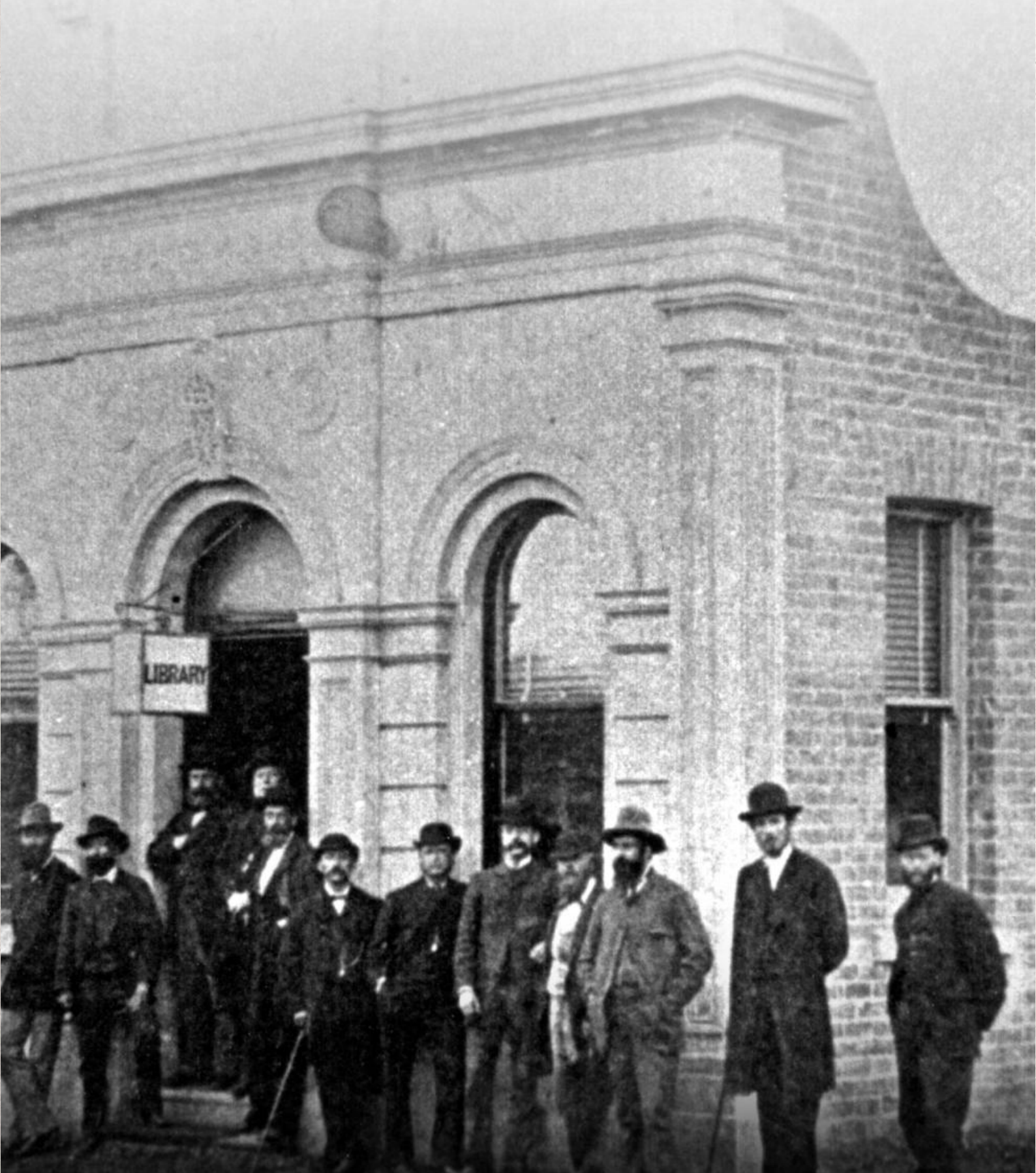


ALEXANDRA



LIBRARY



**HERITAGE
STRUCTURE
SERIES**

ALEXANDRA LIBRARY

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HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

First established:	1877
Building (stage 1):	1883
Extension (stage 2):	1891
Extension (stage 3):	2004/05

Originally the Free Library was run from a room at the early Alexandra Hotel. Later in 1883 the first library building was completed, with a second extension completed 1891 and a third 2005.



The first mention of the need for a library at Alexandra was in the 5 June 1868 issue of the *Alexandra Times* newspaper (its second issue) when schoolboy Mr John O'Connor wrote to the editor John Whitelaw stating:

'As a school-boy, badly provided with books, and having some spare time every evening after school hours to devote to mental culture, I have to request that you will have the kindness to lay before the people of Alexandra the necessity of establishing a reading room in the town, which can be resorted to at (say) one shilling per week'.

However, it was not until some time later that this was realised. The first library at Alexandra was the initiative of local businessman Augustus Moon in 1872 and was run from a small room in the Miners Exchange Hotel (site of the current Alexandra Hotel). However the Hotel was completely lost to the Grant Street fire of 1872 which also destroyed most of the businesses along the western side of northern Grant Street.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

STAGE 2
1891

STAGE 1
1883



It was not until later in 1877 that a Members Committee was formed and a new library was established, which included Augustus Moon. They drafted a set of rules for the running of the library and set up a building subscription system and set the subscription amount. The Committee met at the old Shire Hall on a monthly basis.

Then in 1882 plans were drawn up for a Library Hall and rooms at the request of the Shire, by Melbourne Architect William Henry Ellerker (the same Architect who designed the Alexandra Town Hall). His plans would have cost in excess of 300 pound, but the Shire were only prepared to pay a maximum of 300 pound. Mr Ellerker was asked if it would be possible to reduce the size of the project by only building the 20 ft x 30 ft hall and leaving the two additional rooms to be built at a later stage. Mt Ellerker agreed.

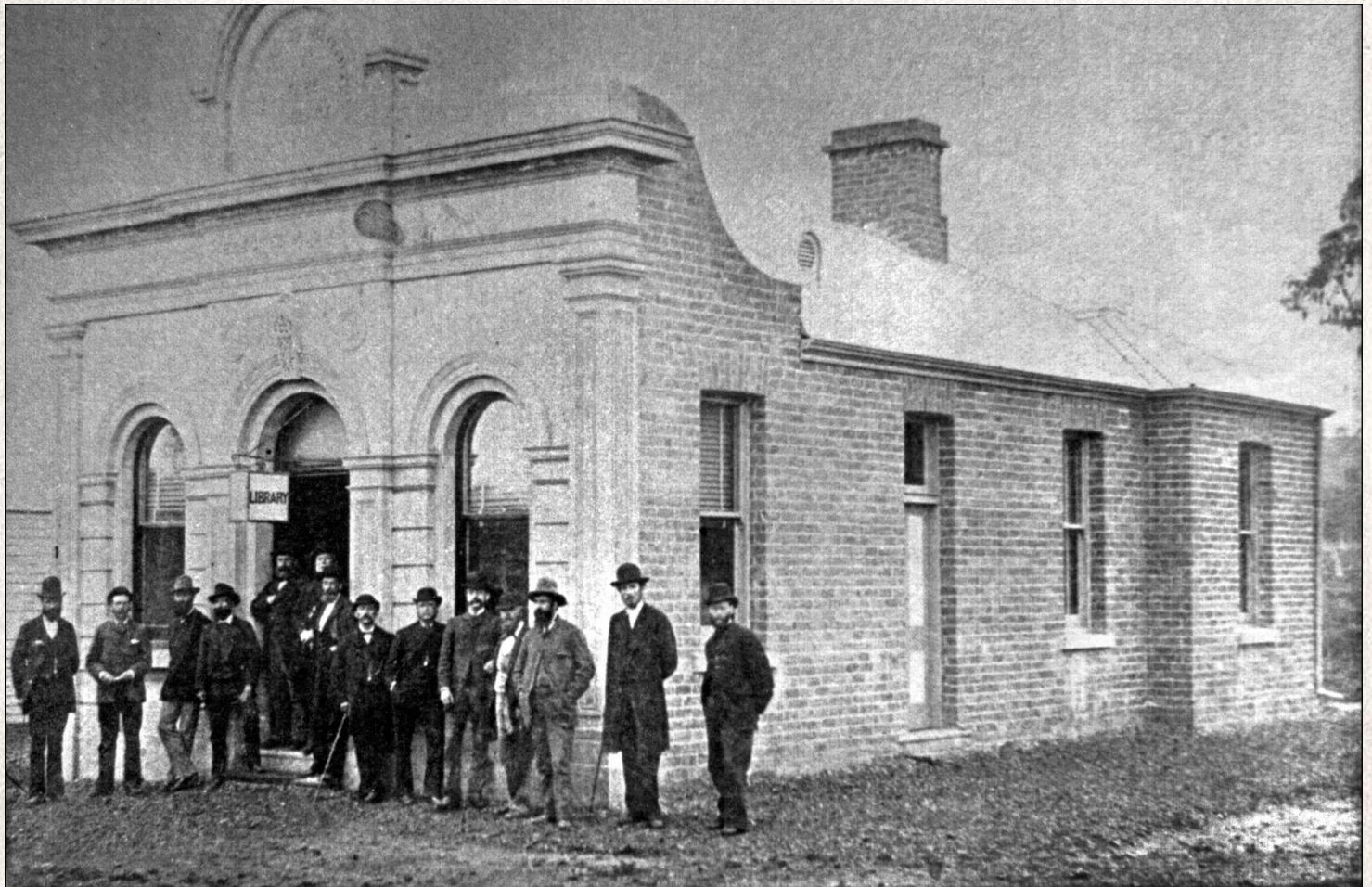
In 1883, after the completion of the Alexandra Town Hall and on the opposite corner of Grant and Perkins Streets, the library moved into its newly built Mechanics Institute and Free Library building. The new building ended up costing 500 pound and marked the

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

beginning of the Alexandra Library - which remains to this day. This brought to reality, the dream of Augustus Moon, who had desired to see the establishment of a library to service the entire community. The opening day of the Library (Mechanics Institute) attracted around 1,000 people and the brass band were a highlight of the ceremony.

The appointment of the library's first paid assistant proved beneficial. In the first half of 1883, the library averaged 17 persons for each night the institute was opened. Yet, they also had 18 books unreturned out of their 630 volumes. Late subscription fees also hindered the progress of the library. The purchase of venetian blinds and lamps that year cost the library £15.



The Alexandra Mechanic's Institute & Free Library building in 1883.

Photograph courtesy Wayne & Jo Miller 2010.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

In 1884, the year after opening, 4,293 visitors took the time to write their names in the visitor book. By 1885 the libraries reading room contained over 700 volumes.

In 1891, the building capacity was doubled, when a billiard room was added on the left of the original structure. The facade identically matched the existing facade of the first building, expanding the windows to four, and the entryways to two.

In 2004, the modern extension (visible on the left of the structure) was added to library. This led to a doubling of the floor space. The extension was constructed on the land that was previously used by the Alexandra Standard until circa 1966 when the Standard Office building was removed and the business moved further north to 45 Grant Street.

During the 2004 renovation, a time capsule was uncovered by workers in the wall on the northern side of the Alexandra Library building. The wall has been originally constructed as a part of the second extension in 1891, the same date shown on documents in the time-capsule. Previous to the time capsule being found, the wooden Alexandra & Yea Standard Office building was located on the northern end of the library and butted up to this brick wall, made from hand made local bricks.

The time capsule was located when the wall was being partly dismantled to make way for a large archway allowing passage between the newest third extension (built 2004/05) into the second extension (built 1891).

The contents of the capsule included four hand written pieces of paper in a large glass bottle, three glass ink bottles and one clay ink bottle. They were put into safe storage by the Alexandra Library and remained boxed until Artworkz were made aware of the time capsule and its contents 29 March 2016 by Library officer Libby Kotschet. David Hibbert of Artworkz photographed the items in question that day and commenced work on a factsheet the following morning.

Today, this original 1887 structure, makes up the right hand half of the historic library building. The library has access to tens of thousands of publications, access to computers, as well as offering ongoing community events. With a full time staff of three workers, and a mobile district library truck, the community is well served by this ongoing community service.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

In March 2015 a small Mechanics Institute Plaque paid for by the Friends of the Library was unveiled on the front outside wall of the library.

Local Cath Chanter told us of her memories of cooking in the old kitchen prior to the 2004 extension when the kitchen was relocated. She told us of how events and even weddings were held in the library, and how the catering was done by locals. She fondly spoke of how the ladies would work together and make trifles.

TIMELINE

BASIC TIMELINE OF EVENTS



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

5 June 1868

First mention of the need of a Library in the local print media (*Alexandra Times*, 5 June 1868).

10 February 1882

Thomas Carison gave a rough quote on the price of a 20 ft x 15 ft Mechanics Institute Hall (258 pound). Land owned by Mrs Whitelaw was considered for the hall on Downey Street opposite the Post office and adjoining Mr Allardyce's residence. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 10 February 1882).

17 July 1882

The Alexandra Town Hall was officially opened. It was constructed by local builder Thomas Carison in accordance with amended plans from Melbourne Architect William Ellerker (offices at 41 Collins Street, Melbourne).

1 September 1882

Plans for a Mechanics Institute hall and rooms were received by the Shire from Melbourne Architect William Ellerker:

*Plans were received at the beginning of the week from Mr W. H. Ellerker, architect of a design for the Mechanics Institute and Free Library building proposed to be erected in Grant street, Alexandra. If carried out according to Mr Ellerker's plans, the building would be an ornament to the town, but it is feared that the cost of such a hall would be too great for the limited funds of the committee, and some modifications will probably have to be made. The matter will come up for discussion at the Monthly meeting of the committee to be held next Monday evening. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 1 September 1882).*

6 October 1882

Melbourne Architect William Henry Ellerker drew up plans for a Library Hall (Mechanics Institute) and rooms. He was then asked by the Shire if reducing the plans by building the two rooms at a later stage would be possible to keep the cost of the building below 300 pound. He agreed it would be.

*'Mr Ellerker to furnish a plan in the amended form'. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 6 October 1882).*

20 October 1882

The Shire gave a donation of 25 pound to the Mechanics Institute



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

building fund. Builder Cr Thomas Carison (who had just built the Shire Hall) seconded the motion brought forward by Cr Lamont. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 20 October 1882).

17 November 1882

Tenders called for the erection of Hall for the Mechanics Institute (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 17 November 1882).

15 December 1882

The only tender received for the construction of the Alexandra Mechanics Institute and Free Library was from Thomas Carison. The price being £390 14s 6d (with a slate roof) or £365 9s 8d for an iron roof. The time for receiving tenders was extended. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 15 December 1882).

12 January 1883

Thomas Carison awarded the contract to build the Alexandra Mechanics Institute and Free Library:

'Your committee have much pleasure in stating that the tender for the erection of a new building has now been accepted, Mr Carison of our Town being the successful tender; amount of tender £365 for an iron roof building. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 12 January 1883).

29 June 1883

The Alexandra Library was built and a Grand Opening advertised in the local newspaper for Monday 2 July 1883. It was advertised as a GALA DAY, Grand Procession, Fancy Dress and Carnival in the afternoon. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, 29 June 1883).

1884

In its first operational year, 4,293 visitors took the time to write their names in the visitor book.

1885

The reading room contained over 700 volumes.

8 July 1887

Tenders invited for the erection of about 1 1/2 chains of piquet fencing between the library and Mr Sault's residence. (*Alexandra & Yea Standard*, Friday 8 July, 1887).



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

- 1891** A second extension to the Alexandra Library was built.
- 5 March 1891** A time capsule was placed in the northern wall of the Alexandra Library second extension.
- 6 March 1891** The issue of the Alexandra and Yea Standard dated Friday 6 March 1891 carried no obvious mention of the time capsule which was later found during renovations in 2004.
- 14 February 1951** The Department of Lands and Survey, informed the Council that steps were being taken to transfer the Alexandra Mechanics' Institute and Free Library. (*Alexandra Standard*, Friday 23 February 1951).
- c1968** The Alexandra Standard Office was demolished.
- 1969** Alexandra celebrated its Centenary.
- 2004-2005** A third extension was built onto the Alexandra Library on land where the wooden Alexandra Standard building once stood and the 'Alexandra Standard' had been printed for many decades.
- 2004** A hidden Time Capsule was discovered by workers removing bricks from the old northern wall of the second extension of the Alexandra Library.
- 2012** Artworkz commenced work on this factsheet.
- 29 March 2016** Libby Kotschet of the Alexandra Library made us aware of the time capsule and where it was found. Photos were taken with an iPhone to be replaced with better images once a professional photoshoot could be organised.
- 30 March 2016** Artworkz commenced work on a factsheet for the time capsule found in a library wall 2004.
- November 2016** Abode Restorations commenced restoration work on the facade of



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

the Alexandra Library. Works were completed by early December and painting was completed by late December.

29 November 2016

Abode Restoration worker Simon Nygaard spoke at the Artworkz HistoryCafe on the work being undertaken by him at the Alexandra Library and previously at the Alexandra Post Office.

9 December 2016

Artworkz published eSplash164 with an article on the work being done to the Library by Abode Restorations and Simon Nygaard.

21 December 2016

The Alexandra Standard published an article based on the eSplash article.

June 2019

Work on creating a Wiki site for the library commenced under the guidance of Libby Kotschet and with the help of Artworkz researcher Allan Layton.

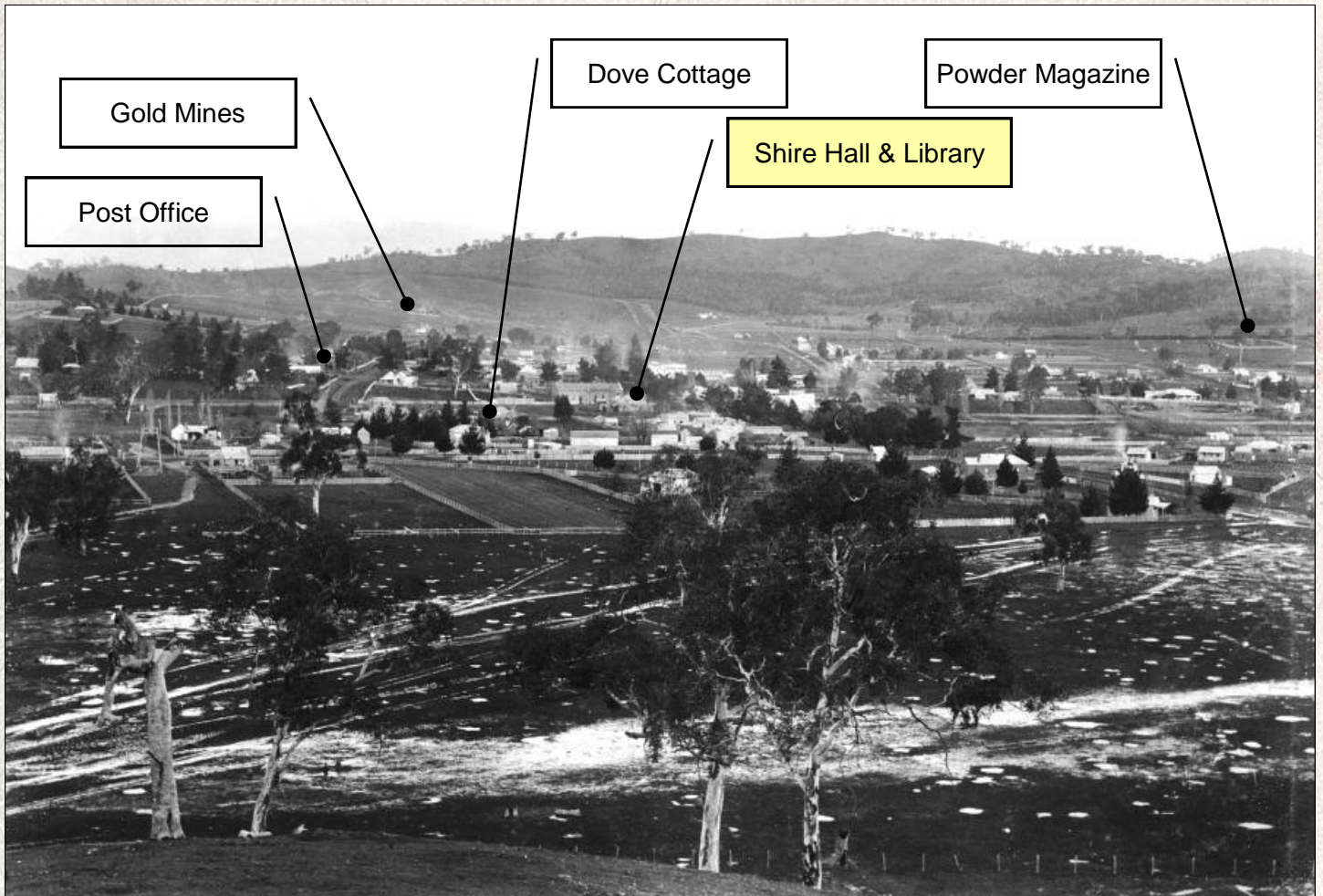
GALLERY

RELATED IMAGERY



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



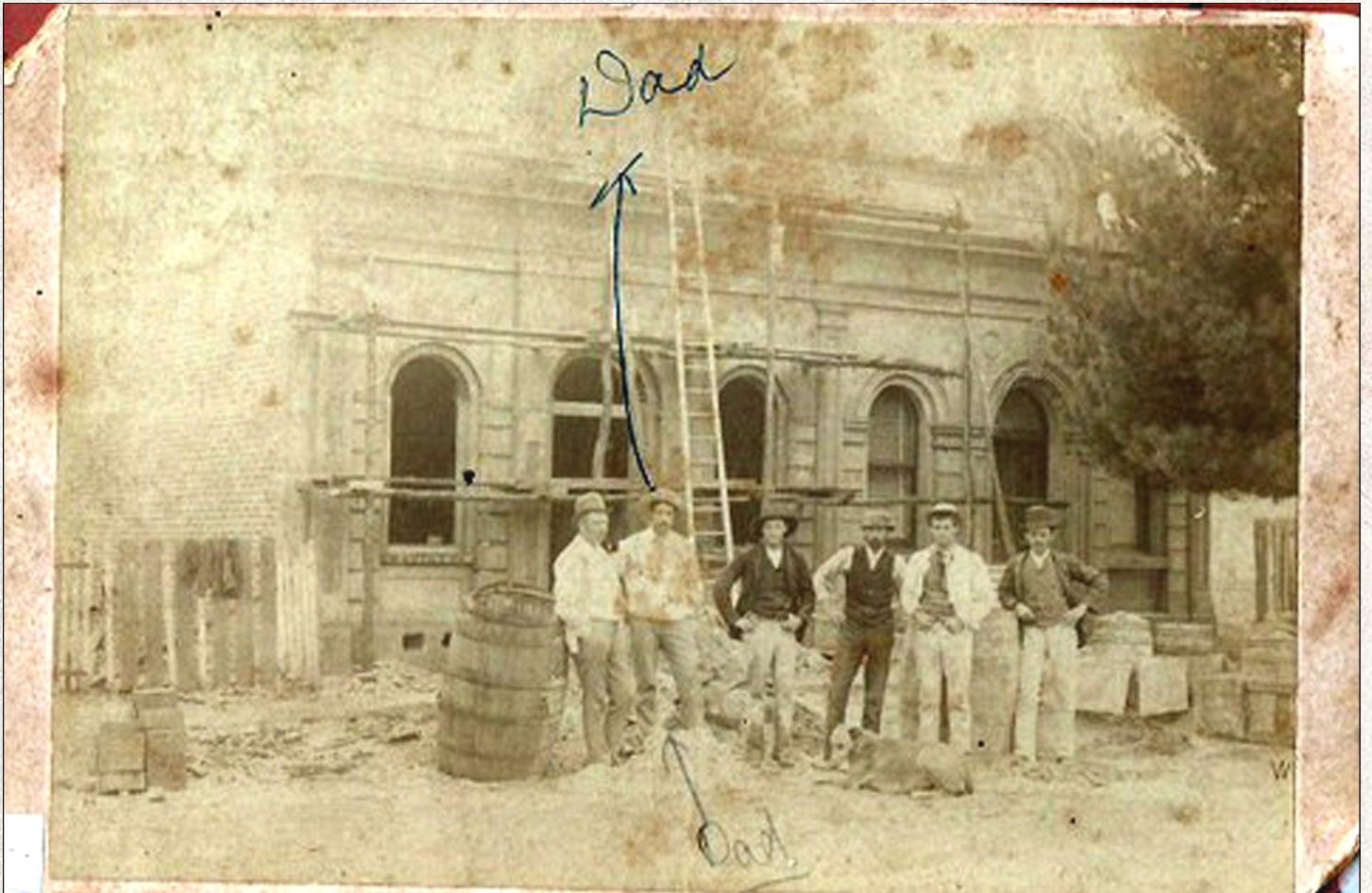
The Library is visible in this early image of Alexandra, thought to have been taken in the early 1900s.

The left image shows the library in the foreground and to the right of the Shire Hall.

Courtesy Hans Schonekas. 2010

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



The second extension to the Library building being built 1891. A time capsule (notes in a bottle) was already hidden in the left wall in the weeks or months preceding this photograph being taken.

This photograph first came to our attention 3 June 2016 and efforts were commenced to try to connect with the family to garnish more history of the photograph. Before we heard back, it was posted on facebook 24 June 2016.

Photograph courtesy Pam Thompson and Libby Kotschet 2016



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



Library building and Standard Office in Grant Street circa 1910

Photographer Lin Cumming
Courtesy Sandra Cumming and State Library Victoria



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



The Alexandra Free Library and the Standard Machine Printing Works, located in Grant Street Alexandra, and photographed above circa 1900.

This picture is after the extension to the Library was added (left section) in 1891.

Photographer Lin Cumming
Courtesy Sandra Cumming and
State Library Victoria



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



Alexandra Standard Office pictured between 1921 when the bell was installed, and before 1945 when a filling hydrant was added to the tower.

Courtesy John & Wilma Page



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



Library building, Shire Hall & Standard Office in Grant Street circa 1910

Photographer Lin Cumming
Courtesy Sandra Cumming & Courtesy State Library Victoria

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



Illustration gifted to the Alexandra Library June 2016, showing the structure circa 1910

Illustrator Barry Roberts. Gifted to the Alexandra Library June 2016



ALEXANDRA
SERIES 3 : 80

LIBRARY

Courtesy Kelly Petersen and
David & Debbie Hibbert 2016



The Alexandra Library was built in 1883 and extended in 1891. Here it can be seen with the former Standard Office located on the left.

In November 2016 elements of the exterior of the library were restored (in some instances replaced) by Abode Restorations, under the supervision of specialist Solid Plasterer Simon Naygaard. We first met Simon at the Alexandra Library when he spoke at the final HistoryCafe for 2016, held on 29 November. The night was a huge success thanks to his informative talk. Our team then sat with him the next morning over breakfast and asked him lots of questions. We learnt a considerable amount from Simon in a short period of time, thanks to his love and passion for his work.

Y o u r S u b m i s s i o n s w e l c o m e



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



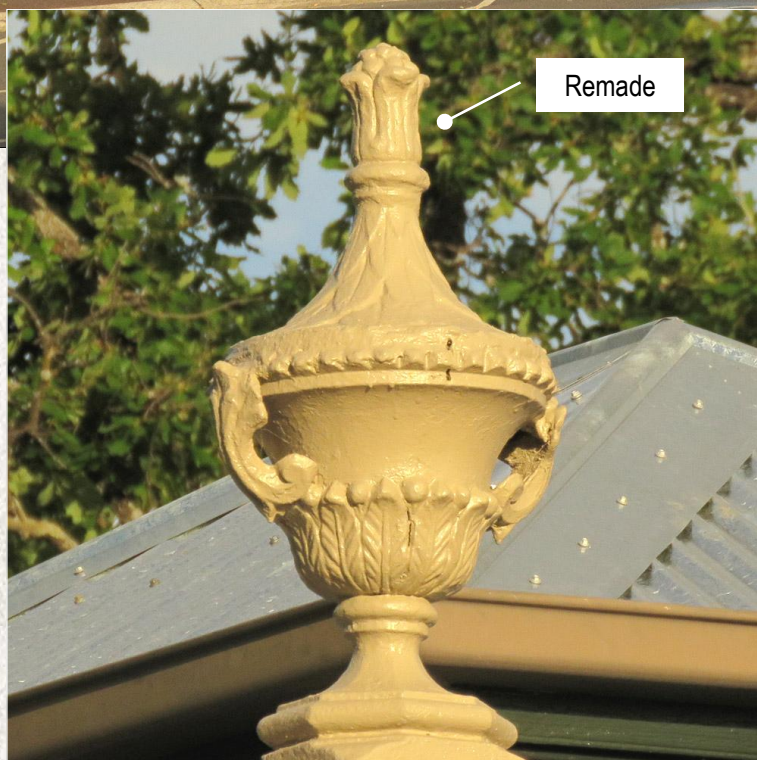
Sky light exterior August 2015

Photograph © Allan Layton 2015



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



After the exterior renovations completed in November 2016

The top section of the item on the left was completely remade by creating a rubber mould (from another one) and using the mould to replicate the missing one.

NEWSPAPERS

RELATED NEWSPAPER ARTICLES



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPERS

To the Editor of the Times.

SIR,—As a school-boy, badly provided with books, and having some spare time every evening after school hours to devote to mental culture, I have to request that you will have the kindness to lay before the people of Alexandra the necessity of establishing a reading-room in the town, which can be resorted to at (say) one shilling per week. I myself would find, apart from other advantages, much relaxation from the arid study of science, which my rigorous teacher imposes upon me, and a perfect knowledge of which is so rigorously enacted by this gentleman of science. If you would afford me space in your valuable journal, I would call for the solution of a question now and then, with the view of exciting in the minds of some of the young people attending school a very laudable emulation; egotism shall by no means actuate my conduct in this regard.

I remain, Mr. Editor,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN O'CONNOR.

Alexandra Times
Friday 5 June 1868
Courtesy National Library Australia

First mention of the need of a Library in the local print media.

Alexandra Times
Friday 5 June 1868
Courtesy National Library Australia 2018



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPERS

SATURDAY 27TH JUNE 1885

Picturesque Victoria - Alexandra

The Argus 1885

The free library and reading-room is an institution they are proud of at Alexandra. I have to visit this, escorted by Mr. Hardy, the president, and "our Joe," the honorary secretary.

This building costs £600 to erect. The library contains 700 volumes, and the reading-room is well supplied with periodical literature.

It is only open during three nights in the week. These nights have come to be considered events to lighten the daily toil.

Everyone using the reading-room is required to record his name in the visitor's book. Last year the attendance was 4,293, showing that the institution is well appreciated.

Extract from the Argus 1885
Courtesy National Library Victoria

The free library and reading-room is an institution they are proud of at Alexandra. I have to visit this, escorted by Mr. Hardy, the president, and "Our Joe," the honorary secretary. This building cost £600 to erect. The library contains 700 volumes, and the reading-room is well supplied with periodical literature. It is only open during three nights in the week. These nights have come to be considered events to lighten the daily toil. Everyone using the reading-room is required to record his name in the visitors' book. Last year the attendance was 4,293, showing that this institution is well appreciated.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPERS

ALEXANDRA FREE LIBRARY.

The half-yearly meeting of subscribers to the above institute was held in the Protestant Hall on Tuesday evening last, the members present being Mr B. Smith, P. M., and Messrs Harly, Harker, Brennan, Hall, Waymouth, Gordon, Davies, Rev. W. Wykes, and Wheeler, acting secretary. Mr Hardy was voted to the chair, and the minutes of the annual meeting held December 29th 1882 having been read were confirmed. Mr Wheeler then read the committee's report as follows:—

"Your committee have pleasure in stating that the number of visitors to the library during the current half year is 1,500, giving an average of 17 for every night the institute is opened, which is a marked improvement on the previous half-year, when only 850 visited the institution, giving an average of 11. The number of subscribers during the half-year has increased, there being now on the register 39 as against 31 last year. It is to be regretted there are a few members who are dilatory in paying their subscriptions, and it is to be hoped they will take the hint and pay up. There are now 630 books in the library. The thanks of the subscribers are due to Messrs. Taylor, Nicholson, and Starling for their donation of books. There are still missing from the library 18 books which the committee would like to see returned. The committee have met regularly once a month for the transaction of business, and the meetings have been well attended. The appointment of a paid librarian has proved very beneficial to the institution. Your committee have urged the claims of the library on the Government for an increased allowance toward the building fund, and are pleased to report, with very satisfactory results, the fund having been benefited to the extent of £56. The Government subsidy to the book fund only amounts to £65 0s 3d. A special effort to raise funds locally was made, and the sum of £84 0s 6d collected. An entertainment was given by the Dramatic Club which benefited the funds to the extent of £19 8s 5d. The new building is now completed to the satisfaction of the committee. The total cost of contract was £465 7s 9d, for £200 of which your committee have become jointly and severally responsible. The committee have incurred additional liabilities for venetian blinds and lamps, amounting to £16, besides which it will be necessary to provide chairs, tables, shelves, &c., which we estimate at about £15. The committee have arranged to formally open the new library on Monday, the 2nd July, and in connection therewith have made arrangements for a street procession in the afternoon, and concert and performance in the evening, to be followed by a ball, which celebrations your committee are sanguine will be largely patronised by the public, and very materially aid the building fund, and express the hope that every subscriber will do his best to assist them in making the celebration a success in every way, and thus relieve our institute from the incubus of debt, and make it in reality what it is in name, "free." The retiring members of the committee are Messrs. Waymouth, Drake, Gordon, and Davies, who are eligible for re-election. A president has also to be appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. W. G. Moon. A librarian has also to be appointed. In conclusion the committee express the hope that subscribers will be more numerous, especially as the fee is so small, being only 7s 6d half yearly, while the benefits to be derived, and the increased comfort and convenience which will be found in the new building have been so materially increased."

The election of President was then proceeded with, and on the motion of Mr Harker, seconded by Mr G. Hall, Mr Harly was unanimously elected to fill that position. The president having returned thanks, Messrs Gordon, Waymouth, Drake, and Davies, were unanimously re-elected as members of committee. Mr Bough having been re-appointed librarian the meeting terminated with the usual vote of thanks to the chairman.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
29th June 1883

Courtesy National Library Australia

A TRIP TO ALEXANDRA.

(By a STRANGER.)

Having a week's leave of absence from duty on the score of ill health I left Melbourne on Saturday, the 3rd ult., with the intention of visiting some old friends of mine residing a short distance from Mansfield. On consulting Bradshaw's Guide I discovered that my destination could be reached either by the Yarra track, or *via* Benalla, or through Yea, and as the last route gave me an opportunity of seeing the Goulburn River, I decided upon taking it, and after seven hours journey reached the ancient city. Like the majority of my species there was enough natural inborn villainy within me to make me yearn for the local papers, and on my applying for them two were handed to me, viz., the *Alexandra and Yea Standard* and the *Seymour Express*, both creditable productions, and far above the average of country journals. A staring notice in the first mentioned paper attracted my attention, inasmuch as it announced the opening of the Free Library and Mechanic's Institute at Alexandra, in aid of which a grand Carnival *a la* Venice would be a great feature in the day's proceedings. My curiosity was aroused, and on making enquiries it turned out that it was possible to include this township in my trip, so without further consideration, and as the coach was just starting I jumped on board and rattled away. After a journey of 20 miles through splendid grazing and agricultural country Alexandra was reached, and accommodation having been secured at Hamea's Corner hotel, one of the best out of Melbourne, I proceeded to view the lions of the town. The first thing that attracted my attention was the Shire hall, a magnificent building supported by four pillars, and altogether a most massive structure, and adjoining this was the Free Library, a compact looking little place neatly finished outside and just completed at a cost of £500, and which reflects the greatest credit upon the promoters. The Post and Telegraph offices are also of a very superior description, and taken altogether the township can boast of the best collection of public buildings out of the metropolis. I returned to my hotel, the rain which had been threatening all the forenoon came down with great determination, and evidently made up its mind to mar the proceedings if possible, but those who had got up the various dresses from town were not to be beaten so easily, and like the gallant 600 they charged Jupiter Pluvius with umbrellas, and despite every obstacle, and amid the cheers of 1000 people the march was commenced from the post office, and proceeded up the main street thence to the library, headed by the Brass Band which discoursed sweet music and showed evidence of careful instruction. The library doors having been opened a number of persons were admitted, and the inside of the building showed that the contractor had done his work well. It looked really neat, and when the £250 debt is paid it will, no doubt, look much neater.

Speeches were delivered by Mr G. Whiting, and by a gentleman named Mr Wheeler, who in very flattering terms referred to the original promoters of the Institute, and his remarks were to the point and properly appreciated by all present. He concluded by installing the new President, a Mr Harly, and this gentleman coming forward was received with applause. One survey of his features was sufficient to convince me that he was the right man in the right place, as his face at once invited confidence, containing as it does every quality essential for a person in position; to command the respect of his co-workers; and I must heartily congratulate the committee upon their choice. After this business was concluded every one cleared out with the intention, no doubt, of getting ready for the great evening's amusement in the Shire hall, and, along with the majority, my steps were directed to my temporary abode, and after a sumptuous repast my evening togs were donned, and I started for the hall just mentioned. Imagine my astonishment on beholding the interior, which was most beautifully finished, and for some time I could hardly believe that I was in a country hall. The stage was a most capacious one, with every requisite for the production of extensive plays, and the acoustic properties of the building as afterwards evidenced were simply perfect. The curtain rose at 8 o'clock sharp upon a farce entitled "A Dead Shot" by the Alexandra Dramatic Club, and the way they carried it through reflected every credit upon them. The two ladies performed their parts splendidly, and the parts of Captain Cannon and Hector Timid were faithfully portrayed by two gentlemen whose dramatic powers are of no mean order. The piece was well placed on the stage and at the conclusion the performers received quite an ovation from an audience of fully 600 persons. A short interval followed, and then a Christy Minstrel performance took place, and the collection of voices was very rare for a country district. The chorus singing was a perfect treat, and with the well organised orchestra a better combination of talent could not have been wished for in a professional troupe. A nigger farce concluded the entertainment and the room was then cleared for dancing. The fancy costumes worn during the day were again brought into requisition, and the light fantastic was indulged in until the "wee sma' hours." As my time was limited I engaged a trap and started on my journey well pleased with my trip to Alexandra, which, taken altogether, is one of the most good ahead places it has been my lot to visit.

Alexandra Standard
20th July, 1883
National Library Australia



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPERS

ALEXANDRA PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The usual monthly meeting of the library committee took place on Monday evening last, there being present Messrs. Hardy (president), Long, Davies, Moon, and Gordon (hon. sec.) The minutes of the previous monthly meeting, and adjourned meetings, were read and confirmed.

Mr. GORDON announced that the sum of £16 6s 2d has been passed by the Department to the book fund of the institution, being £10 in excess of the amount received last year, and nearer what the institution was entitled to than had previously been the case.

On the motion of Mr. LONG, seconded by Mr. GORDON, it was resolved that the book committee be instructed to bring up by next day of meeting a list of books it deemed desirable should be purchased.

Mr. HARDY said it was with much regret he had to announce the utter collapse of this year's sports in aid of the funds of the institution. The committee as a whole were undoubtedly held responsible for the failure, but the onus of the blame rested chiefly on those members who accepted the responsibilities on the sub-committee appointed expressly to inaugurate and carry out the day's proceedings, and who, in place of doing their duty, never even so much as attempted to do it. Why, he asked, would men accept such positions, at the same time having no intention of doing the work attached thereto? He doubted very much if the sub-committee had held a single meeting, or given the matter a moment's notice, after its appointment. It would be much more preferable if members, instead of accepting such offices as a matter of course, with no intention of doing the work, would refuse to act; the committee would then be in a fair position and know what to do. In the present instance the committee trusted greatly to the sub-committee—a body which neglected every one of its functions—with the result that the library had been brought into disgrace so far as its out-door sports were concerned.

Mr. GORDON was of opinion that the committee, as a body, were wholly to blame in this matter. If the sub-committee neglected their duty, the committee should have appointed others in their place.

The plain fact was that from the first members of committee had been wholly wanting in interest in the proceedings. There had been a lack of zeal and enthusiasm throughout, which could have no other result than the miserable failure which had attended them; and it was useless blaming this body or that when they were each equally at fault. If members of committee would not put themselves out of the way a little, and take some interest in proceedings for the benefit of the institute they managed, it was not to be expected the public would render them much assistance.

Mr. LONG also thought the committee had themselves to blame, but considered that out-door sports were a dead-letter in Alexandria, unless they could introduce some novelty; and doubted whether, in the event of the sports taking place, much more success would have been attained, beyond that of keeping faith with the public. He noticed, however, that when any affairs of this kind were to come off, the work was always shelved upon the shoulders of one or two individuals, and that if these willing horses kicked, as they had done in the present case, the whole thing collapsed. Members should take equal responsibility and work, and if pursued with energy, success was bound to follow. He felt that a mistake had been made, but trusted it would be a warning in the future, and urge them on to greater exertions next year.

Mr. DAVIES said members had taken no interest whatever in the matter, and could not expect any success. In regard to the sub-committees, there were one or two members upon these who had their whole time taken up in the amateur dramatic performance, which was a credit to all concerned in it, and the only creditable transaction in the whole proceedings, and it could not be expected that these members could attend to everything.

After some further discussion the meeting adjourned.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
5th June 1885

Courtesy National Library Australia



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPERS

**GRAND
OPENING
OF THE
MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
AND
FREE LIBRARY.**

**Monday, July 2nd.
GALA
DAY!!!**



**Fancy Dress
Carnival
In the Afternoon.**

Come and see an exact imitation of the
GREAT CARNIVAL DE VENICE!
Every known Costume in the World
Represented.
The Greatest Sight ever Witnessed in
the Colony.
The All Nations' Fair entirely Eclipsed.
GENERAL HOLIDAY.
The grand and imposing Procession
headed by the
ALEXANDRA BRASS BAND,
And the
MARSHAL
Will start at 8 p.m. punctually, and
after parading the townshipp will return
to the New Library which will be de-
clared open with a most imposing cere-
mony, and the installation of the
NEW PRESIDENT,
After which
**RICHARDSON'S GRAND
AND
WORLD RENOWNED THEATRE**
will open in the Library.
Special Engagement of
PROFESSOR BELLINI
and his Wonderful Troupe of
DERVISHES.
Also the Original and Inimicable
PUNCH AND JUDY,
Imported direct from London for this
occasion.

In the evening in the SHIRE HALL,
**THE ALEXANDRA
AMATEUR
DRAMATIC CLUB**

Have kindly consented to give a perfor-
mance of the Side-Splitting Farce
A DEAD SHOT.

After which, the Alexandra
**CHERRY
MINSTRELS!**

Will give their celebrated
**DRAWING-ROOM ENTERTAIN-
MENT.**

Tickets—5s., 2s. and 1s.
The whole to conclude with a
GRAND BALL.

Tickets to admit Lady and Gentleman 5s.
Full particulars in our next of costumes
which will appear in the

GRAND CARNIVAL!!!
Look Out for the Greatest Turn Out in
the North-Eastern District.
Monday, 2nd July.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 8 June 1883
Courtesy National Library Australia

Grand Gala Day
advertised for the opening
of the Alexandra
Mechanics Institute
and Free Library.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 8 June 1883

**GRAND
OPENING
OF THE
MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
AND
FREE LIBRARY.**

**Monday, July 2nd.
GALA
DAY!!!**



**Fancy Dress
Carnival
In the Afternoon.**

Come and see an exact imitation of the
GREAT CARNIVAL DE VENICE!
Every known Costume in the World
Represented.
The Greatest Sight ever Witnessed in
the Colony.
The All Nations' Fair entirely Eclipsed.
GENERAL HOLIDAY.
The grand and imposing Procession
Will start at 2 p.m. punctually, from
THE COURT HOUSE.
After parading the townshipp will return
to the New Library which will be de-
clared open with a most imposing cere-
mony, and the installation of the
NEW PRESIDENT.

ORDER OF PROCESSION:
MARSHAL,
G. Whiting, Esq., J.P.
Alexandra Brass Band, in uniform.
The Library Committee.
The President and Members of the Shire
Council.
The Ancient Order of Oddfellows.
The Order of Rechabites.
The Lifeboat with its crew.
The Amateur Dramatic Club.
Kenneth M'Lean, the celebrated Scotch
Piper.

Bellini's Dervishers

And the following—
Mr. S. Allardyce, as Prince Charlie.
Mr. C. Hacker, as a Gent. of the Period.
Mr. Jukes, as British Sailor.
Mr. H. W. Alton, as Polish Lancer.
Mr. O. Carlisle as Suliman Pasha.
Mr. Fitchner, as Othello.
Mr. J. A. Gordon, as Don Carlos.
Mr. E. Bough, as Polydorus.
Mr. E. Drake, as Don Cesar de Bazan.
Mr. H. S. Long, as The Grand Vizier.
Mr. A. W. Haslam, as Ah Hong, Esq.
Mr. G. Hall, as King Henry VIII.
Mr. Weymouth, as Robinson Crusoe.
Master Weymouth, as Man Friday.
Mr. E. Rasche, as a Spanish Cavalier.
Mr. W. H. Whiting British Tar.
Mr. J. Cowie, as Tam o' Shanter, and his grey mare, Meg.
Mr. E. W. Sampson, as the original "Mrs. Goggins."
Mr. W. J. Davies, as Man o' War's Man.
Mr. A. Dobson, as Khedive of Egypt.
Mr. D. M'Farlane, as Paisley Shawl Manu-
facturer.
Mr. J. Payne, as Grecian Prince.
Mr. W. Long as Roman Senator.
Mr. K. M'Lean, as Highland Chief.
Mr. W. H. Santit as Signs of the Times.
Mr. H. Anthony as His Wife.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 29 June 1883
Courtesy National Library Australia

Grand Gala Day
advertised for the opening
of the Alexandra
Mechanics Institute
and Free Library.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 29 June 1883

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPERS

Alexandra Library is 100 years old!

1883 must have been a remarkable year in Alexandra – the Agricultural Show was in its infancy, the Football Club was formed and The Alexandra Free Library and Mechanics Institute was built and opened.

The "Alexandra & Yea Standard" of 29th June, 1883, reports that when it was first proposed to establish a local Free Library and Mechanics Institute "there were many persons who looked on the adventure as altogether too advanced for an outside township." However a "sufficient number of unselfish and energetic individuals who fully recognised the advantage to the general public of having such an Institution" organised a meeting and formed a Committee in 1877.

This Committee formed rules and regulations and obtained enough subscribers to secure the free use of the old Shire Hall for its meetings. Later rented

accommodation was obtained in the Protestant Hall.

By June 1883 visits to the library increased "without parallel : the numbers being for the past 6 months 1500 and the previous 6 months 850." Its 630 volumes were supplemented by about 100 volumes on loan from the Melbourne Public Library. The Library building was opened on July 2nd (see photograph).

It was described as "an ornament to the township and alike creditable to the Committee and the contractor, the latter being Mr. T. Carison, who has completed the edifice in

every particular way with his usual carefulness and ability at a total cost of about 250 Pounds including all extras."

The opening was an immense success "inspite of the inclemency of the weather" and was responsible for one of the largest gatherings seen in Alexandra at the time.

A grand procession of the Committee (and others) in fancy dress, and a brass band arrived at the library, the Marshall dismounted, the doors were thrown open, and the large room (now the adult library) was speedily filled, numbers being able to cram in anywhere." They still do.

This historic event was followed by Richardson's Show, a concert in the Town Hall and a Grand Ball which "commenced

at midnight and was carried on with the utmost vigour until 7 o'clock . . . few persons having previously left the floor." (Proceeds amounted to the highly satisfactory sum of 75 Pounds.)

One hundred years later, the Alexandra Friends of the Library, another group of unselfish and energetic individuals, are celebrating this Library's centenary commencing with a birthday party on Wednesday, November 2nd, from 2 p.m. onwards. All residents of Alexandra Shire (and other Library users) are most welcome to join the festivities. The birthday cake will be cut at 3 p.m.

This photograph was taken after the completion of the Library building in 1883.



eSPLASH
MEDIA
ARTICLES

ARTICLES FROM THE eSPLASH eMAGAZINE

Published eSplash124
10 July 2015



Alexandra Library Technology Jump



This month's return of HistoryCafe at the Alexandra Library had a beautiful little twist. Thanks to Alexandra Library staff members Sharon and Libby, HistoryCafe entered the 21st Century with a new 60 inch Samsung Television, an AppleTV unit and the best and most stable conferencing stand we could find.

The equipment was purchased by the Alexandra Friends of the Library Bookshop and bookshop volunteer Ron Cooper made the purchases and setup the equipment.

The new setup showcases modern day technology, including the ability to wirelessly mirror an iPad, iPhone or Mac screen to the ultra bright and high quality television screen wirelessly. This feature allows us to project high quality photos, videos and eBooks in a manner not previously

possible. I ran HistoryCafe for two hours and not only was the wireless projection seamless, it was also in high definition with high quality sound. The outcome was crisp imagery and sound that impressed all present.

HistoryCafe's return was a huge success with 26 in attendance. The free dinner was supplied by the Friends of the Library Bookshop, with Library staff members Sharon and Libby setting up for us. I feel it was our best and most relaxed HistoryCafe yet!

The next HistoryCafe is to be held Tuesday 29 September from 6 pm to 8 pm. A light dinner is supplied thanks to the graciousness of the Alexandra Friends of the Library Bookshop. This will be the second opportunity for us to showcase the district's heritage using the latest technology currently available.

Artworkz extend a huge thanks to the Alexandra Library and the Alexandra Friends of the Library for making this positive move possible.

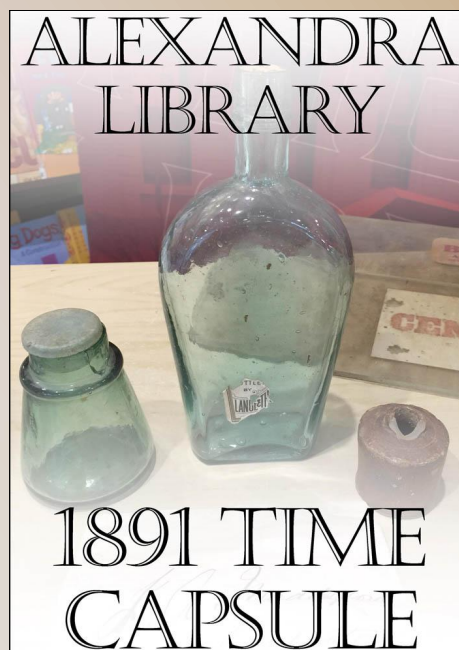


FEATURED EBOOK

Highlighting
Central Victoria

Historical eBook

CLICK TO DOWNLOAD



A small factsheet on the history of the 1891 Time Capsule. This is a living document and any help or corrections appreciated.

A time capsule hidden by workers of the old Alexandra Standard Office 1891 and discovered in the wall of the Alexandra Library 2005.



ABODE RESTORATIONS

- SIMON NYGAARD SPECIALISING IN HERITAGE RESTORATION -

HistoryCafe ends 2016 with a huge bonus

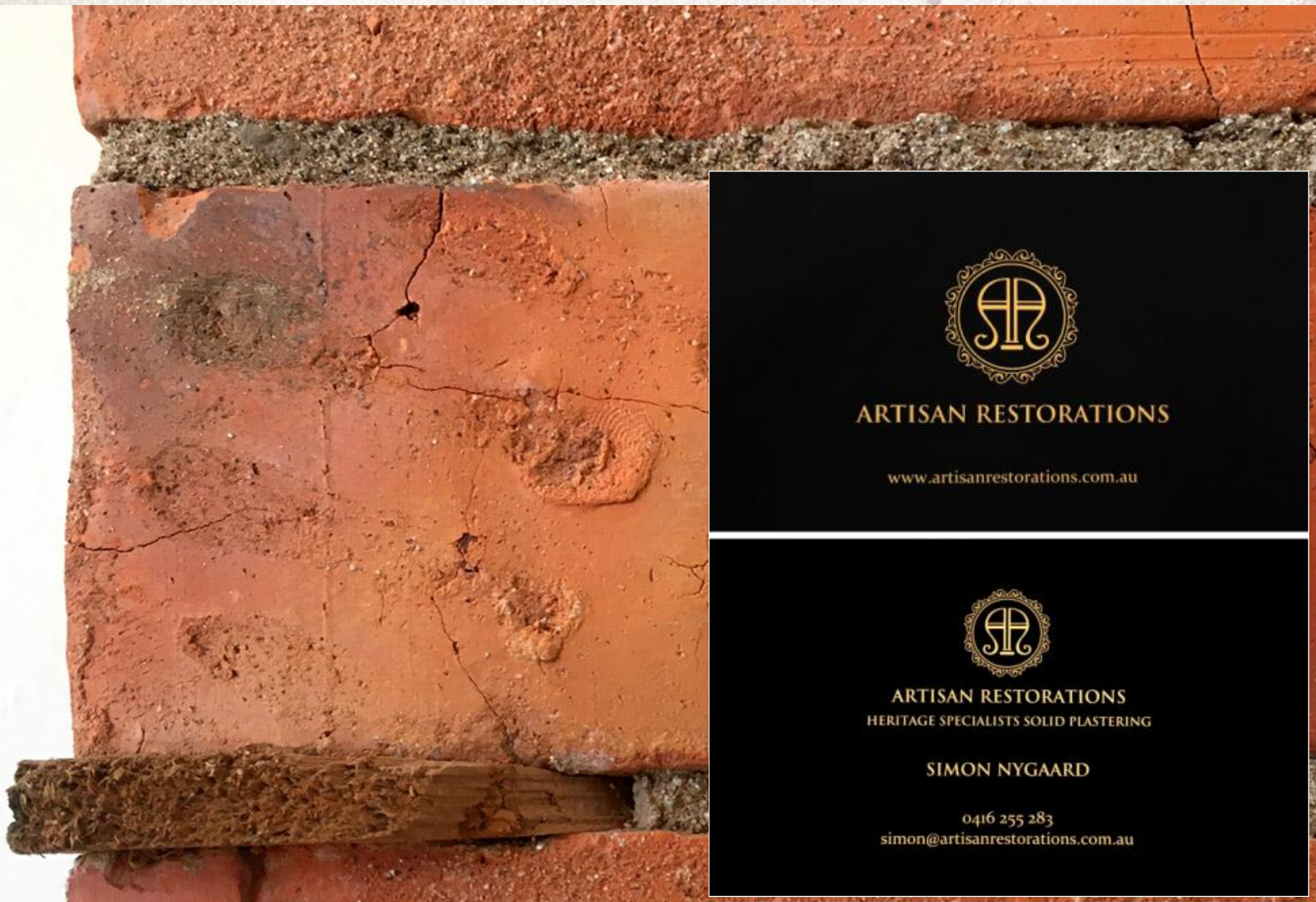


With just two hours before we started our last HistoryCafe for 2016, Libby Kotschet of the Alexandra Library was still working hard and making connections for us behind the scenes. One connection resulted in the addition of a guest speaker for HistoryCafe. Libby had organised Simon Nygaard of [Abode Restoration](#) to talk with us about his previous work in restoring the Alexandra Post Office, as well as his current work on restoring certain external elements on the Alexandra Library.

Simon is what is known as a *solid plasterer* who specializes in heritage restoration. You only have to spend a few moments with him to know he is extremely passionate about his work and our heritage in general. What he taught us about our old buildings, their design and the reasons for their deterioration over time was amazing and very informative. He opened our eyes to the Architecture behind the Town Hall, which is something we will now cover in detail next year. All HistoryCafe attendees we have spoken with since the talk have expressed how much they enjoyed his talk. I enjoyed the session so much that I asked him if he would attend ArtworkzBreakfast the following morning. He did and we learnt even more. Leisa then organised for Simon to visit the Alexandra Hotel afterwards to inspect the architecture and search for fingerprints in old bricks (which they found).



We extend out thanks to Simon for sharing his knowledge and experience with us at such short notice. If you get a chance, check out the ABODE website (above button) and even watch the time-lapse videos in the gallery section of the website.



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