling in time and somehow came out with the word Kotex instead of Kolotex.....but cannot remember the rest of the story! He does remember that Miss Dianne Ellis was "their" Queen.

Jenny Tuttle (wife of Des) nee Pickford

Remembers the Girl Guide table setting competitions in the Shire Hall with Dawn Judd judging the competition with her tape measure! Jenny also remembers the Baby Show's which were raising money for the Infant Welfare Centre. In approximately 1966 the show day was foggy, bitterly cold and Mrs. Audrey Wilkinson (Dr.) was the judge. So, she accepted that the babies would not need to be undressed for the judging!

Jenny remembers Auctions (one held in 1962) in the Shire Hall on a Thursday night where you took your unwanted wedding gifts etc and sold them and then purchased other items.

Jenny was also part of the early Yarrawonga Drama Club (Theatre) –see photo of her appearing in "One Wild Oat" with Eric Walker, Produced by Ken Billing – as a prostitute wearing Mrs. Olive Hargraves Mink Coat, which she was not allowed to throw onto the floor. Other members of the theatre company at that time were Bill Crothers, June Carmichel (Thompson).

Jenny remembers her daughters attending Judy Gutteridge's Ballet School which the girls loved. However, she also remembers that Judy was pedantic in her requirements for the girls dance costumes.

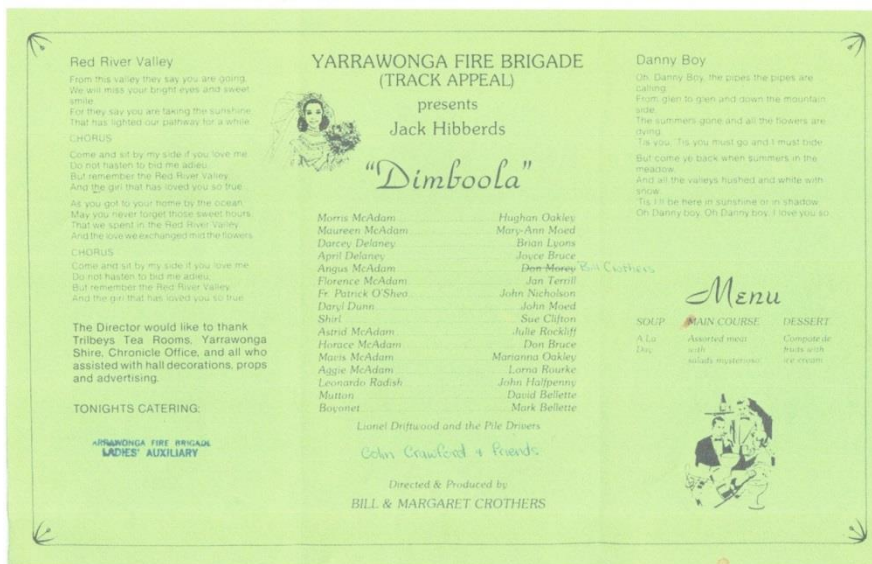
50. Bill Crothers

I joined the Yarrawonga Dramatic Society in 1955 at the age of 20, when they produced plays and pantomimes in the Shire Hall. When some new blood arrived in Town the name was changed to Yarrawonga Theatre Group to cover a more varied form of theatre. Some of the notable people were Ken Billing (Pharmacist) and Dick Gutteridge (Dentist) and his wife Judy who brought new ideas. This group was very successful until the advent of regional television when our audiences stayed home to watch this new wonder. I can't remember what year this was.

I joined the Corowa Theatre a year or two after that and stayed with them for some years. During that time I directed "Dimboola" in the Community Hall as a fundraiser for the Yarrawonga Fire Brigade in 197? .(see photocopy of programme) Some years later I returned to the Allegro Theatre company in Yarrawonga doing lots of shows including "Life of Brian" and "Vicar of Dibley" which was my swansong.

I remember working on the Yarrawonga Stage with Audrey Wilkinson, Eric Walker, and Peter Wood who had worked on the BBC with Robert Morley and James Robertson Justice.

I also remember Winifred Atwell performing at the Yarrawonga Shire Hall in the 1960's.



51. Lioness Club of Yarrowonga



LIONESS CLUB OF YARRAWONGA
P.O Box 22 Yarrowonga Vic 3730

President: Lesley Smith
Ph: 0437243318
Email: lesleysmith47@icloud.com

Secretary: Helen White
Ph: 0407521278
Email: flindgem@westnet.com.au

15 August 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The Yarrowonga Lioness Club is a regular user of our Town Hall, Community Hall, kitchen and all amenities. In the 40 years since our Club was formed and in our previous identity as Lions Ladies, we have used the precinct for a number of events. These include conventions, anniversaries, meetings and catering for other groups' activities. The set up is ideal for our purposes and suits a wide range of interest groups.

Principally we need both halls for gathering, preparing and serving food for a variety of functions. For twenty-six years we have used the whole precinct for our Biennial Craft Expo and since 2013 to cater for the annual Gala Ball when three dances are held over three days. These occasions result in achieving a large percentage of our fundraising proceeds each year. All money raised is donated to local, national and international charities. Our Club is committed to the care and preservation of these facilities, which provide an excellent venue for social activities in our community.

Yours faithfully

Helen White
Secretary

52. Marg Haebich

I have many happy memories of events I have attended and were held in the Community and Town Halls.

Kate Adkins (nee Runnells) held her 21st in the Community Hall on 20th September 1984. Her Wedding Reception was held in the Yarrawonga Shire Hall on 12th March 1988, which used the Community Hall for food preparation.

Pauline & Stephen Judd held their Wedding Reception in the Community Hall and used the kitchen for food preparation.

Linda Torpy held her Wedding Reception in the Shire Hall and the Community Hall kitchen was used for food preparation.

Geraldine O'Dwyer had her Reception in the Community Hall and used the kitchen for food preparation.

I remember my daughters attending Blue Light Disco's until they cost too much.

In 2002 The Sacred Heart Play Wizard of Oz used the Shire and Community Halls.

The Community Hall was used as the supper room for the 3 day dance festivals, as well as being used for Debutante Balls until the cost of hire became too much.

I attended the Moira Health Alliance Volunteers Thank You Luncheon held in the Town Hall which used the Kitchen and Community Hall for food preparation.

I also remember it being used as Occasional Care and Pre-School back in the 1990's, as Voting Site for Elections, being used as a venue for End of year dances for both the Yarrawonga High School (Secondary College) and Sacred Heart Heart College.

It is a valuable public building that needs to be retained for Community Use with the Town Hall and needs to be Heritage Listed and not demolished by Moira Shire Council.

(Marg Haebich is an ex nurse from Yarrawonga Health who founded "Friends in Common" to support families financially and practically who have or are suffering due to a diagnosis of Cancer.)

53. Tracey Schofield (nee Saunders)

During the 1970-80's I attended many School Disco's and Blue Light Discos held in the Community Hall. As children we attended the Community Hall with our mother;s for immunisations. In the early 1970's there were many dress up balls and dances that were very popular in both the Shire & Community Halls. Many were fundraisers and supported by local service clubs or volunteer organisations.

During the 1980's – I attended many engagement parties and Wedding functions in both the Shire and Community Halls. Not all of these would have been reported in the local newspaper as they were private functions. In fact, the Community Hall was used extensively for private celebrations for birthdays, engagements and weddings.

During the 1990's once the Community Hall was modified for use by the Pre-School my children attended Occasional Care in the Community Hall.

The Community Hall is a building that is of benefit to the public and supports the use of the Shire Hall and cannot be replaced by the proposed wrap around Library. It is part of our Heritage in Yarrawonga and needs to be retained and protected for future generations to use. Both the Shire and Community Hall need to be upgraded and maintained so that the Community will use them.

54. Trish Hocking

ACTORS, CHORISTERS, DANCERS, CRAFT MAKERS & THE GENERAL PUBLIC

NEED THE COMMUNITY HALL

In my chequered career of being an amateur dancer I have taken part in performances on stages in many and varied circumstances, the only purpose built stage for performance where there was a dressing room as I remember in my youth, was three times on the stage at St. Patrick's Hall in Wangaratta. Most stages provided in my youth were usually the tray of a large truck, backed into a shady spot at a local Agricultural Show or Athletics Carnival, the change rooms were usually your parents' car, the bus on which you travelled to the venue, public toilets if they were handy, or a tent erected near the stage.

I arrived in Yarrawonga in 2002 and straight away joined the Ladies Tap Dancing group at Mrs. Kerry Seamer's Dance Studio, where there was an annual concert of dancing held at the end of every year – performing on a full size stage, before a full house in the Yarrawonga Shire Hall. What a blast!

However the one drawback for these concerts was you could guarantee it would be a 'boiler' of a day and every one of the 150 dancers, had to take it in turns in their troupes to squeeze into the two very small dressing rooms for costume changes. It was organized chaos, people of all ages and sizes fighting for a small space and piles of costumes in the corners of both rooms or hanging from wherever there was something to hang from. Until in about 2006 Kerry, understanding how difficult it was for all, decided to pay for the hire of both the Shire Hall and the Community Hall on the day of the two concerts she presented, her Cobram and Yarrawonga Dance Studios. So that meant the Community Hall of 200 square metres was available for 300 dancers for costume changes over the duration of a day, together with the added bonus of the centre of the hall kept clear and able to be utilized as our warm up area. Add to that number of dancers who are mostly young children, are the mothers and helpers who assist all the younger dancers change costumes and keep their belongings tidy and safe.

The Community Hall has a purpose built wooden dance floor which has been prized by dance groups within the district for the whole of its lifetime. Ample toilet facilities are also within the hall, the ladies' toilet has a powder room area. Heating and cooling facilities were added to the hall in around 2000, which has been a huge bonus not available in the larger Shire Hall. From 2006 until the present time, as dancers we have been able to leave behind, the very hot, overcrowded backstage facilities of the Shire Hall and enjoy a spacious, cooled backstage area for all performers. Being part of the Sun Country Dance Studio concert had become all pleasure.

In all other venues I have danced in and around Yarrawonga, we have been ushered to toilets (nowhere to hang costumes) store rooms, (be careful of tearing clothes on rough edges) and even a scullery, the only spaces available in which to change into your costumes. The scullery proved to be the most novel change room but one had to be prepared for a sudden entry by staff working in the adjoining kitchen.

The Community hall was built in 1959 to replace an old outdated wooden building from the 1890's.

It was meant to and has faithfully served the community in many different forms. It has a commercial grade kitchen to cater for banquets, weddings and act as the supper room for Balls and events held in the Shire Hall, It is a smaller space meant to accommodate smaller community events e.g. community dances, Council and public meetings, immunization programs, Blood Bank, Karate lessons, all variety of dance lessons from Scottish and Irish dancing to Ballet, to being the available as a large 'spillover' space for events held in the Shire Hall as in Balls, the Allegro theatre for props and change rooms and also needed by the 1000 Voices choir as a 'green room.' The imminent threat of losing this valuable floor space is going to jeopardize the conduct of any further large scale events or the development of all local groups who have been able to rely on it being there for the last sixty one years.

Sited directly behind the Shire Hall in the full knowledge that it would be both a complementary space for the Shire Hall, its exterior was purposefully matched to the locally made red brick of the larger building, Lining up its front entrance with the entrance to the back stage of the Shire Hall, was 'not an accident.' At the top of the backstage stairs on the south side of the stage is a solid brick wall with doors for entry to the back stage area, a perfect sound barrier to nullify any backstage noise. Any future plans to alter the backstage entry from the south side of the Shire Hall to the north side, will not have the same 'sound barrier' protection that is afforded to the stage area for assembly and dressing rooms. Using the foyer of a Library is not going to make a successful assembly area for dancers, players or choristers. Having to use a Library reading room together with promised storeroom space is not in any way an ideal space to ask performers to use for their change rooms. In the event of the two venues operating at the same time, I find it hard to believe that performers for a Shire Hall event, will take precedence over Library members for the use of their Reading Room.

Yarrawonga is a vibrant rural community rich in pioneer history, part of which meant the local population would have had to provide most of its own entertainment until after the Second World War. And since 1929 the town had the facilities to accommodate these local performers and events. It is still producing young people within the community who go on to bigger and better things in the performance world. Losing the Community Hall will limit the opportunities available for diversity of performances enabling our young performers of the future to get the chance to develop stagecraft needed for performance. It will also deny the community a purpose built hall space for 'small hall' events, which are after many decades, regaining popularity in the Australian landscape of performance.

55. Teaghan Gibson

In 2011 I commenced work as a Classroom Music Teacher at Balwyn High School, a school renowned for it's large and successful Music Program. At this school I have worked to inspire students to engage in and continue their music studies through my role as Assistant Director of Music and a 1-term Secondment to Director of Music. In a school of 2100 students I am proud to say that 800 of those students learn an instrument at school or are part of our enormous ensembles program. In this role, I teach classroom music to students across all year levels, direct a Concert Band, accompany choirs, teach AMEB Music Theory and support the organisation of our Presentation Night each year, held at Hamer Hall in Melbourne with a 90-piece Symphony Orchestra comprising only students, a 600-piece massed choir comprising

Years 7 and 8 students and soloists. My role extends through organisation, running of singing rehearsals, accompaniment for rehearsals, and the audition process. This provides an experience for my students that I could have only dreamed of as I was growing up.

I have worked with the North Eastern Region (Melbourne) to conduct the 'Rookie Band' in a showcase of Music within the state of Victoria at Hamer Hall.

Within these roles and my daily work, I am advocate for the power of music in teaching us beauty, and stretching our brain to work in ways that other aspects of life cannot.

In 2016 I returned to university as a post-graduate to study a Masters in Instructional Leadership alongside my full time work, developing my capacity as an educational Leader and applying this to my setting as a Music Educator at Balwyn High School.

During my earlier University studies, I worked part time as a Piano teacher and accompanist to financially support my studies and the costs associated with living away from my family, in the city.

I am eternally grateful for the financial support of Allegro to enable me to achieve my dreams and work to inspire a love of the arts in young people every day.

56. Stan Ogilvy - Principal of Sacred Heart College 1982 - 1998

Val and I came to Yarrowonga in 1982. Taking over a school that had been controlled by the Parish Priest was a challenge. I had come from a school that was progressive and extremely professional. I wanted the kids to have the best education which would lead on to further education be it University or TAFE or an Apprenticeship.

We did a lot of work to find out where the school was lacking. We identified areas including dancing, music and drama. We then looked for facilities in the town. Dancing had stopped because of a behavior problem. I negotiated with the senior students and started dancing classes at Shire Hall and Community Halls. The facilities were great and the students were enthusiastic and well behaved. We used these facilities a lot.

The final end of year Dance was held in the Shire hall in conjunction with the Community Hall. Then we started Drama which was very popular. The students put on a play each year which was well attended by parents. (see copies of "Bats", "The Brothers Grim - Spectaculathon" programmes, "The Addams Family" Awards for Luke Doyle and Y. C.'s) Again we used both the Shire and Community Halls.

Some of our students went on and joined Allegro town Theatre Group. This group put on many performances to big crowds and continues to focus on theatre and musicals. Val, my wife was a member of this group for many years.

On considering change to the two halls previous activities sends an important message – we need to make sure the past is celebrated and the future creates more opportunities. Change is essential because it takes us to the next level.

The education of our young people is what creates the future - what we build is crucial in helping to understand and nurture the needs of that future.

Stan & Val Ogilvy

57. George O'Bryan.

George served for 26 years regularly cleaning both the Shire and Community Halls. He commenced in 1969 and retired in 1995 with the municipal restructure (see Yarrawonga Chronicle article) and the move from Yarrawonga Shire into Moira Shire for the town of Yarrawonga. The Halls were well looked after by both the Shire and George. He would like to see them both returned to the days of frequent use and being well maintained.

58. Lynne Elliott

My memories of the Community Hall and why it is important to maintain the Hall for the community.

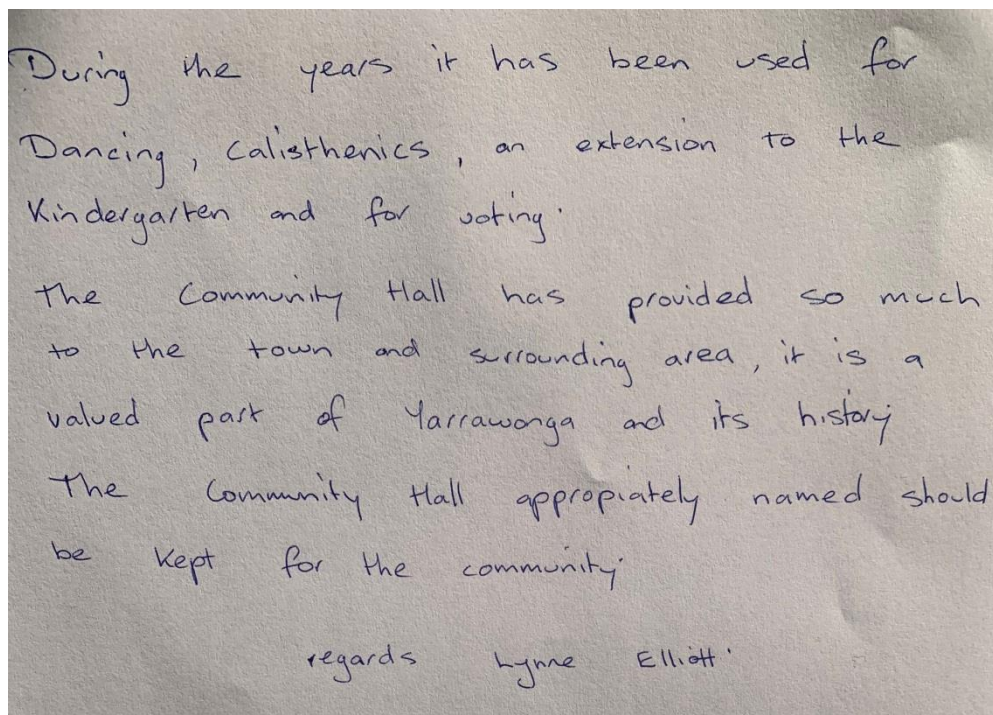
My name is Lynne Elliott (Davis) and I am a local born in Yarrawonga with all my family connections strongly entrenched in Yarrawonga.

The Community Hall has always been a good space. It is functional and works well in complementing the Shire Hall with its availability to a kitchen, toilets and generous room which not many small towns can now boast.

Providing suppers for Balls such as 'Deb Balls' and 'Gala Old Fashioned Dancers' which have a popular circuit in the country areas.

It also provides a space for Public Meetings and the room if required for changing costumes during allegro or other performances.

I have fond memories of holding a function there when I was an entrant in the Miss Australia Que. The Shire Hall too big and the community hall a more appropriate size for such a function.

A photograph of a handwritten note on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and discusses the history and value of the Community Hall in Yarrawonga. It mentions activities like dancing and calisthenics, its use as an extension to the kindergarten and for voting, and its status as a valued part of the town's history. The note is signed 'regards Lynne Elliott'.

59. Malcolm Browning

In the late 1950's Yarrawonga Shire decided to pull down the old "Supper Room" which had become a real "eye sore". At least 8 Balls were held in the Shire Hall each year mainly in the winter months.

The Community Hall was built and opened by Horrie Prescott, Shire President in 1959. My father Ron Browning from the Western Riding together with Bill Ryan and Les Forge represented the western riding. The opening was a very memorable evening. All the Councillors "dolloed up" in their suits.

Over the years I have attended many meetings in the Community Hall. Come to mind: Country Party (now Nationals) always had the local branch meetings; Murray Valley District Council Meetings in the Community Hall; Politician's at the time: George Moss State leader of the Country Party Upper House N.P.'s, Ian Swinburne and Keith Bradbury; Pre-Selection Meetings 'young' Bill Baxter won the Country Party nomination and became the MLA for Murray Valley and "the baby of the house." Latter on Ken Jasper won pre-selection and succeeded Bill Baxter. David Evans became MLC for North East Victoria.

On the Federal Country Party level we had Jack McEwan ("Black Jack") member for Echuca and then Murray occasionally came to Country Party Meetings in the Community Hall. He was Deputy Prime Minister and became Prime Minister when Harold Holt disappeared.

In 1961 Voting for the State Election was held in the community Hall. George Moss was a candidate and voting was for 12 hours then from 8 am to 8 pm. Very cold that day. Alistair Forge and I handing out "How to vote" cards. Then scrutineering at the vote count. Long, day 14 hours!

So, the Community Hall as had many attendees – of both local, state and nationwide significance, as well many and varied uses.

The Community Hall has been very handy for the tasty suppers during the Ball season. The Community Hall kitchen is very handy, with plenty of space and good cooking facilities. Some organisations hired the Community hall for Balls and dances. The Yarrawonga Footy Club had several Balls there. In the late 1950's legislation meant that people could take alcohol to a Ball – whew!

The age of the Disco – I attended many in the community Hall in a caretaking capacity raising funds for the local Scout Group. Many other groups benefitted and teenagers had a good time.

60. Barry Norman

49 Witt St Yarrawonga

0400271341

Just a short note on my experiences and association with the Yarrawonga Shire / Community hall complex and can be expanded on with some photos of our experiences

It started on the 28/1/1967 when Maureen and myself had our wedding reception in the community hall.

As our children grew myself and a neighbour ran the Yarrawonga / Mulwala Junior Basketball association in the Shire Hall.

Our 4 children made their Debuts in the shire hall. Each ball had a theme and the stage was set out to facilitate the theme. This enabled all the families to become involved in the preparation.

All my family had their wedding receptions in the Shire hall and we used the Community hall as a preparation area for these self catered wedding receptions

As the Witt St Caterers we did numerous weddings, 21sts, parties using the complex over a period of 18 years. We also catered for several Bucks & Does Balls in the complex using the shire Hall as the dancing area, the community hall as the preparation area , and a marquee was erected on the than vacant block to serve as the bar area. The final Bucks & Does ball was at Weygoods Truck Depot when we served 2200 meals.



The Witt St Caterers owned most of the equipment needed to run these functions but the community hall was critical to our successes as the facility had ovens, stainless steel benches & sinks, hot water, power, toilets and convenient access to the main hall

I must add that we catered in several halls throughout the Moira and Federation shires over the years and found the Community hall Yarrawonga to be user friendly, accessible, and fit for purpose

Barry Norman

1/5/2020



61. Michelle O'Meara

SHIRE HALL AND COMMUNITY HALL - YARRAWONGA

On 7th. July, 1966 my father, Des O'Meara, opened a stock and station and real estate company in Yarrawonga. Over the course of the next thirty years or so, our company utilised the Yarrawonga Town Hall and Community hall on many occasions for various work related activities.

1. Furniture Sales - were conducted on the first Thursday of every month for many years. People came from far and wide to attend these auctions. Auctions for deceased estates were often conducted which attracted many antique buyers, antique enthusiasts and private collectors. Our locals loved attending the auctions and on some occasions local clubs and organisations were known to have altered meeting dates as their members wanted to attend the monthly furniture auction. There was great frivolity and friendly banter between the auctioneers and the many regular attendees.
2. Property auctions - Large Rural properties being sold by auction were also held in both halls at various times over the years. These at times attracted interested parties from various parts of Victoria and New South Wales.
3. Information evenings - There were occasions when a proposed project or activity being conducted in the Yarrawonga area required information to be provided to the community and in turn input from the community sought and these were sometimes held in either of the local halls.
4. Social Functions - over the years there have been many weddings, engagement parties and twenty first birthday celebrations held in the community hall. Balls were a great source of enjoyment for the locals and many of these were held in the Town Hall with supper being served from the kitchen facilities of the community hall. The Catholic debutante ball was held in May every year and many local families attended these balls. My father was Master of Ceremony at these balls for many years introducing the debutantes and all three girls in my family made their debuts at these balls.
5. The Yarrawonga football club also had a yearly ball in the hall that again was attended by many locals. The Sacred Heart High School (which it was called in those years) conducted their yearly end of year dance in the Town Hall and the mothers club provided supper for these occasions again using the community hall kitchen facilities.
6. In 1979 our family held a surprise 30th. wedding anniversary party for our parents in the Community Hall which was attended by some 120 local friends and family members. Dinner was provided by the then Sacred Heart School mothers club. Mr. Jack McCarthy, a local drover, and a favourite identity of our area, attended and recited many of his poetry verses for which he was renowned for.

7. Theatre - The Allegro Theatre Company held many productions in the Town Hall over the years. These productions were a wonderful source of community effort by the Allegro Theatre Company members, family and friends to produce for the enjoyment of locals in our twin towns. Weekly rehearsals and weekend workshops were held for many months to prepare set building, design and construction, lighting and sound, costume preparation and musical orchestration which were just some of the tasks undertaken at the Hall to produce these productions. The Community hall was also used for costume storage and presentation and practice and warm up sessions prior to performances.

These are just some of the things that come to mind when asked to provide some recollections of the use of the two halls in our town over the years. I hope that they are of help.

Michelle O'Meara

62. Lyn & Neil Griffiths

SUBJECT: YARRRAWONGA SHIRE AND COMMUNITY HALLS

We would like to offer our experience with social activities held at both the above halls. Since we moved to Mulwala in 1981 we have attended many functions at these halls.

We have attended balls and dances for Debs, fund raisers, Christmas parties, ballroom dancing weekends, and afternoon tea dances. We have fond memories of attending the 50th Anniversary of the completion of the Yarrawonga Weir. This was held in 1989 and everyone dressed appropriately in the fashions of 1939.

Apart from the dances, we have attended many Allegro productions, musical presentations, movie nights, school concerts, dance class concerts, taekwondo demonstrations, etc, in one or other of the halls. We could go on and on.

What all these functions have in common is that those hiring the facilities have a choice of either or both halls, depending on the size and needs of the function. There are not many places where you have a beautiful Town Hall where a few hundred people can attend a ball and then instead of having to carry tables of food into the hall and put it on the dance floor, you have it set out ready in the Community Hall. After supper guests are then able to return to the Shire Hall to continue dancing or stay chatting in the Community Hall. I'm sure both halls would have been used for many of the activities listed above in a similar way.

If the Community Hall was not there, it would be a far less attractive option to hire out the Shire Hall for many events. The township could miss out on future events without the Community Hall as an additional option. Also we have been to many dances and musical presentations held in the Community Hall when a smaller venue was required. It's a great hall having its own kitchen and toilet facilities within the building. Also the acoustics in the hall for musical events are quite good, as witnessed recently by a capacity crowd at a world standard guitar concert.

It would be very short sighted to contemplate demolishing the Community Hall. What it needs is a little more advertising so that people who are new to town, or those touring the country with entertainment, actually know it's there for hire. No backwards steps please.

Lyn & Neil Griffiths

63. Wallace Bruce

Allegro Theatre Company.

Original member of Allegro Theatre Co and Member of the Section 86 Committee for Management of the Yarrawonga Town Hall Complex for Moira Shire.

Allegro Theatre Company was formed after "Trial by Jury" which was organized by Mary Helen Woods (Violin Player) and the cast which was mainly school teachers. Other initial members were Alistair Forge, Bernie Bott and John Halfpenny. Mary Helen Woods realized that a show required so much work, and that there needed to be others to help, so they planned Pirates of Penzance with both the original cast and newer members. Then they performed HMS Pinafore. Wallace was sent to organize the Hall for the performances and treated well by the Shire Of Yarrawonga.

Initially, shows were musicals held once a year, and then we branched into plays so held 2 shows per year.

Wallace recounts that Allegro took a bus to perform "Pirates" at Rutherglen & Cobram. The stages were much smaller than in Yarrawonga and there was no opportunity to rehearse on them. A Canadian Schoolteacher who was part of the cast had a drinking problem and in Rutherglen, when there was a change of scene during a "blackout" he fell over a block & let out a profanity that the entire audience heard...causing much mirth! He had to be quietened down on the bus returning home.

Wallace was the Secretary of Allegro and Musical Director for 3 or 4 shows and Directed about 6. It took 14 weeks to rehearse to put on a show. The early winter shows were before there were gas heaters in the Shire Hall.....it was very cold.

"Ma Baker's Tonic" was a "beauty".

Ecumenical Choir.

The Ecumenical Choir was formed from the 9 Lessons and Carols Service that was held at the St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church, Yarrawonga each Christmas. It was instigated by Fr. Tony Pearsal who was priest at St. Andrew's Mulwala. They started singing at a post Christmas (Epiphany) and Easter Service and then were called the Ecumenical Choir, mainly composed of Catholic Church ladies and they sang religious music. Their first concert was a stand alone concert for which they expected 60 people and charged \$5/head including afternoon tea (slices made by Lexie Bruce-Wallace's wife) and they ended up with 180 people. It was held at the Uniting Church Hall – people came in busloads.

Community Hall.

Wallace remembers the building of the Community Hall by the Oakley Bros. Especially Gordon Oakley. He remembers his mother commenting that "those little windows at the front – can't work out what they are for." (Toilets)

Oscar Secull was the doorman for the Suppers of the Balls that were held first in the "Old Supper Room" and then the community Hall under the coloured ticket system. No one entered with the wrong coloured ticket. Joyce McNulty made the coffee in the "copper urn" in the new Community Hall Kitchen for the suppers.

In the 1960's Audrey Wilkinson & Bill Brond brought left wing speakers to Yarrawonga in the Community Hall. Including: **Jim Cairns** (who became Federal Minister for Overseas Trade, Deputy Prime Minister & Treasurer in Federal Labor Party Government);

Bettina Arndt (sex therapist & gender issue commentator) who confronted the audience with “write down the name of that thing that is between your legs.” Wallace & numerous other gentlemen appeared to “blush”!

Shire Hall

21st November 1974 Farmers Protect Meeting attended by 600 Victorian and NSW Farmers to object to the treatment of farmers by the Federal Labour Government of Gough Whitlam. Wallace was Chairman of the local Yarrawonga Farmers Union and in this role chaired the meeting. There was an empty chair for, and an apology from Gough Whitlam. Written motions were submitted to the chair early in the meeting and amalgamated. Bruce Lloyd Member of House of Representatives for Murray was in attendance. Farmers came from 200 km away. Margot Bott (wife of Bill Bott) spoke.

Balls – During the Ball Season there was one every Tuesday night– the first was run by the Tennis Club at Easter and the last one in September by the Presbyterian’s.

Public Meeting for Casino at Chinaman’s Island - was chaired by Dr. Roger Montrose and Cr. Bill Brond was in attendance, Jane Bros (Bill & Bob) were on Stage. Wallace Bruce moved a motion not to allow the development by the Jane Bros. and it was seconded by Dot Crothers (first wife of Bill Crothers). In those days Yarrawonga Council listened to the people of the local community.

29/11/1980 Queensland Ballet (Victorian Arts Council) production of the “Nutcracker” – stated the the Yarrawonga Shire Hall had best stage outside Melbourne.

Moira Shire – Section 86 Committee

After the amalgamation of the Yarrawonga Shire into the Moira Shire a Section 86 Committee was established to run the Yarrawonga Town Hall Complex. Nominations were Shane McBurnie – Chairman; Wallace Bruce -Deputy Chairman; Don Bruce- Secretary; Mary Cooper and Chris Pinner.

Chris Pinner was a painter and did much voluntary work on the Shire Hall, including the restoration of the beautiful rose in the ceiling in the Shire Offices. Many years latter, someone allowed an air conditioning duct to be cut into it!

The floor was in a “shocking state” and Colin Bragg from the Moira Shire was most cooperative in getting it replaced with Tasmanian Hardwood (see Y.C. articles). At the same time the curtains were replaced on the stage and side windows. On 8th August 2007 there was an Open Day for the Community to see the new floor and curtains in the hall.

Originally the Hall had an orchestra pit, but it caused trouble and a removable cover was made. The Pit cover took up so much room when it was removed. To get into the pit you had to go down and under the stage and through a little door to enter; it was also very cold.

When the floor was replaced you could still use the orchestra pit, but it is covered with the new timber. The orchestra pit was used for a couple of Allegro Shows. Allegro dug out underneath the stage to make a storage area. The original chairs were in banks of flip up chairs and were stored in the orchestra pit.

The Section 86 Committee was “sacked” by Moira Shire in 2010 following an audit by the Shire reported “in camera”. The report was never released and Wallace took the decision to VCAT. The only error the Section 86 committee made was a decision made without a quorum at a meeting.

After the sacking of the Section 86 Committee, bookings of the Shire and Community Halls were through the Cobram Office and there were double bookings and issues with hall maintenance and cleaning.

64. Geoff Campbell

3 June 2020

To whom it may Concern

I commenced dancing in the Yarrawonga Community and Shire Halls as a schoolboy attending socials, progressing to teenage dances, my wife and I have continued dancing in Yarrawonga and surrounding area, even further afield NSW, ACT, SA and all over Victoria and we always compare the facilities to those in Yarrawonga and feel we have some of the best in our own town.

Dancing is a very important part of our life and the fact that our local dances attract people from all over Australia these dancers are always full of praise for our Dance floors and the facilities the town has to offer and as tourism is very important to the Yarrawonga's economy and these facilities must be maintained to ensure the tourism is continued, Dancing in Yarrawonga is very special to us

Over the years my wife and I have enjoyed many activities in the Community Hall including Weddings 21st Birthday parties and especially my Great Aunts Winnie Inchbold's 100th birthday , Poetry recitals like the Jack McCarthy recital , Jack was a renowned bush poet and on several occasions gave recitals to raise funds for the local Hospital in conjunction with the Apex club

Other activities that come to mind are fund raising Luncheons and dinners, Wine tastings, Wool Shows Public Meetings to form the Yarrawonga and District Rural Co-Op also Yarrawonga Credit union (Now call Central Murray Credit Union and a Save the passenger train meeting, Political rallies for Country party now know referred to as the National Party and no doubt other political parties held rallies, Children's school activities, bush dancing, school concerts and socials, children's and Adult Immunizations

We even once in the 1980's almost bought a farm at a land auction in the Community Hall

Blood Bank was held in the community hall monthly which I attended over for over 20 years

The Community Hall is an important part of the Town Hall complex and must be part of the Heritage listing of the whole complex The Community Hall has been a major part of our Social and Cultural lives for over 60 years and that of many others in the Yarrawonga area, and must be retained for future generations to enjoy.



Geoff Campbell

61 River road

Yarrawonga 3730

Geoff Campbell – Part 2 Cr. Bert Campbell was Geoff's father & also Yarrawonga Shire President



25th November 1981 100th Birthday for Geoff Campbell's great aunt with Bert Campbell at the Yarrawonga Community Hall.



Yarrawonga Chronicle December 2, 1981 Winnie Inchbold with centenarian plaque presented form the Australia Day Council with Mr. Horrie Prescott MBE & Mr Bert Campbell (former Shire President's)

1960's Red Cross Conference in Shire Hall



Red Cross Conference – opened by Cr. Bert Campbell in Community Hall



65. Beverley Long (nee McFarlane) Miss Victoria 1959.

Functions: Wedding Receptions.

The Community Hall provided many receptions which still hold dear as many memories. The early hall (Supper Room) had limited catering facilities which didn't deter these functions as they were splendid occasions for the populace.

Miss Victoria 1959.

On the homecoming of our Miss Victoria without the Shire Hall and surrounds it would have not been the splendid day for all. The Shire Hall front edifice was flooded which seemed like the whole population were there. A welcoming reception was held by the Shire President and members.

In the evening inside the hall provided a sparkling further welcome which continued with a brimming portion of the population. All magnificently catered for from the Community Hall.

Allegro Theatre Company:

Allegro has presented many stage productions of wonderful challenging performances over the years. The Shire Hall being a wonderful facility with its marvellous stage, reportedly the biggest outside Melbourne. Their productions could not go ahead without the Community Hall providing the Green Room allowing extra space for overflow rehearsals, costume change and storage. As these evenings always provided an after Show Reception which was provided by the committee and friends. All made easier by the addition of a modernized functional kitchen in the Community Hall.

Other memorable events that have taken place over the years:

Glamorous Debutante Balls, the V.E. Ball, Winifred Attwell Concert, among many others.

We need the Community Hall to stay & continue to be part of the overall function for the citizens of Yarrawonga through the magnificent Shire Hall.

Beverley Long.

66. Luke Doyle

I'll never forget the first time I jumped on stage as a 13-year-old Mike Teevee in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. I was gangly, freckly, with teeth jutting out at angles that could be compared to tombstones in an unkempt cemetery.

I sat in the front row of the audience waiting for my queue to begin my gun-slinging monologue. I could have probably said my lines backwards I knew them so well, however I was still incredibly nervous. To my bewilderment, the moment I stood up and started shouting in my Australian-Texan accent I found that the butterflies, shakiness and urge to go to the loo disappeared and I was fully immersed in my character. Fair to say I was absolutely hooked.

From 2007-2013 I performed in 10 productions with Allegro Theatre Company and 4 school theatre shows and talent exhibitions. Some of my most cherished memories from adolescence were in Yarrawonga's Town Hall and Community Hall where I would spend hours cracking jokes and rehearsing with fellow students and members of the theatre troupe.

These were very formative years that saw me hone my craft as an actor with the help of mentors at the theatre company. With every production came a newfound confidence and a stronger sense of identity and community.

After moving to Melbourne in 2014, I continued performing stand up at the Comedy Festival (2014 – '15) and Fringe Festival (2016). I sucked pretty badly at times but over three years I managed to put together a show that kept the audience chuckling for the best part of an hour – those could have been sympathy chuckles but they were chuckles nonetheless!

As recently as 2018 I played the role of Papa Bear in the Western Arts production of Shrek the Musical in Moonee Ponds. They were even generous enough to give me 2 lines in the show – boy, what a responsibility! It was great fun to be part of a community theatre group again and brought back all the memories of my Allegro days back in the Town and Community Halls.

Although I am yet to see bright lights of LA, headline the Edinburgh Fringe or have a beer with Hugh Jackman, I like to think that I have made a decent contribution to the performing Arts in Yarrawonga and Melbourne. It was the community spaces, the Yarrawonga Town Hall and Community Hall, that made it possible for me flourish as a performer and a person. I'd like to join the growing tide of voices that are calling on our council to preserve these precious spaces so that the community theatre can continue to flourish.

Luke Doyle was the recipient of the Allegro Arts Scholarship in 2011; the Allegro Talent Award jointly in 2007, solely in 2011 and 2013.

67. Dianne Wiadrowski

Diane Wiadrowski
2/9 Piper Street,
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Ph: 0426 055 568

To whom it may concern,

I spent the first 26 years of my life living in Melbourne before making the move to live in Yarrawonga.

During my time in Melbourne I had the privilege of performing in Her Majesty's Theatre, the Comedy theatre and several years working at Channel 7.

These experiences instilled in me the love of performing, theatre and dance.

After moving to Yarrawonga I discovered the Allegro Theatre Company and have been a member for 40 years. This has involved performing in productions, directing, choreographing, stage crew, hall decorating – in fact all facets of live theatre. I have been a committee member for many years and am a life member of the company.

The purpose of the Allegro Theatre Company Inc. is: 1 – to facilitate the production of live theatre for the enjoyment of audiences and players; 2 – to develop community appreciation of live theatre; 3 – to provide for members the opportunity for self-development; 4 – to facilitate fellowship and enjoyment of members.

Coming from Melbourne I soon realised that regional and country areas don't have the same exposure to the arts, in all its forms, either visual or performance, as people in the larger cities. For many, the only way they can have these experiences is by bringing the city to the country.

Since Allegro's inception nearly all of the productions have been presented in the Yarrawonga Shire Hall. These have included shows incorporating the younger community members to the more mature.

Allegro has had many hundreds of people "tread the boards" over this time.

There have been so many productions over the years, but to mention a few – "Oklahoma"; "Oliver"; "The King and I"; "Sound of Music"; "My Fair Lady"; "South Pacific"; "Beauty and the Beast"; "Black Adder"; "Faulty Towers"; "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory"; Gilbert and Sullivan; kids productions and many more.

Allegro has been the only company to bring Monty Python's "The Life of Brian" to the stage and people travelled as far as Adelaide, Brisbane and Melbourne to witness this production. Channel 9 even travelled up to film the show.

Many of these productions have won awards in many categories, and are on display in Allegro's trophy cabinet situated in the foyer in the Shire Hall. Taking centre stage is the "Bud Tingwell" trophy awarded from the Victoria Drama League for Best Show across Victoria for "Black Adder".

As some of these shows have a huge cast, it would not have been possible to present them without the use of the Community Hall, as the Shire Hall dressing rooms are very small and inadequate. With a cast of 60 or more, costumes and people galore, make-up etc, access to a suitable area for accommodating so many aspects of a show is essential. Without this type of facility, it would be very difficult to present such productions.

In the past, Allegro Theatre Company has utilised the Community Hall to provide supper after the show for the audience members to meet the cast, and to show our appreciation for their patronage.

Over the many years of my involvement with Allegro, I have seen so many people, young and old, gain so much self-confidence and self-esteem having overcome their fears by having a go, hence fulfilling the four purposes of the company as listed earlier.

Allegro offers a scholarship of \$1000 each year to young people wishing to further their interest in the performing arts. In the past these have included Drama courses including direction, acting, sound and lighting, musical instrument study, dance, summer theatre workshops, etc. Allegro continues to encourage anyone who wishes to further their study. As a result of being involved with Allegro, some of these young people have gone on to have professional careers in their chosen area. For example: Chris Younger has travelled the world using his expertise in the sound and lighting area. Michael Argus has furthered his career in acting and is now performing in that profession. Chris Hindle was accepted into a Movie world course in Queensland.

All of the people involved over the past 42 years of Allegro have been ordinary people achieving extraordinary things. We must continue to foster these attributes well into the future.

There are many more people who are still pursuing their love of theatre and performance, from humble beginnings in the Yarrawonga Shire Hall and their involvement with Allegro.

Another group I have been a member of for many years, as a Committee member and President, was the Arts Council Victoria (name has been changed over the years). This council was formed in order to bring performing and visual arts of all types to the rural areas and ensuring that people in country did not miss out. This included bringing areas of the arts to Yarrawonga Shire Hall such as theatre productions presented by the very best of Australian talent (Reg Livermore, Ann Phelan, John Woods, Peter Adams, etc); literary luncheons with popular Australian authors; musical presentations including the likes of Don Burrows Quartet. The list was many and varied.

One comment these performers all seemed to say was "It's a beautiful hall, you must be very proud". And we were.

As a member of the community, I have also been privileged to attend such shows as "Philip Jente Puppets"; "The Cambridge Buskers"; the Queensland Ballet; "Irish Dancing" and many more. These are world class performers and to see them on the Yarrawonga Shire Hall stage has been amazing.

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Another area close to my heart is dancing. I have been involved in many dance presentations over the years, both performing and having a dance school. Involving over a hundred pupils, it would not be possible to stage these without a venue such as the Community Hall – so many children (plus mums), so many costumes etc.

I have watched my children perform, my grandchildren perform and many friends and their children perform on the Shire Hall stage and it is a source of great pride and delight to see. I have attended Deb balls; Football balls; dances; wedding receptions; Cultural days; Flower shows; and in recent times “The Choir of 1000 Voices” concerts in both the Shire Hall and Community Hall over the years.

I am currently involved with the Yarrawonga P-12 Community Workshop as a volunteer, working with the Workshop Co-Ordinator, Michelle Klowss. The workshop is a fun and safe place for the students to come and be creative without any pressure.

As a result of the students being involved with making so many articles from different countries, Michelle has had a vision to have a production based on Cultural Diversity. As a result the Workshop will be presenting the “Magical Mystery Tour Around the World” to be performed in the Yarrawonga Shire Hall. Due to the Covid virus, this will be postponed until it is safe to proceed (hopefully next year some time).

The purpose of this presentation is to highlight the different cultures of thirteen countries around the world, focussing on the people, the land and the endangered animal species. We hope to convey that even though we might be a little bit different in cultures, underneath it all we are all human beings.

For survival, we must all unite to look after each other, the animals and the land. With hundreds of hours of input so far, the students and volunteers are all involved in making sets, costumes, life size animals, puppets, props etc and are very excited about presenting this mammoth “Tour” to the community.

As the production will involve a few hundred students, teachers and volunteers on the night, the concern we have is will there be the facilities to cater for all our requirements?

The only venue in Yarrawonga/Mulwala to present big productions and functions that can cater for all requirements is the Shire Hall in conjunction with adequate facilities such as the Community Hall. There are currently no other options available.

Over the decades the Yarrawonga and surrounding communities have created many beautiful memories involving the Shire and Community halls. In this current climate, including droughts, devastating bushfires and now the Covid Virus, there needs to be a huge and concerted effort to foster positivity and hope within all communities.

This community spirit has involved both halls in the past and we must ensure that it continues in the future years to come.

Regards,
Diane Wiadrowski.