

## BUNGENDORE NSW



**Name: School of Arts**

**Address: Gibraltar Street Bungendore NSW**

### **The Town:**

Bungendore is a small town, population 2183 (2006 census). It is situated in south eastern New South Wales on the southern shore of Lake George 265 kilometres south west of Sydney and just 27 kilometres east of Canberra.

The place where the town stands today was first reported by white men in 1820 when a party, led by Joseph Wild, camped at Lake George and explored the area. A town grid was laid out by Surveyor Larmer in 1837, when Bungendore was gazetted a town.

There was a strong Irish community in the town, partly because early settlers such as John Dwyer, who arrived in 1837, gathered Irishmen to the town and settlers such as the Rutledge family encouraged Irish settlement, both Catholic and Protestant.

Bungendore was well situated at the crossroads of traffic from Goulburn and Sydney. Before the coming of the railway (4<sup>th</sup> March 1885) considerable quantities of stores for the district



were sent from Sydney by sea, and then up from Bateman's Bay on the south coast by bullock wagon. Bungendore was surrounded by large station properties. Nearly 4000 bales of wool left the railway station in 1887 when the tonnage of goods into Bungendore was nearly 130 000 tons, The population was 270 in 1881, 629 in 1891, and 711 in 1901.

A Hall was finally built in 1883 as the headquarters of a temperance lodge and five years after that, the School of Arts followed as the culmination of nine years of suggestions and deputations, and even a preliminary Government grant of 23 pounds. The movement was the forerunner of the Public Library.

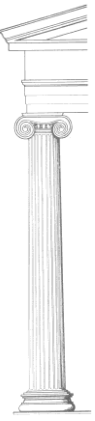


**Front entrance**

### **The Beginnings:**

The School of Arts in Bungendore was established on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1888 at a meeting of William Forster Rutledge (grazier) Charles Augustus Garrard (bank manager) the Rev Edgar F. Hutchings (Church of England parson) John Sparrow (hotel keeper) Thomas Smith (farmer) W.C.Smith (farmer) Robert Pollack (railway employee) John Dickenson (railway employee) A.McClung (flourmill owner) Thomas Foster, Patrick Carroll, W.H.Crowe (storekeeper) W.Temple (farmer), George Smith, J.J. McJannett, Henry Edmonds, and Frederick Nelson.

These nineteen men were the foundation members of the School of Arts. The inaugural meeting, held in the Temperance Hall, elected W.F. Rutledge as Chairman, and the proposal to form a School of Arts was moved by Garrard, and seconded by McClung.



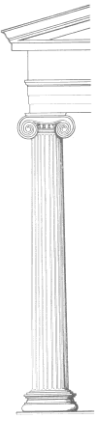
## The Building:

The building is of modest late Victorian weatherboard construction, timber stud framed, pitched galvanised roofs, timber doors and windows, interior lined with boarding. The integrity of the building is intact, although internal walls have been removed to make more suitable areas. But it does not compare in scale with the lavish similar institutions of Goulburn, Yass, and Braidwood in the local region.



**Entrance hallway**

The building is in reasonable condition, although it currently needs attention. The surrounding fence has been partially removed, so the building appears to be in the school grounds, which probably offers it some protection.



## Uses:

The School of Arts in Bungendore was the focus for the sorts of community activities common to all similar institutions.

The building is, and has been used for Scouts and Guides groups; Community Workers' Office; drop in centre for the aged and disabled; billiards, boxing, art, music, yoga classes, bands, quilters; art exhibitions; Land Care and other meetings; concerts, dances and balls and grand celebrations. It continues to provide for the local community in whatever manner current needs demand.



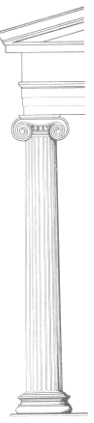
**School of Arts: interior**

## The Heritage Precinct

The Bungendore School of Arts is sited in an important Heritage Precinct, with school buildings to the east, the Post Office and residence to the west, the Police Station Office and residence, the Court House, St Philips Church (residence and hall around the corner in Butmaroo Street); and in the park directly over the road, the War Memorial, and a memorial drinking fountain to commemorate P.J.B. Osborne, Councillor and Shire President, who was directly involved in bring a water system to the town.



**School of Arts: rear view**



## Other buildings in the Bungendore Heritage Precinct

**The Court House**



**St Philips Church**



**War Memorial; School of Arts at rear**

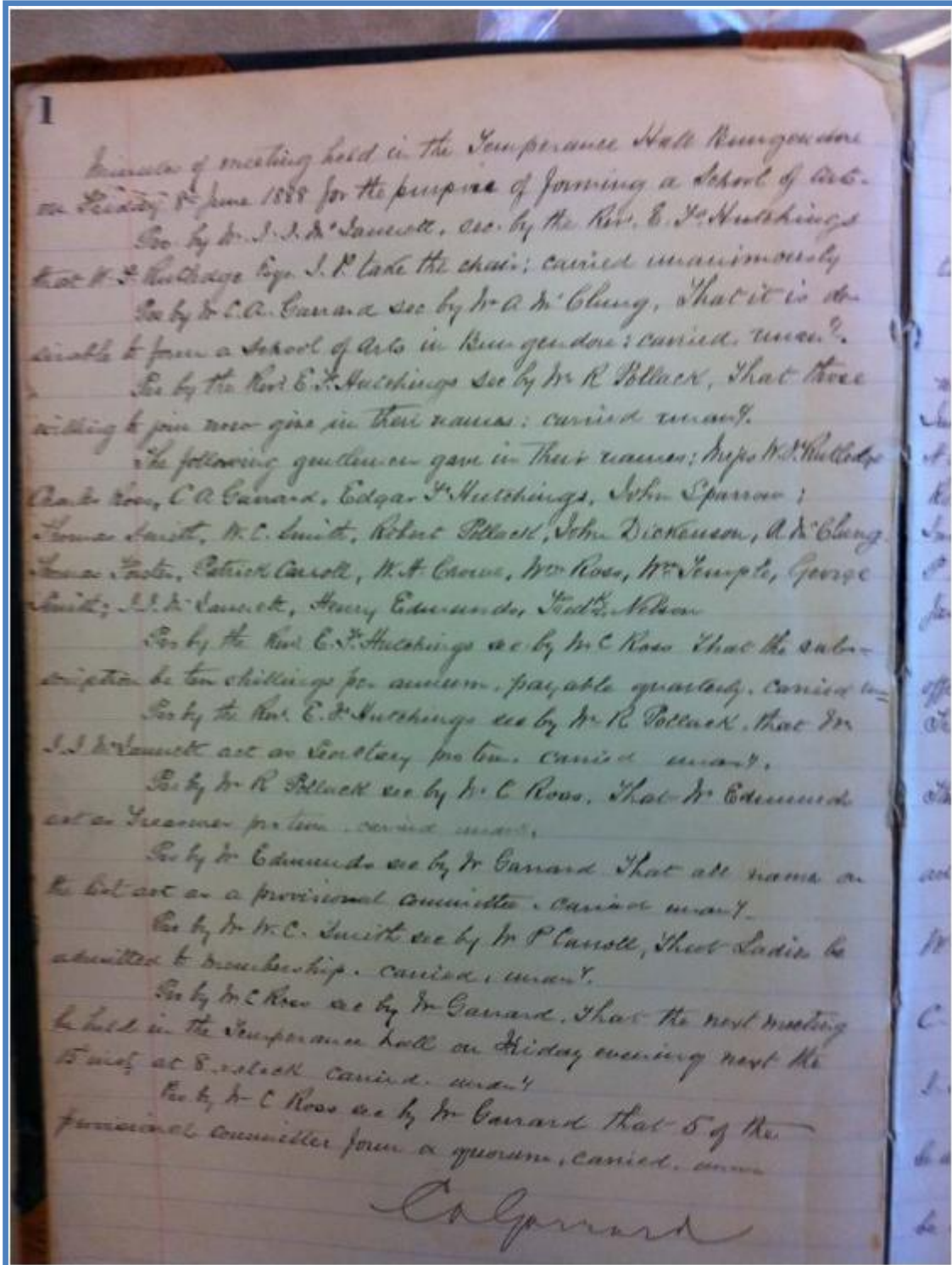


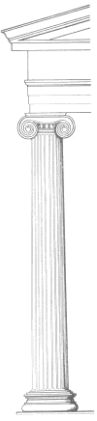
**Memorial Drinking Fountain**



**Page from Minute Book of the Bungendore School of Arts held by the National Library of Australia.**

**These minutes record the inaugural meeting in June 1888 to establish the Bungendore School of Arts. (See notes below)**





## Excerpts from Minute Books of the Bungendore School of Arts. (*Records held by the National Library of Australia*).

Notes by Josephine Martin 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

- **8 June 1888:** A band of men, headed by William Forster Rutledge met in the Temperance Hall in Bungendore for the purpose of forming a School of Arts. Nineteen men attended, those men formed a perfect cross section of society.
- Two motions were carried unanimously:  
*“that it is desirable to form a School of Arts in Bungendore”* and *“ ladies be admitted to membership”*.
- **19 June 1888:** A meeting in the Temperance Hall again to look for suitable premises and furniture. Proposed that a musical entertainment and a dance be got up in aid of the School of Arts. Assistance required in getting free books from the Government. Request to Minister of Lands for two acres of land by the Police Office, facing Gibraltar Street.
- Meeting held **21 June 1888:** A Mr John Dwyer had promised them he would give up the place he was living in at present on or about 1 July on being paid the sum of two pounds. The Reading Room was opened 7 July, 20 attended. Library opened 14 July.

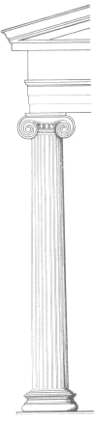
### Progress and development:

- **July 1889:** Proposed small reading room to be erected on land kindly given by the Government to the Institute; tender accepted 6 August (no sum mentioned).
- First debate **28 June 1892.** 46 members at that time.
- Meeting **30 June 1897:** Some repairs and additions to the building necessary.
- **20 September 1897:** Special meeting. Loan of maximum one pound from Committee members to fund painting of existing building and picket fence (eight pounds three shillings and sixpence)
- “Lantern” lectures to be given. Periodicals, papers, books accounts.
- Cricket Club asked not to store their gear in the School of Arts building
- List of members in attendance, minutes, correspondence, reports, accounts, dramatic club, chess, chrysanthemum show, ball!
- **23 July 1901** reports changes in committee, new Trustees membership, finance, Reading Room, Library. Building and fence are in good repair.



- **10 July 1906:** Motion to add two extra rooms discussed; to be recommended.
- **19 July 1906:** Extension, building of similar material, about 15x25 to be erected western end, right angles to the existing building. Three rooms - Reading Room, Committee Room, Library.
- **9 October 1906:** Five pounds five shillings allocated to plans and specifications of new buildings [unfortunately neither survive].
- **14 April 1908:** Billiard room proposed.
- **10 June 1913:** Tender accepted for billiard room, 105 pounds.
- **26 January 1915:** Sports day and ball.
- Annual membership 85 members **July 1915.**
- Disasters mentioned. No improvements other than essential maintenance. Water tank installed.
- **Annual Report 1916:** H.F. Rutledge enlisted [for war service]; space on committee; funds good; billiard room a steady source of revenue.
- **1917:** Institute now stands with a total of 1353 books with fairly full supply of daily papers and periodicals.
- Honour Board names many heroes who have left this district to fight.
- **13 September 1918:** New petrol lights to be proceeded with replacing gas lights in Reading Room.
- **26 November 1920:** Euchre party and dance held at School of Arts, charges 6/- and 3/6.
- **21 July 1921:** Meeting deferred until October; decided to “carry on” with School of Arts.
- **1924:** Painting and repairs.
- **1 January 1925:** School of Arts to run race meeting [bookies and all!].
- **21 October 1925:** Tenders accepted for additions to Institute Building.
- Bungendore Literary Institute overdraft of 300 pounds requested.
- **4 September 1930:** Bungendore Baby Health Centre to be given permission to build a room on Bungendore School of Arts.
- **1933-34:** Ladies 26 members; gents 23. **1938:** Ladies 19, gents 34.
- **26 August 1941:** “Recent rowdiness at the School of Arts” outlining drinking within the building, rowdiness and certain damage (apology and recompense from one of the culprits).





**Acknowledgements:**

Judith Turley: *Palerang Councillor; Member Palerang Heritage Committee*

Andrew Riley: *Secretary, Committee Member and Booking Officer for 14 years*

Angie Angel: *Journalist, Bungendore*

Ann Elder: *Postmistress, Bungendore Post Office*

Janice Knight: *Bungendore Public School*

**References:**

The National Library of Australia (NLA) holds archival records of the Bungendore School of Arts.

The records are in the Manuscript Collection of the NLA identified as **NLA MS 663**.

*Canberra Collection* edited by P.A. Selth

*Queanbeyan, District and People*: Errol Lea Scarlett

*Australia's Colonial Culture*: George Nadel

Article, *Bungendore Mirror* 26 May 2101: Angie Angel

Heritage Walk around Bungendore 2012: Sally Osborne, Member Palerang Heritage Committee.

*Bushrangers to Beautification: A Stroll around Bungendore*: reprinted 1995

**Compiled by Josephine Martin ,**

“The Briars” Bungendore.

Member Palerang Heritage Committee

Member ADFAS Canberra

**ADFAS Canberra**

**June 2012**