ALEXANDRA

SHIRE HALL

ALEXANDRA SHIRE HALL

CONTRIBUTORS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Built:	Work started in late 1881
Opened:	17 July 1882
Cornerstone:	Laid 4 January 1882 by Shire President Peter Dunn
Facade style:	Inspired by Roman Tuscan

The Town Hall was the second Town Hall for Alexandra. The first was built on the same black and was sold at auction prior to works starting on the current Town Hall. The current hall was designed by William Ellerker and built by local Thomas Carison.

The Alexandra Shire Hall is a large hall located in the centre of Alexandra in Central Victoria and opened on 17 July 1882. It design is inspired by Roman Tuscan and has a Coat of Arms that predates Australia's first Coat of Arms (1908) by 26 years and the second and current Coat of Arms (1912) by 30 years.

Prior to March 1870, a room in the wooden building that previously stood at the same site, was rented as a Clerks Office by the Roads Board. In March 1870 the land and building was purchased for 125 pound by the Shire.

According to Alexandra's first newspaper (*Alexandra Times,* Friday 3 November 1871), Alexandra's first building to act as a 'Town Hall' was a brick structure built by district

INTRODUCTION

pioneer Richard Vining in late 1871. It was located on the same site as the current Town Hall (Allotment 1 Alexandra), was adjacent to the Vining Hotel (located on the site of our current Library building) and was christened **'Alexandra Town Hall'**. It was stated that:

'When matters of great importance of a moral, social, or political character move the people, may they assemble here in all their majesty and power, and let the rulers of the land hear their voice. And as for the Shire Councillors, if they do not perform their duty, then will the ratepayers gather into this building and censure the President of the Shire Council and all those who act with him.'

The main hall was described as being 66 feet by 22 feet, and was declared the largest room in Alexandra at that time. It was a small structure that met the initial needs of the growing township and was often referred to as the 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall'. The old building was later described by the Alexandra Times on 24 October 1881 as:

'There can be no mistake about it now, as the old rookery which has so long done dury as a public house, ball room, library and council chambers, is to be sold to the highest bidder on 5th of November, as the hammer, and must be taken away by the fortunate purchaser.'

Close-up of the shield on the Coat or Arms.
Courtesy Allan Layton 2013.

In May 1881 the Shire Council communicated with the well known Melbourne based Collins Street Architect W. H. Ellerker (c1853-1891). He subsequently submitted plans and specifications to the Shire for a large building to replace the former old building (which was used as a town hall from time to time). The new plans were in the Classic Roman Tuscan architectural style.

On 18 October 1881 the Shire accepted a tender from local builder Thomas Carison for £2,214. It was not the cheapest tender submitted, but was the most convincing. Once approval was granted, the old building on the block was sold at auction.

INTRODUCTION

The foundation stone for the new Town Hall was officially laid on 4 January 1882 by Shire President Peter Dunn Esq. Carison then built the Shire Hall in less than seven months and in a manner that was very pleasing to the Shire.

The new Town Hall was officially opened by the Shire on Monday 17 July 1882 and a Banquet and Grand Ball were held during the evening to celebrate the opening.

In 1955, works to restore and repair the town hall was carried out. During this work, much of the decorative elements that made the Shire Hall so beautiful, was removed.

On 19 January 1976, the Shire Hall and Offices were inspected and a restoration and repair report was prepared for the Shire. The report highlights works needed, presents costs and quotes as well as giving a brief history on the Shire Hall and Architect William Ellerker and builder Thomas Carison.

In 1983 a push by the Shire to have the Town Hall demolished was overturned as a result of overwhelming public opposition to the move. The Shire wanted to demolish and rebuilt at great expense, though it was argued that the needed renovations would be far cheaper than the proposed rebuild. After considerable public pressure, the Shire backed down and the Town Hall was upgraded at a much smaller cost. A damp course was added, the hall was refurbished, the antiquated heating system was replaced, a Council Chamber was built, a veranda added and they re-modelled the toilet area.

In 2009, Artworkz commenced work on this factsheet, and in 2013 we uncovered our first evidence suggesting that the current Town Hall was not the first hall called a 'Town Hall' to be located at Alexandra.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

A Timeline of Events

TIMELINE

November 1871

The Foundation Stone of the first Alexandra Town Hall was laid by Mrs Vining. It was adjacent to Vining's Hotel and was often referred to as 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall, though was Christened the "Alexandra Town Hall" by Vining himself upon the laying of the foundation stone.

16 May 1874

A second major fire in Grant Street threatened the first wooden Shire Hall opposite. The fire was along the Eldorado series of shops on the western side of Grant Street, on the northern end. The fire claimed the Eldorado Hotel and the Cumming's Albion Hotel amongst others. The then wooden Shire Hall (opposite the Eldorado Hotel) was said to have been under threat from the heat of the fire (Alexandra Times, 23 May 1874).

May 1881

The Shire Council communicated with well known Collins Street Architect W. H. Ellerker. He subsequently submitted plans and specifications to the Shire for the building. Plans he drew up have been lost. A tracing of the original plan was prepared by Architect C.E. Wright in 1925 and can be seen later in this factsheet.

July 1881

On the eve of calling for tenders for the construction of the Town Hall, a debate arose regarding the proposed site.

October 1881

Plans were altered to allow for an upgraded 60 feet hall instead of the first proposed 35 feet hall.

October 1881

Tenders were called for to build the Town Hall.

18 October 1881

The tender was awarded to Thomas Carison.

5 November 1881

The structure that was Alexandra's first Town Hall was sold at auction.

November 1881

The contract to build Alexandra's second Town Hall was awarded to Thomas Carison (often miss-spelt Carrison) at a cost of £2,214.

TIMELINE

December 1881	Construction on Alexandra's second and current Town Hall commenced.
February 1882	The construction of the Town Hall was reported as being well under way.
April 1882	A motion was passed at a monthly Council Meeting that the Shire Hall be opened with a Banquet and Ball, with the ticket price being £1, 1s for both and 15s for the Ball. It was also passed that pricing for fencing and furniture supplied to the Shire by the contractor Thomas Carison be accepted.
May 1882	Thomas Carison granted a four week extension of time to allow for completion of various additional works, including the construction of a stage at the eastern end of the hall.
7 July 1882	A detailed description of the new Town Hall was given in the Alexandra and Yea Standard. It included a description of the circular Coat of Arms located in the pediment, moulded by Mr Scurry of Melbourne and the tiled floor. It was stated that the total cost for all building and fittings was £2,769.
17 July 1882	A substantial ball was help and the Shire Hall officially opened.
Unknown	The iron fencing surrounding the front of the Town Hall was removed. It is not known what happened to it.
1916	Renovation works were carried out to the hall. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 30 June 1916).
1925	A new supper room, offices and stage were constructed. The architect was C. Ernest Wright of 443 Collins Street, Melbourne and the builder was Ferguson and Payne.

TIMELINE

1955
Some restoration work was carried out on the Shire Hall. Most of the decorative elements were removed at this time. It is not know exactly why this occurred, though it may have been that it were considered a financial burned to keep them. Australia was going through a financial crisis around this time and money for such projects was scarce.

1956
The exterior was painted with impervious gloss paints and interior redecorations.

1957
Fillings around exterior of the hall and s=construction of perimeter brick drain to south wall of hall/

1960
Extension of stage on north side and construction of exit steps.

1969
Painting of interior and exterior of the Shire Hall.

1970c
The Coat or Arms was painted in colour. From analysis of early black and white images circa 1900, it is clear that the colours did not exactly match the early colours used when first coloured.

19 January 1976
The Shire Hall and offices were inspected. A report into the condition of the Shire was prepared by the Shire and a copy of the report remains today with the Shire. The report highlights works needed, presents costs and quotes as well as giving a brief history on the Shire Hall.

22 June 1976
Drysat Pty Ltd inspected the fabric of the building.

23 July 1976
F. G. James Pty Ltd inspected the building.

Unknown
Sometime between 2002 and 2009 the Town Hall was painted a cream colour and the colour colours of the Coat or Arms was painted over.

TIMELINE

|	
2009	Artworkz commenced this Factsheet.
29 November 2016	Artworkz were made aware of a 1976 report on the Alexandra Library Restoration. It talked of the condition of the shire hall and proposals to restore it. The book included plans and a number of photographs we had not seen before, including two from around the 1900s.
29 November 2016	Solid plastering and restoration specialist Simon Nygaard spoke at Artworkz HistoryCafe on the Shire Hall, Post Office and Library buildings.
30 November 2016	Simon Nygaard attended ArtworkzBreakfast to talk further on our old buildings.
5 December 2016	Minor repair work was conducted on a wall in the front northern room by Simon Nygaard of ABODE Restorations. The rendering was almost sand-like in places and falling away.
8 January 2018	Artworkz conducted a photoshoot of the Sydney Bank of New South Wales, which is one of just a handful of buildings in Australia with a Coat of Arms with the emu on the left.

GALLERY

Related Imagery

Shire Hall : Alexandra : Victoria

...Proposed Additions and Alterations..
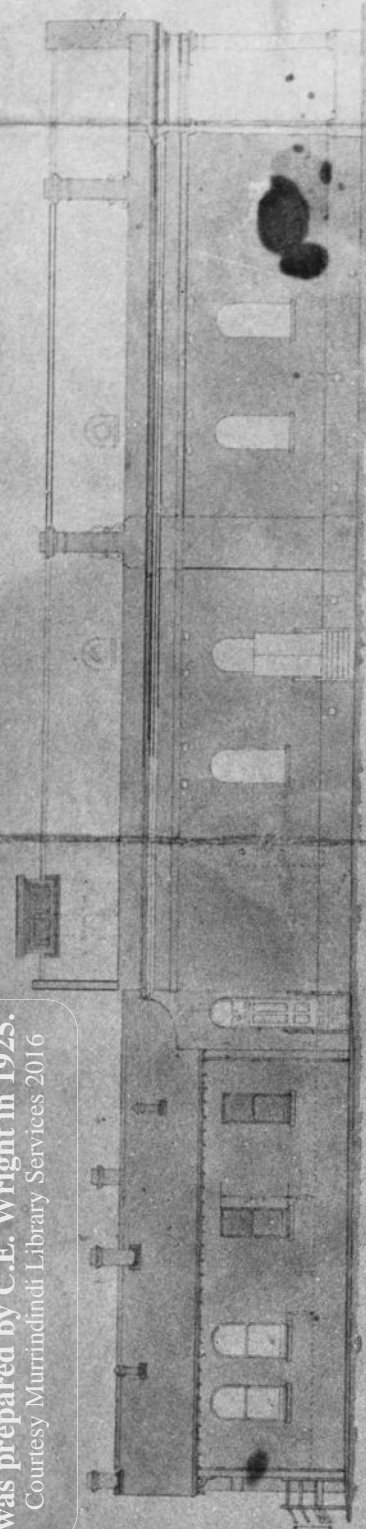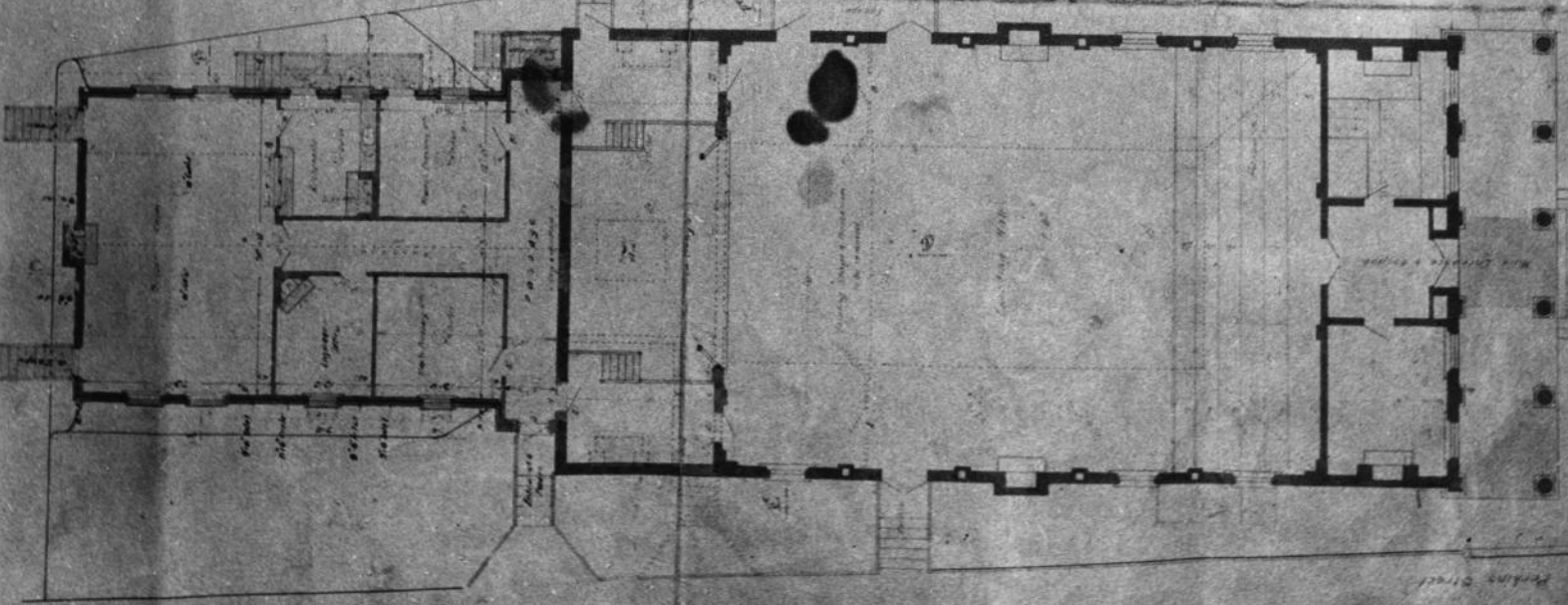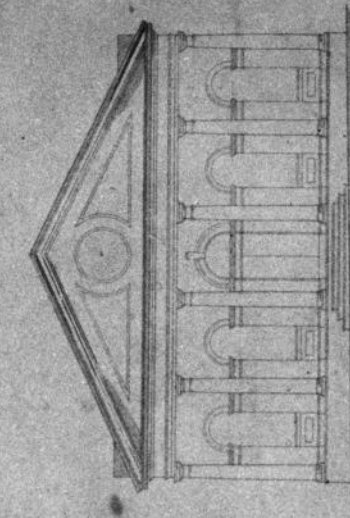
North Elevation.

East Elevation.

West Elevation.

Section at B.

Section E F.

Front Elevation

original mouldings on façade & pediment removed during previous renovations

areas of cracked & defective render
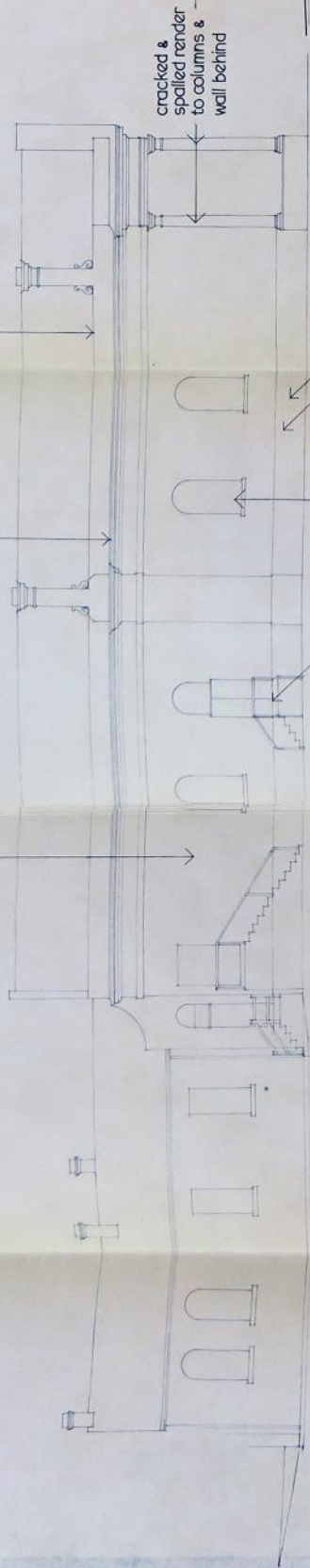
existing pavement above damp proof course level

Cross Section

defective ridge cappings
loose sheets
defective gutters

water penetration

poor drain (see plan)

see plan for note on interior

rising damp

water penetration

water penetration

Side Elevation

water penetration through defective parapets, chimney render & gutters

cracked & spalled render to columns & wall behind

inadequate subfloor ventilation
rising damp in all walls

failed paintwork & seals to windows
failed doorsills & panels

original mouldings removed during previous renovations

extensive areas of cracked & defective render
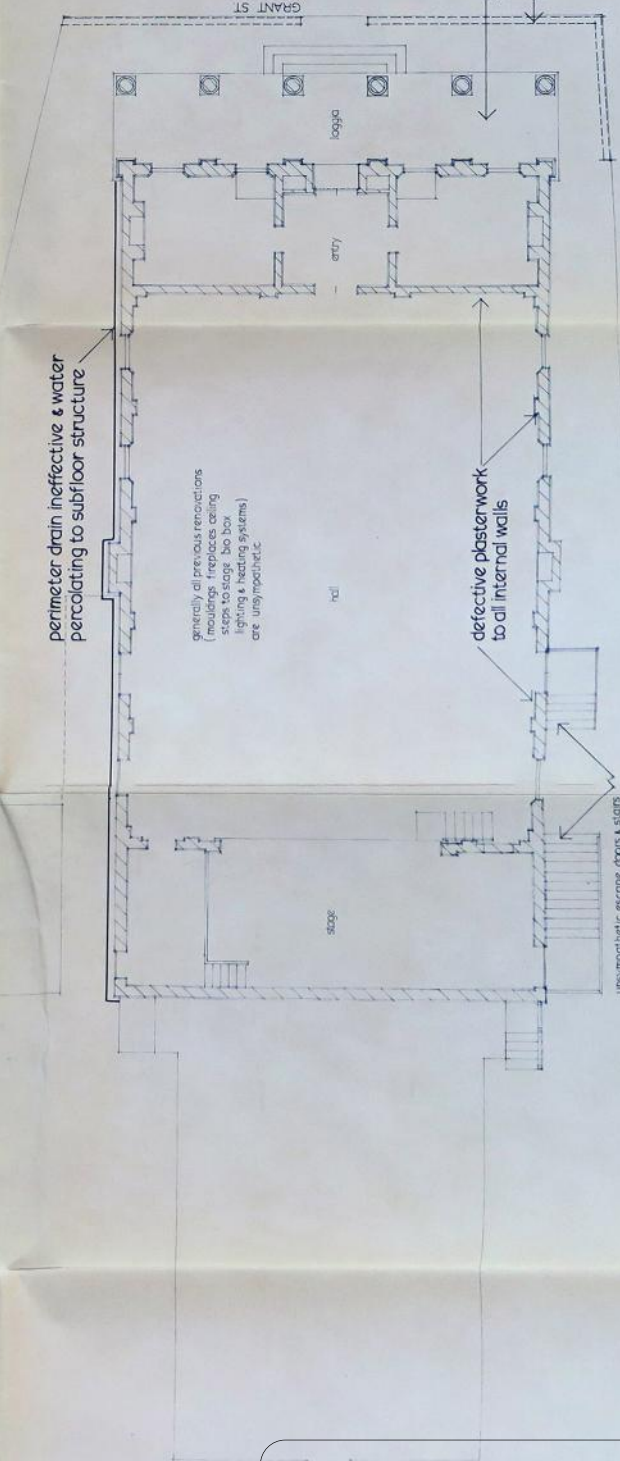
Plan

perimeter drain ineffective & water percolating to subfloor structure

unsympathetic paving

original cast-iron picket fence removed

GRANT ST

loggia

entry

hall

stage

generally all previous renovations (mouldings, fireplaces, ceiling steps to stage, bio box lighting & heating systems) are unsympathetic

defective plasterwork to all internal walls

unsympathetic escape doors & stairs

PERKINS ST

failure of finishes & materials is shown in **heavy lettering**
unsympathetic additions & alterations are shown in lighter lettering

the Shire Hall Alexandra

the building fabric at present

drawing no. 1

1976 plans produced for the renovation of the Shire Hall
Courtesy Murrindindi Library Services 2016

Front Elevation

A — reinstate mouldings to pediment, portico & entrance wall to match original detail; rehabilitate windows & make glazing patterns uniform

4 — reduce level of pavement to below vents and damp proof course

D — reinstate picket fence

• Front Elevation

Cross Section

1 — roof (see side elevation)

C — interior (see plan)

3 — drain (see plan)

4 — clear sub floor vent (see side elevation)

3 — rising damp (see plan)

• Cross Section

the Shire Hall Alexandra

rehabilitation & restoration

drawing no 2

Side Elevation

1 — remove all render capping to brick parapets & render to chimneys; repoint all loose & eroded joints; rerender with waterproof mortar

A — reinstate mouldings to chimneys, cornice to wall

5 — remove defective render to columns capitals & bases; rerender to original detail

2 — check all roof cladding; ridge capping & flashings; remove defective capping & secure loose sheets

4 — clear subfloor ventilation of obstructions & install uniform vent plates

5 — remove defect't paint from rendered surface; cut all loose render; cut all cracks open; rerender defective surfaces after drying out; reseal & repaint ndows

• Side Elevation

Plan

GRANT ST

loggia

entry

hall

3 — remove brick retaining wall & adjacent fill; seal off existing drain outlets discharging into perimeter drain; dry out drain; remove all damp & defective mortar & replace with damp proof mortar; construct new drain to street

C — reinstate all plasterwork to original detail; remove steps to stage & replace with more appropriate device; reinstate fireplaces to original detail; reinstate original ceiling; sand & seal floors; up-grade heating & lighting

6 — remove all defective plasterwork, dry out wall & replaster to match original detail

B — demolish stairs & landings & replace with new stairs to match hall

3 — install recommended patent technique to alleviate rising damp in perimeter of building

D — reinstate picket fence

PERKINS ST

stage

• Plan

rehabilitation work is shown in heavy lettering & numbered in order of urgency

restoration work is shown in lighter lettering & lettered in order of preference

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1890.

Courtesy Wayne & Jo Miller 2010.

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1890.
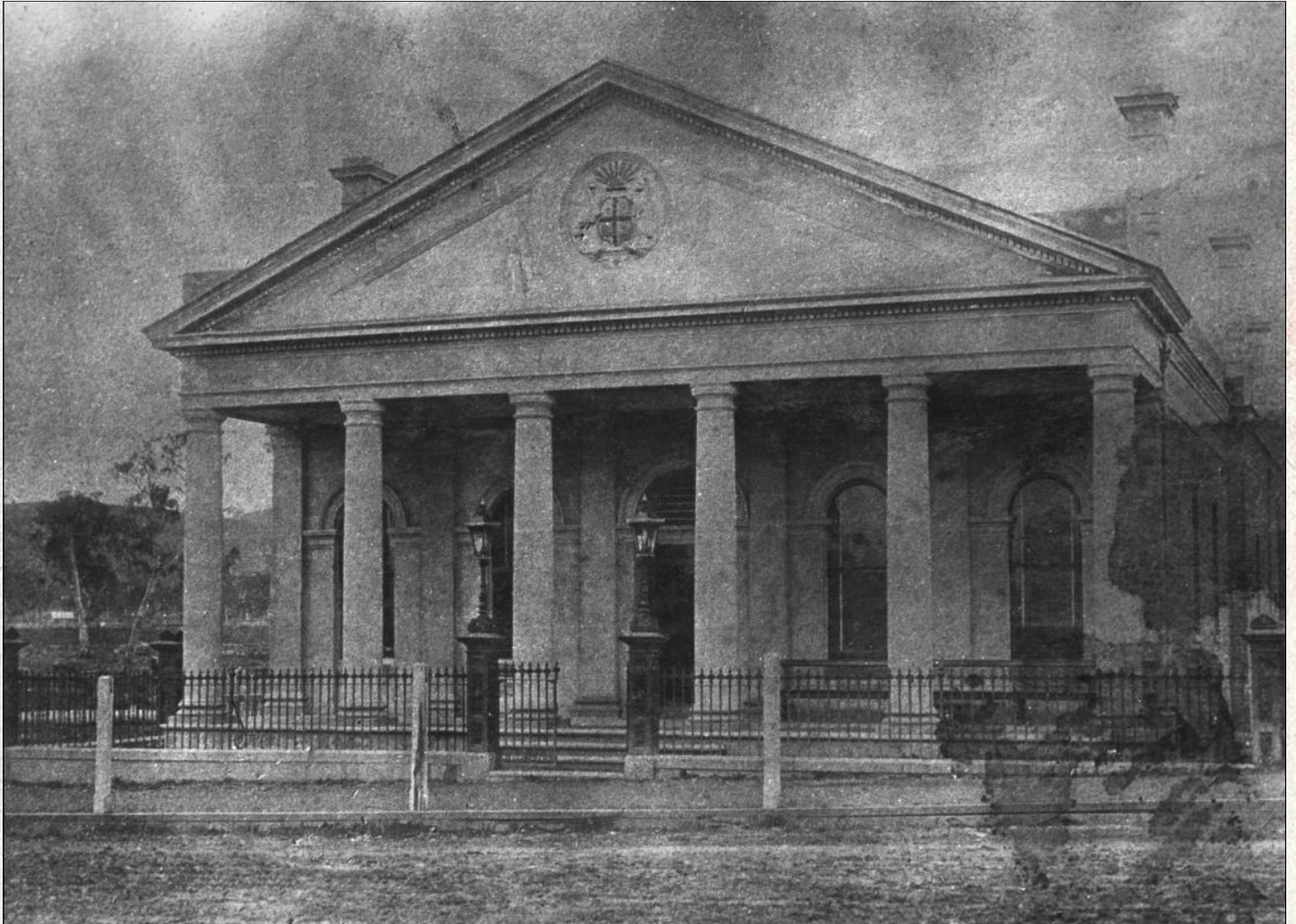Courtesy Bill & Joan Walsh 2016.

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1900.
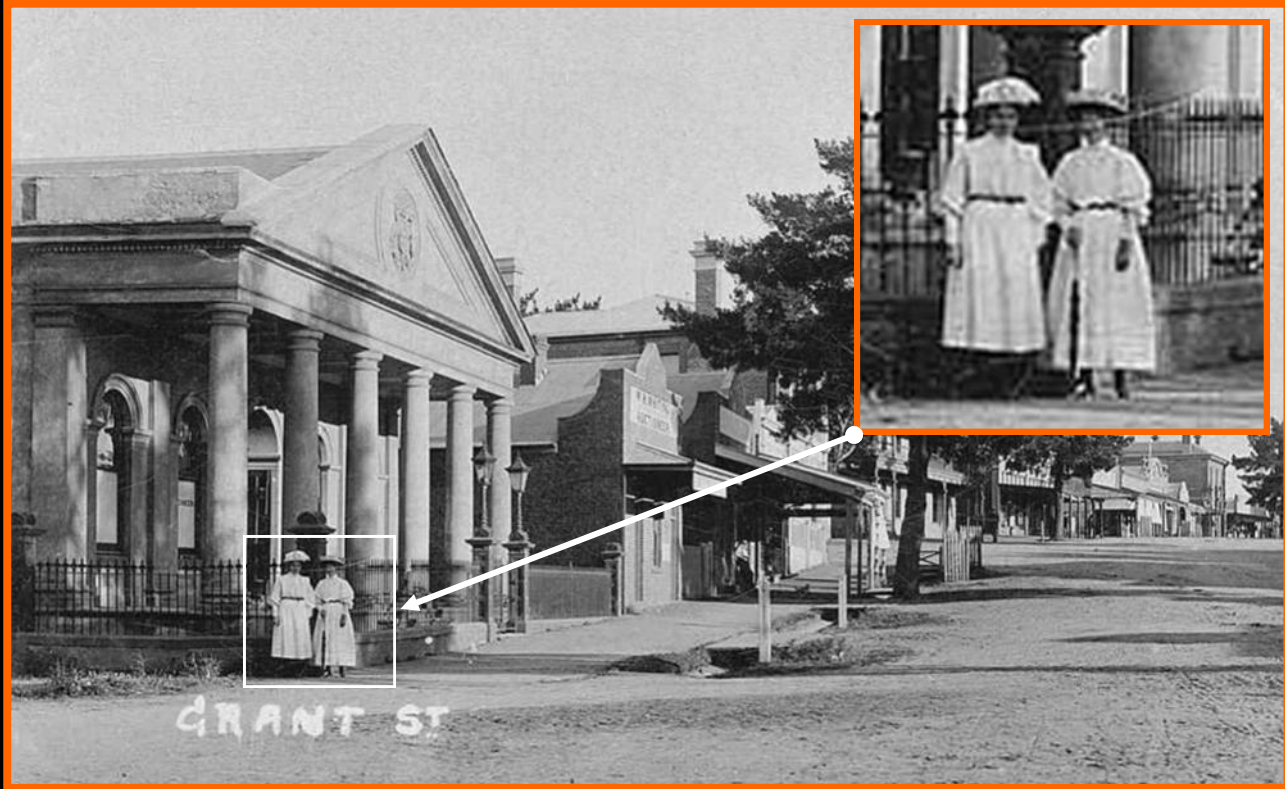
Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi 2016.

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1900.

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi 2016.

Alexandra Shire Hall.
Grant Street, Alexandra circa 1910.

Published with the permission of an anonymous eBay contributor.

Pictured (about) is the current town hall, However, to our knowledge, the first building to be referred to as a 'Town Hall' in Alexandra District was a small brick structure constructed by early district pioneer Richard Vining 1871. It was located on the same block of land as the current Town Hall and was adjoining Vining's Hotel. Often referred to as the 'Vining's Athenaeum' it was the largest hall in the district at the time and meetings, funerals and celebrations may have been held between its walls.

'On the 3rd of November 1871, the Alexandra Times announced that Mr Vining has laid the foundations for a building that would contain the largest room in Alexandra. It was often referred to as 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall, though was Christened the "Alexandra Town Hall" by Vining himself. His wife, Mrs Vining, then laid the foundation stone and Christened the new structure the 'Town Hall.' (Alexandra Times, Friday 3 November 1871).

Contributions Welcome

HISTORIC SNAPSHOT

INFO FACTSHEET

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who wishes to stay anonymous.

To our knowledge, the first structure referred to as a 'Town Hall' in Alexandra was a small brick structure constructed by early pioneer Richard Vining 1871. Located on the same land as the current Town Hall, it was adjoining the Vining's Hotel. Often referred to as the 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall, it was the largest hall in the district at the time and local events, funerals and celebrations may have been held between its walls.

"On the 3rd of November 1871, the Alexandra Times announced that Mr Vining has laid the foundations for a building that would contain the largest room in Alexandra. It was often referred to as 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall, though was Christened the "Alexandra Town Hall" by Vining himself. His wife, Mrs Vining, then laid the foundation stone and Christened the new structure the 'Town Hall'." (Alexandra Times, Friday 3 November 1871).

C o n t r i b u t i o n s   W e l c o m e

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1900.

Courtesy Simone Adams 2010.

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall with the location of the Payne water fountain circa 1970c

Courtesy Simone Adams 2010.

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall with the location of the Payne water fountain circa 1971

State Library Victoria

GALLERY

Unknown street parade at the Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1960.

Courtesy Mick McEvoy 2016

GALLERY

Unknown street parade at the Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1960.

Courtesy Mick McEvoy 2016

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall circa 1976.

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi 2016.

GALLERY

Condition of the Shire Hall as shown in the 1976 report prepared by the Shire

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi 2016.

GALLERY

Condition of the Shire Hall as shown in the 1976 report prepared by the Shire

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi 2016.

GALLERY
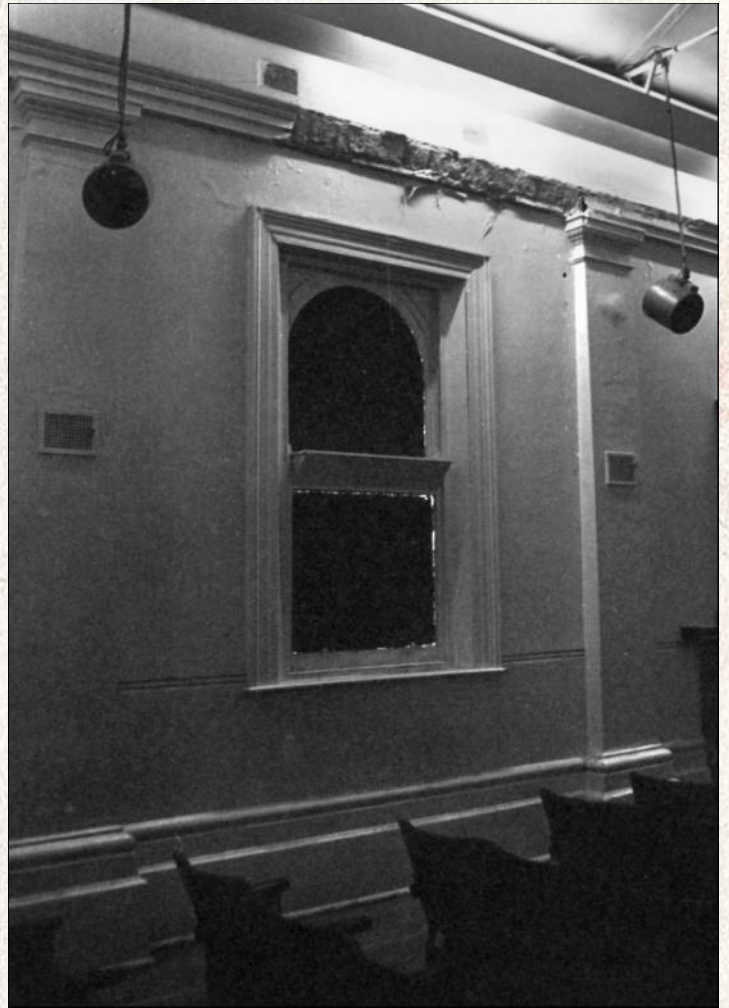

Condition of the Shire Hall as shown in the 1976 report prepared by the Shire

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi 2016.

GALLERY

The Alexandra Shire Hall 2002 with the shield on the Coat or Arms in colour.

Close-up of the shield on the colour Coat or Arms in 2012.

HISTORIC
FACTSHEET

GALLERY

One of the Shire Halls six original Chimneys (three per side). Only four remain today with the two at the rear of the building (the Eastern end) having been long since removed. Originally the structure had two large open fireplaces providing heating during the cooler seasons. The other four chimneys were ornamental.

GALLERY

Alexandra Shire Hall 2010

GALLERY - HONOR BOARDS

Shire of Alexandra Roll of Honor
Closer view next page

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi

GALLERY - HONOR BOARDS

ALDOUS, G.	CUMMING, J.D.	HENNESSY, P.	MILLER, R.R.	PAXIN, G.L.	SOUTER, E.
ALDOUS, H.E.	CUMMING, J.F.	HENNESSY, W.	MILLIARD, J.F.	PAYNE, A.E.	STILLMAN, A.R.
ALLEN, T.	CUMMING, J.R.	HETHERINGTON, J.	MILROY, J.	PAYNE, C.	STILLMAN, A.
ALLEN, W.	CUMMING, N.	HEWLETT, H.	MILROY, W.	PAYNE, F.	STILLMAN, E.
ALSTON, B.	CUMMING, W.N.	HILL, H.J.	MINCHINTON, E.	PAYNE, H.N.T.	STILLMAN, J.
ALSTON, H.D.	CUMMING, W.C.H.	HILL, R.	MINTERN, G.E.	PAYNE, H.	STILLMAN, R.
ANDREWS, J.C.	CURRIE, E.	HOBAN, D.	MOORE, G.E.	PAYNE, W.	STILLMAN, W.C.
ANDREWS, J.E.	DANIELS, C.	HOWARD, J.	MOORE, T.	PEACH, W.E.	STILLMAN, W.E.
ANDREWS, J.P.	DOBSON, D.	HOWARD, L.	MURRAY, C.E.	PEDDERSON, H.	SWEENEY, P.
ANDREWS, K.McK.	DONALD, J.	HOWELL, A.E.	MURRAY, H.A.	PENDLEBURY, J.	TAYLOR, C.
ANGEL, L.	DOOLEY, J.	HUBBARD, B.	MURRAY, J.T.	PENNY, F.C.	TAYLOR, T.
ARMSTRONG, A.	DOWNEY, E.	HUBBARD, S.	MURRAY, A.	PENSOM, A.E.	TAYLOR, V.
ARTHUR, J.	DOWNEY, J.	HULLEY, J.	MURRAY, G.	PETERKIN, P.	THOMAS, L.
BALDING, P.	DOWNEY, L.	HUTCHINGS, A.	McCALLUM, R.J.	PETERS, W.E.	THOMPSON, D.
BATTERSBY, H.	DUNN, A.	JOHNSON, E.A.B.	McCOLL, N.J.	POPPLE, W.J.	THOMPSON, M.
BATTERSBY, J.H.	DWYER, J.M.	JOHNSON, L.R.	McCORMACK, J.J.	PRENDERGAST, A.	TRESIZE, P.
BLACK, M.	DWYER, P.T.	JONES, I.	McCORMACK, P.	PRICE, G.	TUDDENHAM, H.
BLAKENEY, E.	DWYER, T.	JOSE, C.	McCORMACK, M.J.	RALSTON, H.	TURNER, A.E.
BLAKENEY, V.E.	DWYER, T.L.	JUDD, C.C.	McCOUCHMAN, C.	RAYNOR, H.	WALTON, R.
BLAKENEY, W.H.	DYBALL, E.	JUDD, E.E.	McDONALD, D.	RAYMOND, V.	WARNE, T.
BRAIM, H.S.	DYBALL, W.	KEEN, W.	McDONALD, F.	ROBB, E.G.	WARD, L.R.
BRANDER, A.	EDDY, R.	KENT, B.	McGREGOR, A.J.	ROBB, G.A.	WARD, T.J.F.
BRANDER, J.J.	ELLIOTT, J.W.	KENT, G.	McKENZIE, J.	ROBB, N.J.	WATERS, A.
BROWN, S.	FALKINGHAM, J.H.	KERR, P.	McKENZIE, S.	ROBERTS, W.J.	WATERS, W.
BULMER, S.	FARRER, T.S.	KERR, W.	McKINNON, C.	ROBERTSON, A.H.	WEAVER, H.
BURCHALL, A.G.	FELL, E.W.	KILPATRICK, C.	McKINNON, P.	ROBERTSON, H.	WEAVER, W.
BURRETT, E.	FISHER, F.	KILPATRICK, J.E.	McLAUCHLAN, A.D.	ROBERTSON, N.	WEBB, A.F.R.
BUTLER, C.J.	FOREACRE, R.	KINGSTON, B.	McLAUCHLAN, D.	ROBERTSON, L.M.	WEBSTER, W.T.
BUTLER, H.	FOSTER, R.F.	KIRSHAW, J.	McLAUCHLAN, H.D.	ROBERTSON, W.	WEST, H.H.
BUTLER, J.P.	FOWLES, E.	LANE, H.G.	McPHERSON, D.	ROBINSON, C.J.	WEST, S.G.H.
CARBARNS, L.	FRASER, D.S.	LARCOLMBE, C.	McPHERSON, R.A.	ROBINSON, H.J.	WHEELER, E.
CADDY, J.	FRY, R.	LARKCOM, W.	McRAE, D.	ROWAN, A.T.	WHITE, E.
CAMERON, W.G.	GILBERT, R.	LARKIN, J.	NASH, C.	ROWAN, I.C.	WHITELAW, A.
CASEY, A.	GOODEAR, C.	LAWLOR, L.J.	NASH, W.	ROWAN, P.C.	WHITELAW, D.J.
COLLERY, J.M.	GORDON, C.	LAWLOR, R.B.	NEWMAN, A.	SAMPSON, P.F.	WHITELAW, L.C.
COLLERY, J.	GOUGH, P.	LEGG, T.	NEWMAN, E.V.	SAWERS, G.V.	WHITELAW, L.I.
COLLERY, P.	GREEN, E.T.	LEWIS, H.G.	NEWMAN, R.	SAWERS, V.	WHITELAW, K.
COLLINS, E.W.	GREEN, P.V.	LEWIS, P.	NEWMAN, W.S.	SCALE, F.	WHITELAW, R.A.
COLLIS, D.	GWYNNE, R.	LOBLEY, A.	NOLAN, W.	SCHEFFER, W.T.	WHITING, C.G.
COLLIS, E.W.	HALL, W.	LONGSTAFF, G.	NOONAN, M.	SCOTT, D.W.R.	WHITING, L.
COLLIS, W.	HALTERMAN, C.	LUNDQUIST, A.B.	O'BRIEN, B.	SCOTT, R.	WILLIAMS, W.
COMMERFORD, J.	HAMILTON, P.	LYALL, A.	O'BRIEN, H.D.	SCOTT, S.E.M.	WILMOT, E.
CONNELL, J.W.	HANNING, L.	MACDONALD, W.	ORCHARD, O.W.T.	SEBIRE, F.H.	WILSON, A.
COOKSON, C.	HANNING, N.H.	MAHONEY, J.E.	OWENS, W.	SHAW, A.E.	WILSON, A.R.
COOKSON, W.W.	HANNING, T.R.	MANSFIELD, P.	PANTOL, J.	SHAW, J.E.	WILSON, J.
COUCHMAN, C.	HARDING, E.J.	MARROW, H.J.	PARSONS, A.	SHAW, L.	WILSON, S.
CREIGHTON, P.R.E.	HARKESS, D.	MASON, A.	PATIENCE, A.	SINCLAIR, J.R.	ZAMPATTIE, P.P.
CRICHTON, E.	HASSETT, J.	MASON, J.O.	PATIENCE, C.A.	MAGEE, R.	PLUNKETT, F.W.
CRICHTON, R.	HASSETT, T.E.	MASON, R.	PATIENCE, L.		
CUMMING, A.R.	HAYES, H.	MAYBERRY, S.J.	PATRICK, C.H.		
CUMMING, E.J.	HAYES, J.	MAYGAR, L.C.	PATRICK, A.J.W.		
CUMMING, H.	HAYSOM, H.	MEEHAN, J.P.	PATRICK, H.		
	GILBEE, E.T.		McKENZIE, D.		WELSH, F.W.

Shire of Alexandra Roll of Honor

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi

GALLERY - HONOR BOARDS

SHIRE OF ALEXANDRA
· 1939 – 1945   WAR ·

SISTER F. STEVENSON

A. BOWLER
B. BROOKS
R. F. CHANTER
B. COWCHER
F. J. CULHANE
E. W. DOCKING
A. C. EDWARDS
P. EDWARDS
W. E. EDWARDS
J. ELWARD
K. FLEETON
R. A. HANNING
J. KOPANICA
A. KILPATRICK
F. KILPATRICK
S. V. MACKRELL
A. K. MURRAY
J. McMARTIN
J. P. O'DONNELL
E. C. STILLMAN
C. THIES
H. WATERS
L. WEBSTER

REMEMBER

IN HONOUR AND
GRATITUDE THE
MEN AND WOMEN
OF THIS SHIRE
WHO SERVED
AUSTRALIA
EVEN UNTO THE
SUPREME SACRIFICE
PRESERVING A
HERITAGE FOR US
TO GUARD
AND CHERISH

LEST WE FORGET

Shire of Alexandra Roll of Honor

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi

GALLERY - HONOR BOARDS

Shire of Alexandra Roll of Honor

Courtesy Shire of Murrindindi

NEWSPAPERS

Related Newspaper Articles

NEWSPAPERS

Mr Vining's Town Hall.

Alexandra Times
Friday 3 November 1871
National Library Australia

The Official Town Hall currently standing in Grant Street Alexandra was not the first structure named 'Town Hall'.

On the 3rd of November 1871, the Alexandra Times announced that Mr Vining has laid the foundations for a building that would contain the largest room in Alexandra. It was often referred to as 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall, though was Christened the 'Alexandra Town Hall' by Vining himself.

His wife, Mrs Vining, then laid the foundation stone and Christened the new structure the 'Town Hall'.

In Mrs Vining's speech, she expanded on her dreams for his 'Town Hall'. This included its use as a place of assembly for matters of:

- great importance.
- moral importance.
- social importance.
- political importance.
- Shire councillor accountability.

Cheers rang out upon her finishing her talk.

NEWSPAPERS

GRAND POPULAR

ENTERTAINMENT,

to be held at

The New Town Hall,

Adjoining Vining's Hotel,

on

FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 14,

In aid of the Funds of the Alexandra

COMMON SCHOOL.

PROGRAMME.

Prologue	Mr Monahan
Song	Mr W. Moon
Recitation	Mr E. Whitelaw
Song	Mr H. M. Taylor
Duet	Mrs Morris & Miss Moon
Reading	Mr J. Branch
Duet	Mrs Morris & Mr R. Higgins
Oration	Mr J. Whitelaw

Interval of ten minutes.

Song	Mr Hofland
Reading	Mr Emerson
Song	Miss Morris
Song	Mr Branch
Recitation	Mr Monahan
Duet	Miss Moon & Mr W. Moon
Song	Mr H. M. Taylor
Song	Mr S. Whitelaw

God Save the Queen—Everybody.

Admission—Front Seats 1s., Back Seats 6d.

To commence at Eight o'clock

Alexandra Times
Friday 14th June 1872
Courtesy National Library Australia

The first Alexandra Town Hall adjoining the Vining Hotel

Alexandra Times
Friday 14 June 1872

This article tells us that the original Town Hall, was next door to the Vining Hotel in Grant Street.

It also tells us that it was being used for entertainment and fund raising events. In this instance the Town Hall was hosting 'Grant Popular Entertainment' in aid of the Funds of the **Alexandra Common School**.

NEWSPAPERS

THE ALEXANDRA ATHENÆUM.

The formal opening of this commodious and substantial building took place on Monday night last by a grand amateur performance. The large hall was densely crowded, and many who had purchased tickets were unable to obtain admittance. There certainly has never been such a gathering in Alexandra for numbers and respectability. The hall is 150 feet in length and 30 feet in breadth, the walls being of brick and the roof of iron. The acoustic properties of the house are remarkably good. The walls have been ornamented with paintings on the plaster of parrots, flowers, &c., giving a pleasant, lively appearance to the main body of the building. A commodious stage with wing walls has been erected, and a neat proscenium. The scenery has been got up with great taste and ability, certainly far superior to anything of the kind we have ever seen out of Melbourne. The storm at sea, the ships, boats, thunder, lightning, and numerous other effects were remarkably good, and called forth the admiration and wonder of the audience. Mr Charles Hamea, who painted the scenery, has a remarkable taste and talent for this kind of art.

Alexandra Times
Saturday 26 September 1874
Courtesy National Library Australia

Alexandra's second 'Town Hall' was the Athenaeum at 150 x 30 feet which was used as a hall.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Saturday 26 September 1884
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

ASTRONOMY.

A LECTURE
On
POPULAR ASTRONOMY
Will be given by the
REV. D. REES,
In the
SHIRE HALL,
On TUESDAY EVENING, 15th INST.

Chair to be taken at half-past Seven o'clock.

The object of the lecture will be to show how the study of the heavens may be made interesting and practically useful to all.

Special reference will be made to the recent transit of Venus.

ADMISSION FREE, but a Collection will be taken towards the Presbyterian Church Building Fund.

Alexandra Times
Saturday 12 June 1875
Courtesy National Library Australia

Reference Alexandra's second Town Hall, where an event was described as being at the 'Shire Hall'

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Saturday 12 June 1875
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

Alexandra Times.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

"Veritas Omnia Vincit."

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1876.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN GRANT STREET.

The township has again suffered from a destructive conflagration, and each block of our main street has now been visited in turn by the devouring element.

Beyond Vining's hotel stood the Athenaeum Hall, a large brick building, which from the intense heat caught fire in several places, and at one time seemed in great danger, being so full of smoke that it was impossible to enter. Everything was at last removed but the mere shell, and copious doses of water were well applied till the danger was over, though the beams and rafters beneath the iron roof were charred and shrivelled by the heat. The wooden structure at the back used as dressing rooms was partly torn down, and a considerable expenditure will be required to put the hall in order again. Very little could be saved from Vining's, as the fire spread so quickly, the billiard-table, stock, and most of the furniture being lost. Of Vining's and Williams's premises nothing was left standing but the blackened chimneys, and the destruction was all accomplished perhaps within half an hour.

Alexandra Times
Saturday 9 December 1876
Courtesy National Library Australia

Alexandra's second Town Hall (Vining's Athenaeum) was damaged by the Grant Street Fire. Also confirms that Vining's Hotel and Vining's Athenaeum are different structures, but adjacent to each other.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Saturday 9 December 1876
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

Mr Thomas Carrison was the successful enderer for our new shire hall at the amount of £2,214. There were in all five tenders sent in, the highest being £2,875, and the lowest, that of Parsons and Watt, £1,924.

There can be no mistake about it now, as the old rookery which has so long done duty as a public house, ball room, library and council chamber, is to be sold to the highest bidder on the 5th of November, at the hammer, and must be taken away by the fortunate purchaser.

Alexandra Times
Friday 21st October 1881
Courtesy National Library Australia

The tender for the construction of the new (third) Shire Hall was awarded to Thomas Carison.
It is also worth noting that the old Town Hall is to be sold to the highest bidder.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 21 October 1881
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

The new Shire Hall building, is making rapid progress, the brick work being up to the wall plates, and the principals of the roof in position. A very good idea of the general effect of the building can now be obtained, and the general effect realised. Mr Carison, the contractor, is actively superintending the progress of the work, and is using every effort to give satisfaction and to complete in contract time, and we may fairly hope to have festivities under its roof by the date of the Queen's birthday.

Alexandra Times
Friday 17th February 1882
Courtesy National Library Australia

Construction of the new Town Hall under way

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 17 February 1882
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

SHIRE HALL.

Mr Carison, the contractor for the Hall, supplied the Council with the particulars and prices of fencing and furniture. Iron fencing for the front and partially round one side of the building, with double gates, blue stone cap, brick and concrete foundations, would cost £150; a large table for the main hall, with 10 drawers, £18; smaller cedar table, £7; 34 forms at £4, £136. These items amounted to £311. Chairs could be obtained at all prices. The stage he thought should be left to the architect.

After discussion, it was decided, on the motion of the President, seconded by Cr Wheeler—That Mr Carison's offer be accepted at the prices mentioned, subject to specifications, to be submitted by him to a committee meeting the following Wednesday, being approved of. Mr Carison was also requested to obtain patterns and price lists of chairs before the next ordinary day of meeting:

OPENING CEREMONY.

Cr Wheeler moved, and Cr Wightman seconded—That the opening of the Shire Hall be celebrated by a banquet and ball, tickets to admit to both to be £1 1s; for ball only 15s.

The motion was carried.

It was resolved that Mr T. Hunt, M.L.A., and several members of the Ministry should be invited to be present on the occasion, and the meeting then adjourned.

Alexandra Times
Friday 28th April 1882
Courtesy National Library Australia

Discussion on the new Town Hall

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 28 April 1882
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

THE NEW SHIRE HALL.

Now that our new Shire Hall is completed, it will interest our readers to place before them a few remarks in reference to the building, and the reason for its erection. For several years it was felt that a new hall was absolutely necessary, the building formerly used being a most dilapidated and unsightly structure, and in every respect unsuitable for the purpose. After giving the subject much thought and consideration, the council, in May 1881, communicated with Mr W. H. Ellerker, the well-known architect of Collins street, Melbourne, who submitted plans and specifications of the proposed building. These were approved of, but on the eve of calling for tenders, objection was taken to the site, with the result that action was deferred until after the annual election the following August, when the ratepayers decided by a large majority of votes in favor of the present site, which is the same upon which the old building formerly stood. In October, the plan having been meanwhile altered so as to make the main hall 60 feet long in place of 35 feet, as originally drawn, tenders were called for, and on the 18th of the same month, the tender of Mr Thomas Carison was accepted for the sum of £.,213 11s 9d. There have been no extras upon the building, but special contracts have since been let to Mr Carison for a stage, seats, chairs, iron railing, drainage, &c., bringing the total cost up to £2,760. The following is the description of the building. The architecture may be called Classic Italian. The portico facing Grant street occupies the full frontage of the building, and is approached by a flight of stone steps. It has six Doric columns, 22½ inches in diameter; the pediment is dentille, and in the centre, in a circular moulded panel, are the Australian Arms, modelled by Mr Scurry, of Melbourne. The floor is tiled, and between each column are semi-circular headed windows, the centre opening having the main entrance door. The side to the U.T. Creek is cemented, similar to the principal elevation, and has an entrance to the rate collector's office and committee-room. Entering by the main entrance through the lobby, which is 11 feet 3 inches wide, the secretary's office is on the right, and the engineers on the left; both rooms are 15 feet b. 12 feet, and 15 feet 6 inches high, with cornices, and flowers at ceilings. The large hall is 60 feet long and 42 feet 9 inches wide.

It is divided and ornamented by pilasters set in Keen's cement, with moulded caps and bases, and handsome cornice, frieze, and architrave. The ceiling is wagon-shaped, and boarded, for acoustical purposes; the height in the centre is 21 feet 6 inches, whilst to the top of the cornice it is 16 feet. The iron tie-rods of the principals shew below the boarded ceiling, and will be found useful for suspending flags or other decorations when required. The hall is lighted by eight circular-headed windows. There are two fireplaces, and cemented dado and skirting all round the walls. Ample inlet ventilation is provided on the Tobin system through the pilasters and louvres in fanlight over the doors, while for the outlet ventilation there are three T galvanised iron tubes, communicating with louvres on the outside of the roof. There are zinc discs hung below the ceiling to prevent any possibility of down draught. This is the system introduced by Mr Ellerker in the State School, Lee street, Carlton, which is acknowledged to be one of the best ventilated schools in the colony. At the end of the hall, a handsome stage, 26 feet by 15 feet, has been erected, which will prove of inestimable service for public meetings and performances. The acoustic properties of the hall appear to be excellent. Immediately at the back of the hall is the committee-room 30 feet by 15 feet, and 15 feet 6 inches high; there is also the rate collector's room, 12 feet by 10 feet 9 inches, and both have handsome cornices and centre flowers, and are well ventilated. The roof is covered with the best Bangor slates. The iron railing was supplied by Messrs Philips and McWalters, of the Victorian Foundry, Melbourne, and is a good specimen of casting.

We understand the Councillors are perfectly satisfied with the manner in which Mr W. H. Ellerker has carried out the work, without having given any trouble to them, and without involving them in any extras—a most unusual thing—and they have invited that gentleman to the banquet and ball to be given on the occasion of opening the hall. In conclusion we must not omit a word of praise to Mr Carison, who has carried out the work—as he always does—in the most satisfactory manner, and given general satisfaction. The ratepayers of this Shire have now a hall second to none in the Eastern district, and we feel sure that they will never regret having erected their new Shire Hall.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 7th July 1882
Courtesy National Library Australia

A description of the Town Hall.

Of note is that it mentions that the new Town Hall is located on the same site as the first Town Hall. It also mentions that the Coat of Arms was created as a part of the original plans.

The ventilation system was based on the ventilation system previously introduced at a Carlton State School, which was known at the time as being one of the best ventilated schools in the colony.

Alexandra Times
Friday 7 July 1882
National Library Australia

NEWSPAPERS

Opening of the New Shire Hall.

The new Alexandra Shire Hall, of which we gave a full description in a recent issue, was formally opened on Monday last. The weather fortunately proved propitious, the sun shining brightly forth, and adding brilliancy to the animated scene. Shortly after midday, the township began to wear a holiday appearance, and people commenced flocking in from all directions. The Corner Hotel, as usual on occasions of a festive nature, was gaily decorated with bunting, while from other buildings an occasional flag was to be seen waving in the breeze. About 2 o'clock the Alexandra Brass Band, under the leadership of Mr F. Scorah, took up its position on the balcony of the Corner Hotel, and discoursed inspiriting music to the crowd which had by this time gathered in the street, and soon afterwards, a cavalcade consisting of about a hundred horsemen, and several buggies filled with occupants, with Mr Peter Dunn, the president of the Shire, at the head, started out to meet the special coach containing the Ministerial and Parliamentary guests. The people of Yea having taken advantage of the occasion to offer their welcome to the visitors, Alexandra was not reached until a later hour than was anticipated, and it was half-past four when the coach, attended by its imposing escort, drove into the town. On alighting at the Corner Hotel, the visitors were greeted with three ringing cheers by the assembled crowd, the Band also lending its aid to swell the hearty welcome. After a brief delay, a start was made for the hall, and the visitors were shewn through the various rooms, appearing greatly pleased at what they saw.

Alexandra Times
Friday 21st July 1882
Courtesy National Library Australia

Opening of the Town Hall 17 July 1882.

Alexandra Times
Friday 21 July 1882
National Library Australia

Saturday 20 June 1885

Picturesque Victoria
Marysville to Alexandra
The Argus 1885

In striking comparison to the paltry state school here is the Shire Hall. This magnificent building attracts the attention of every stranger. It is the finest of its kind out of Melbourne.

The main hall is 75ft by 40ft, with a splendid Stage scenery and dressingrooms. Behind this is a council chamber and rooms where Masons meet and offices of the shire, where Mr Moon (the secretary) and Mr Alston (the rate collector) hatch their schemes against the pockets of taxpayers.

The Alexandra Shire Council of nine, of which the present president is Mr Thomas Carison, of Alexandra, are naturally proud of the grand building they own.

The rateable value of the property in the shire is about £20,000. I do not think the council is in debt, but they have a good asset in their Shire Hall

Extract from the Argus 1885
Courtesy National Library Victoria

NEWSPAPERS

DEATH OF A ST. KILDA EX-MAYOR.

The Late Mr. W. H. Ellerker.

To-day we have to announce the demise of another old identity and a former representative of the St. Kilda council, in the person of Mr. William Henry Ellerker, J.P., the well known architect, who died on Monday last at his late residence in Crimea-street, St. Kilda. The deceased gentleman had been in delicate health for some time past and the sad event was not unexpected. The funeral which took place on Wednesday at the Melbourne General Cemetery was very largely attended, the deceased being a prominent Mason and Orangeman, a large number of members of those institutions taking part, general sympathy for the bereaved relatives and regret at the loss of so respected a citizen being expressed.

The St. Kilda council at its meeting on Wednesday evening ordered a letter of condolence to be forwarded to Mrs. Ellerker expressive of sympathy with her in her bereavement.

Mr. Ellerker was born in England and came to this colony in 1853, entering the office of Mr. Thomas Kemp, the well-known Melbourne architect, a few weeks after his arrival. After a long residence in South Melbourne, he settled in St. Kilda where he had resided for many years, always taking an active interest in local affairs. For three years' he filled the position of correspondent of the local board of advice, and in 1884 was elected a councillor of the borough for the North ward. In the following year he was unanimously elected mayor, and carried out the important duties appertaining to that office with satisfaction. During his tenure of office occurred the settlement of the contract with the Government for erecting the new Prince's-bridge, Mr. Ellerker signing the engagement on behalf of his council to pay £10,000 towards its erection; and also the arrangement by which Albert Park was handed over in perpetuity to the councils of South Melbourne and St. Kilda and the Board of Land and Works, thus preventing any more sales of land in that fine park, Mr. Ellerker, with the late Cr. Johnston, being elected as the first trustees on behalf of St. Kilda. After Mr.

Ellerker's term of office was over, he was presented by his brother councillors with a beautifully illuminated address in appreciation of his services, and in 1886 he was gazetted a justice of the peace for the central bailiwick. In March of that year he visited Europe, the tour occupying thirteen months. In 1857 he was elected an associate of the original institute of architects in Melbourne, then a member, and afterwards a Fellow of the present institute, and during his trip to England had the honor of being elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In 1863 he went to Queensland, remaining there three years, during which time designs were invited for the Queensland Houses of Parliament; tenders were called for four of the designs considered most worthy, and that of Mr. Ellerker's was recommended by a royal commission, together with the tender of Mr. C. Beauchamp for adoption, but the Government having by the advice of the colonial architect altered its views and determined to erect all public offices in the same building, Mr. Ellerker's design was not carried out. In 1866 he returned to Melbourne, where he had been in business ever since.

Amongst his works are the Temperance, Horticultural, and Protestant hall, Melbourne; the Carlton Hall erected by Mr. Munro, the Premier, which was commenced and in three weeks the walls were up, the roof on, and Mr. Munro, who had been refused all the large rooms in the district during an election campaign, spoke in it, and was subsequently elected by a large majority. The residences of the Hon. the Speaker (Sir M. H. Davies); the Premier, the Hon. Jas. Munro, M.P., Armadale; the Hon. C. H. James, Toorak; and the late Mr. R. Gibson, Royal Park, are all monuments to Mr. Ellerker's skill and taste as an architect.

The Prahran Telegraph
Saturday 4th April, 1891
Courtesy National Library Australia

OTHER

Other Related Items

WILLIAM HENRY ELLERKER

Architect and Designer of the
Alexandra Town Hall

William Henry Ellerker was born in England and migrated to Victoria in 1853. He took a position with architect Thomas Kemp and afterwards with Knight, Kemp and Kerr, Architects for the design and construction of the Houses of Parliament in Melbourne. Ellerker was elected to the Institute of Architects in 1857 and transferred his employment that same year to the Public Works and Railways Department in Victoria. He travelled to Queensland in 1863, working there for three years in which time he won the competition for the design of the new Queensland Houses of Parliament. The Queensland Government later altered its opinion of the winning design and shelved the project.

He returned to Melbourne in 1866 and practised in Victoria until he retired in the late 1800s. He is remembered for a long distinguished career and for designing many notable buildings. These include the Temperance Hall, Horticultural Hall and Protestant Hall in Melbourne, as well as the Carlton Hall. The Federal Hotel (formerly the Federal Coffee Palace) in Melbourne was also attributed to him (amongst others). William is noted in the book *Victoria and Metropolis* written by A.P. Sutherland for being 'employed by many eminent citizens and politicians to design substantial mansions in Melbourne and the country'. Notably for central Victoria, he designed the Alexandra Shire Hall.

In 1885, William entered into partnership with E.G. Kilburn and the practice continued to flourish in the book years of 1885-92.

After some dispute regarding the proposed location (which held up the project for a month) and after some last minute alterations to the plans to extend the length hall from the 35 feet to 60 feet, tenders were called for.

COAT OF ARMS REVERSED

The Alexandra Shire Hall is adorned with the "Coat or Arms", the Kangaroo and Emu distinctively showcasing two of our prominent and amazing animals while the coat of arms shows our relationship with Mother England.

On the Australian Coat of Alms created for federation in 1901, the Kangaroo is on the left and the Emu on the right (top right).

The Alexandra Shire Hall Coat of Arms (bottom right) has the Kangaroo and Emu reversed, indicating it was created before federation in 1901.

A slight change was made to the Australian Coat of Arms in 1912 to represent each state and address some small concerns.

The current Australian 50 cent piece shows the current coat of arms on our Australian Tender with the Kangaroo on the left which has been normal since 1901.

Interestingly, the 'Bowman Flag' emblem created in 1806 in New South Wales by John and Honor Bowman, bears a striking resemblance to the Alexandra Town Hall Coat of Arms. It was painted using oil paints on silk material from Honor's wedding dress, and was a part of the inspiration for Australia's Coat of Arms.

See our Coat of Arms factsheet for more.
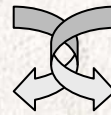
COAT OF ARMS COLOURS

The Alexandra Town Hall was officially opened on 17 July 1882

c1900
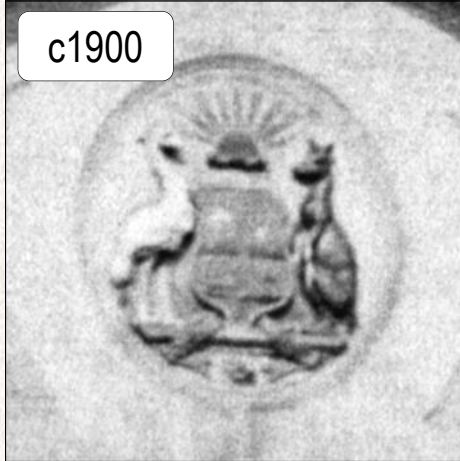
c1900
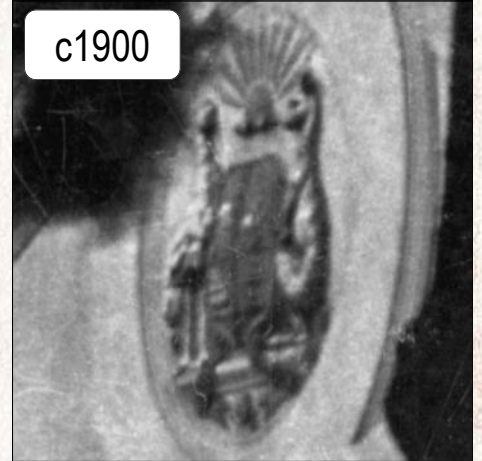
c1912

c1915
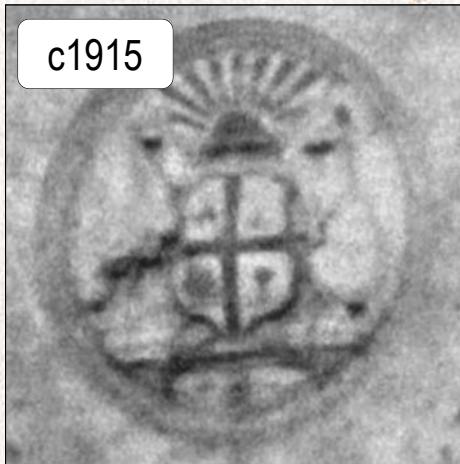
c1950

c1987

2002

2009

In 2013 Alexandra local Rex Tate raised the prospect of recolouring the Coat of Arms on the Alexandra Town Hall to match the original colours. While we may not be able to identify the true original colours (or if it even had colour originally), our research will continue. Any help would be appreciated.

Coat of Arms Sheild Symbols

Stars of the Southern Cross

Golden Fleece
Wool

Mining & Construction

Shipping
Export & Immigration
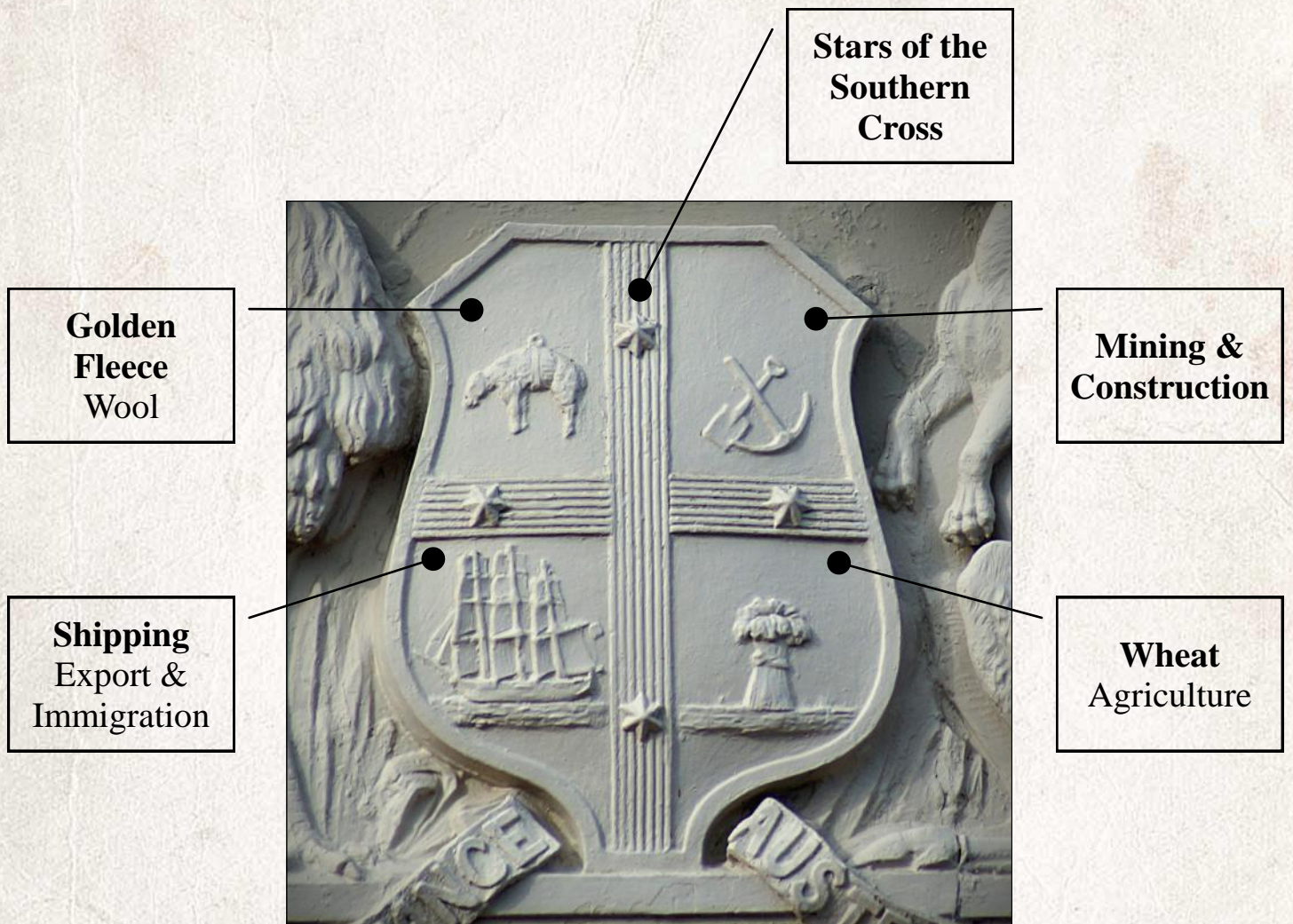
Wheat
Agriculture

The Golden Fleece is representative of animal based farming Industry, and especially the wool industry which was a foundation of the early colony.

The sheaf of wheat represents the Agricultural Industry.

The sailing ship represents Sea Trade (import and export industry) and early immigration.

The shovel and pick represents the Mining and the construction Industry.

The shield is representative of power and protection. The four elements are seen to protect and empower the early colony.

Photograph courtesy Allan Layton 2013.

KEYSTONE MASK

William Henry Ellerker (1853-1891) was the Architect responsible for the plans and construction of the Alexandra Shire Town Hall. He was likely also behind the keystone mask above the door of the Town Hall.

It is not currently known whose face this is and what it is meant to represent. The current thinking is that the face may be that of :

1. **Janus**
    The Roman god who protected doorways and gateways. He had two faces, one looking forward and the other facing backward (as a door has two faces).

2. **Portunes**
    The Roman god of keys, doors and livestock. He protected the warehouses where grain was stored.

Any further information would be appreciated.

Janus
INFO
WEBSITE

Portunes
INFO
WEBSITE
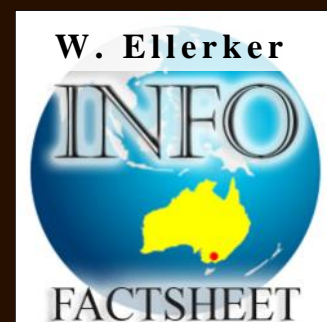
W. Ellerker
INFO
FACTSHEET

SHIRE HALL FOUNDATION STONE

The discrepancy between the date on the Foundation Stone laid at the front door of the Shire Hall and the date on the trowel used to lay it, is shown. It is believed that a hold up with the laying of the stone led to the discrepancy. On Friday 30 December 1881 the Alexandra & Yea Standard newspaper reported that the laying of the foundation stone would be conducted on the following Wednesday, thereby confirming the 1882 date as the official date of the laying of the stone.

The trowel was presented to Shire President Peter Dunn Esp J.P. in recognition of him laying the foundation stone of the Alexandra Shire Hall January (4 January 1882). It is currently held by his descendants. The Dunn Family were district pioneers and large contributors to public affairs locally.
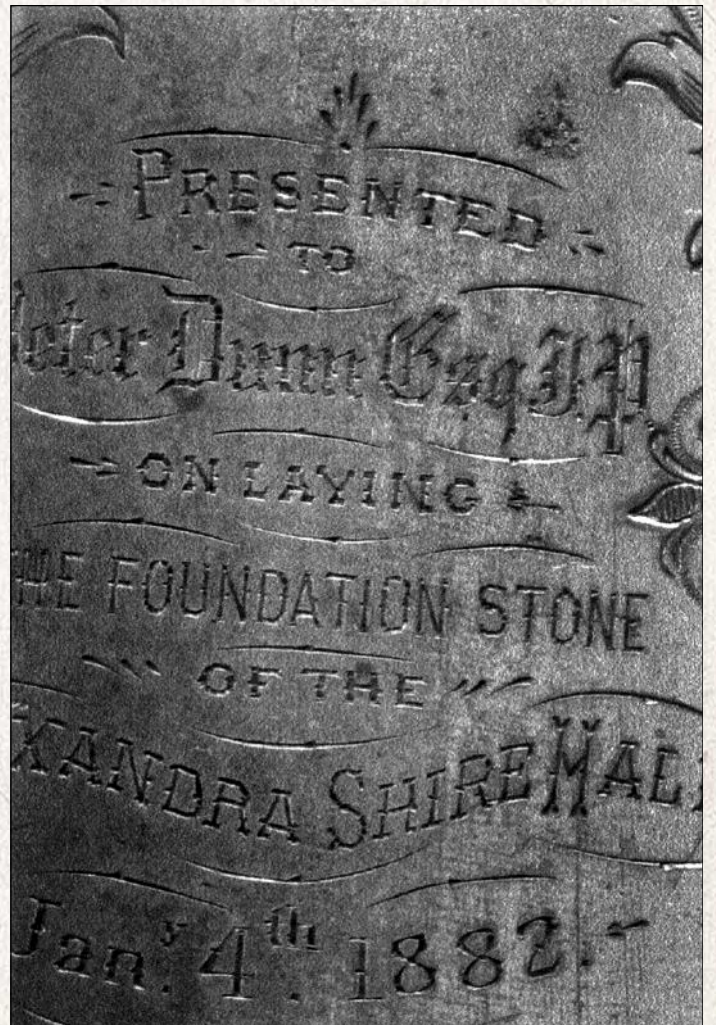
Trowel photographs courtesy Norma & Maria Stace and Noel Spoldin

SHIRE HALL FOUNDATION STONE

I also took an active part in all public affairs was 21 years a Shire Councillor **and being President at the time we were about to build a new Shire Hall (£3000) I had the honour of laying the foundation Stone, and was presented with a Silver Trowel suitably inscribed.** I was President of the Agricultural Society on more than one occasion and did my best for the District in which I spent 36 years of the best of my life.

Extract from
the
History of Peter Dunn

PAYNE FOUNTAIN

ALEXANDRA SHIRE HALL TO PAYNES PARK

The Alexandra Shire Hall 1971

Note the Payne Drinking Fountain located on the bottom right of the above image. This fountain was moved to the Payne Park, corner of Bayley and Cooper Streets, Alexandra at an unknown time.

The fountain has been capped and is no longer useable. As of 2015 there are no drinking fountains located at Alexandra.

The next page shows the fountain at Payne Park.

Photographer John T. Collins
Courtesy National Library Australia

OUR HIDDEN
MEMORIALS

ALEXANDRA DRINKING FOUNTAIN JULY 2015

This drinking fountain was a token gift by the Payne family and was originally erected at the front of the Shire Hall. Today it is located at the Payne Playground located on the corner of Bayley and Cooper Streets, Alexandra. It is not known when the fountain was moved from the Shire Hall. Any information welcomed.

THIS FOUNTAIN IS A TOKEN
TO THE MEMORY OF
CR. ERNEST ENWARD
PAYNE
CR. SHIRE OF ALEXANDRA
1938 - 47
ERECTED BY THE MEMBERS OF
HIS FAMILY

THIS FOUNTAIN IS A TOKEN
TO THE MEMORY
OF ERNEST EDWARD
PAYNE
CR SHIRE OF ALEXANDRA
1938-47
ERECTED BY THE MEMBERS OF
HIS FAMILY
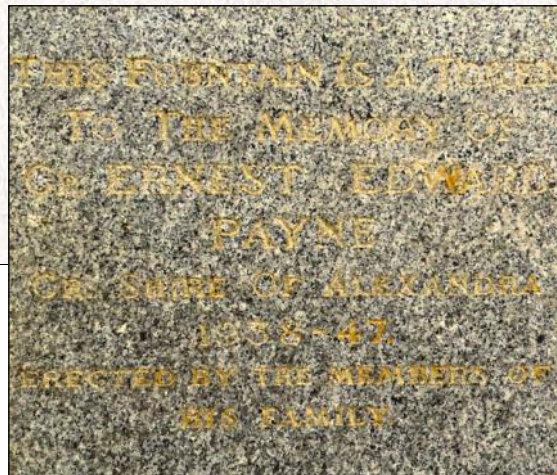
THIS AREA AND
ENTRANCE WAS DONATED
TO THE SHIRE BY
REG E. PAYNE
(CR DURING 1948-67)
AND HIS FAMILY
FOR THE PURPOSE OF A
CHILDRENS
PLAYGROUND. 1985.

What's Missing

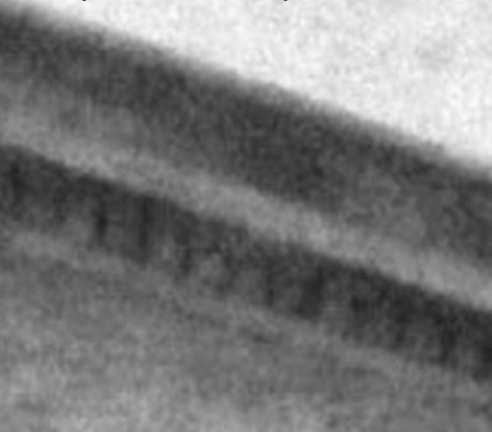|	
Missing:	**Dentils**
Area:	Under the front top of the roof
Building built:	1881–82
Opened::	17 July 1882
Item Removed:	1955
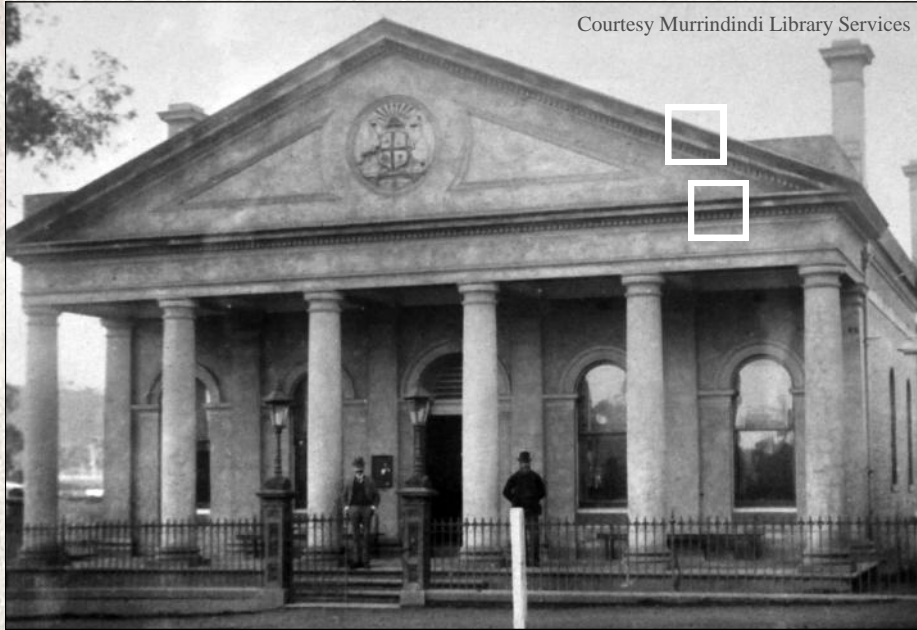
WIKI ENCYCLOPEDIA

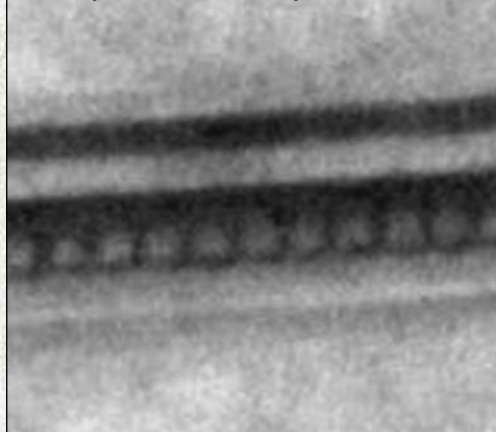Courtesy Murrindindi Library Services

The Alexandra Shire Hall located in Grant Street Alexandra has had its fascia significantly altered from its original design. Many of the original design elements were replaced with more generic decorative elements in 1955. This was done during a period where the Shire Hall was in need of repairs and costs were higher than the Shire could cope with. The high maintenance elements were removed and replaced with more generic elements.

Dentils are closely and evenly spaced rectangular blocks used as decorative elements in early architecture. Often associated with the classical Roman and Greek architecture and the neoclassical (Greek Revival) architecture, they were often molded below the cornice of a building, just below the roofline. Though they were also found in other areas of a building's design such as the portico (the roof over a porch leading to the entrance of a building) held up by as seen on pictures of the early Alexandra Shire Hall.

Circa 1910
Courtesy Murrindindi Library Services
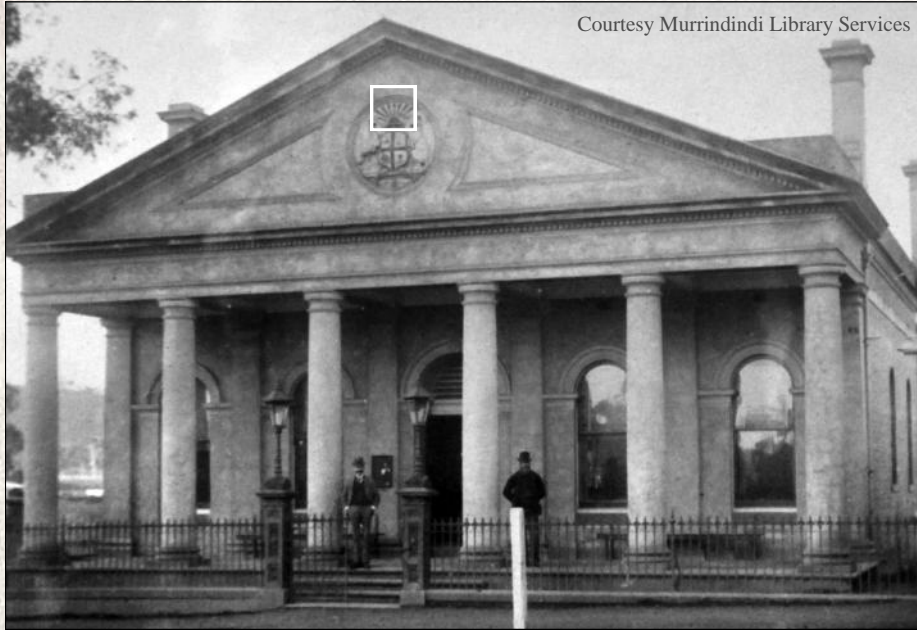

Circa 1910
Courtesy Murrindindi Library Services

Today

What's Missing

|	
Missing:	**Insert Panel Molding**
Area:	Around the inserted panel (Coat of Arms)
Building built:	1881–82
Opened::	17 July 1882
Item Removed:	1955

WIKI ENCYCLOPEDIA

Courtesy Murrindindi Library Services

The Alexandra Shire Hall located in Grant Street, Alexandra, has had its fascia significantly altered from its original design. Many of the original design elements were replaced with generic decorative elements in 1955. This was during a period where the Shire Hall was in need of significant repairs and the maintenance costs were deemed too high. Therefore the high maintenance elements were removed and replaced with lower cost elements.

The decorative panel moldings located around the inserted decorative Coat of Arms once featured evenly spaced lines used in early architecture. This was associated with the classical Roman and Greek architecture and the neoclassical (Greek Revival) architecture. These were used around inserted panels to create a decorative effect. This simple and effective design element was often seen in other areas of a building's design, and was cheap and easy to create. Below are some images showing the early Alexandra Shire Hall insert panel. Today the insert panel is smooth (right image).
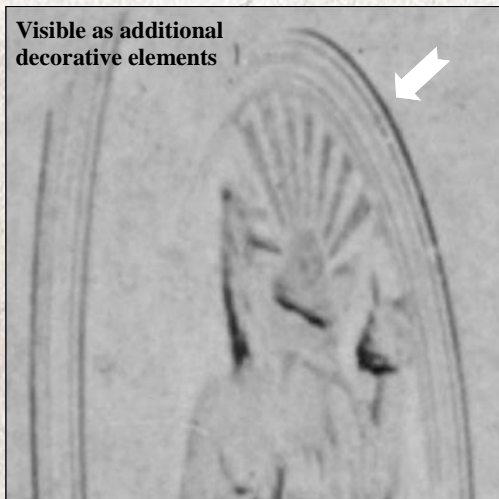
Visible as additional decorative elements
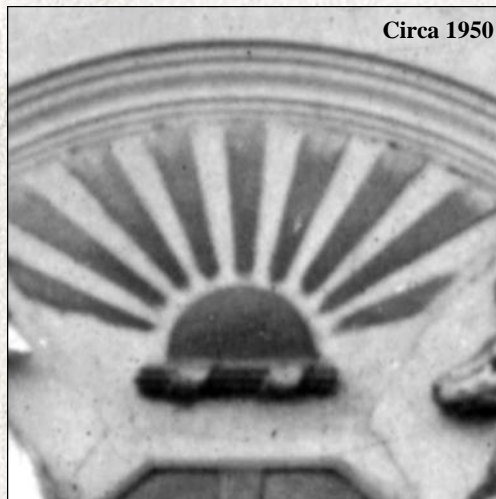
Circa 1950
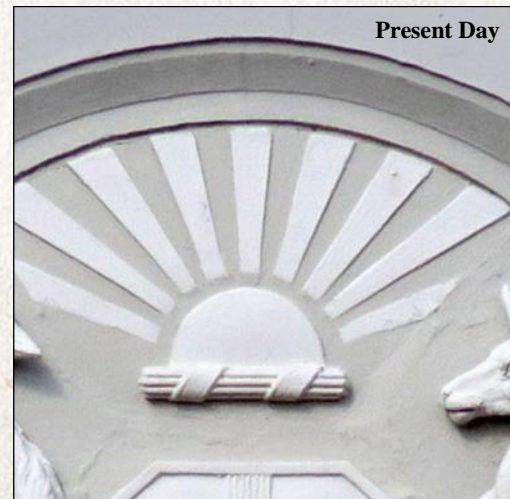
Present Day

NOTES

- The first Town Hall in Alexandra was built by Richard (Dick) Vining, and was often referred to as 'Vining's Athenaeum Hall. It was Christened the "Alexandra Town Hall" by Vining himself upon the laying of the foundation stone in 1871 and served many purposes akin to a those of a Town Hall.

- The Foundation Stone at the front door says "ERECTED A.D. 1881", yet was actually laid 4 January 1882 by Peter Dunn Esq due to an unknown hold up.

- The current Shire Hall was built to conform with a "Classic Italian" Architecture.

- Shire Hall building was at the time the greatest single building costing for the Alexandra Shire.

- The current Shire Hall originally had a tiled floor.

- The current Shire Hall was built with a then state-of-the-art ventilation system, that was previously used at a Carlton State School. This school was regarded as having one of the best ventilation systems in the colony at that time.

- In the 1980s the then Shire Council attempted to have the Town Hall demolished. A public outcry saw them reverse their idea and led to the Shire upgrading the structure instead.

- In 2012, the Alexandra Cinema closed for good. The cinema had for many decades operated out of the Town Hall successfully, though changes in entertainment technology and the way people watch movies saw a significant decline in patronage. A renewed attempt was made to bring the cinema back and this has been successful to date.

- The Coat or Arms were called the "Australian Arms' and were modelled by Mr Scully of Melbourne.

Artworkz

Serving the community