

The New Community Hall

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On Saturday, the 26th January 1980 the new Tarooma Community Hall was officially opened by the then Warden of Kingborough, the Hon. W.C. Hodgman. The Council served tea and biscuits and the Hall was open for public inspection. A small crowd was reported to have attended. So began the life of the Community Hall.

It was built to meet a need for public community facilities and to replace the old Ex-Servicemen's Club in Jenkins Street. The Ex-Servicemen were to have their own room in the new building.

The building cost \$152,624 to construct and consisted of the Hall itself, the Ex-Servicemen's room, a kitchen, two store rooms and toilets. Its management was placed in the hands of a committee of representatives of local organisations interested in using the Hall. These organisations included the Ex-Servicemen's Club, the Playgroup Association, the Country Women's Association, the Senior Citizen's Club, the Lion's and the Kingborough Council. In 1981 this group was expanded to include the Apex Club.

The first recorded meeting of the Community Hall Committee, later to be known as the Hall Management Committee, was held on the 29th November 1979. Those present at that meeting were Councillor Ashton, chairman, Messrs. Hean, Shelley, Munro and Mesdames Lane and Rapley. Following the official opening the first meeting of the Committee at the new Hall was held on the 5th February 1980.

At that meeting, and at subsequent meetings, the Hall Committee received many donations to assist with furnishing and equipping the Hall. Within the first few months the Ex-Servicemen's Club donated their piano and flag pole, the Sandy Bay Lion's Club gave \$1,200 for kitchen items, crockery and cutlery, \$200 was received from the C.W.A. for drapes. One hundred chairs and 10 tables were received from the Kingborough Lion's Club, for which they were later reimbursed \$2,000 following the Committee's receipt of a \$2,500 government grant. Three hundred dollars was donated by the Playgroup Association, of which \$200 was

to be spent on drapes and \$100 to be reserved for playground equipment. Later the Hall Committee received \$250 from the Kingborough Council for shelving and crockery, and \$150 from the Apex Club for the badminton court and equipment.

In early 1983 the Hall Committee agreed to a request from the Keith George Memorial Fund to extend the Hall by building a new room on the south-eastern corner of the building. This would increase the versatility of the building by providing the community with a small meeting room. It was named in honour of the late Mr Keith George, a former Principal of the Tarooma State Primary School. The Keith George Memorial Room was opened on the 11th December 1983 by the then warden of Kingborough, Mr E. Tabor. It cost \$17,929 of which \$2,000 was donated from the Keith George Memorial Fund. The C.W.A. and Senior Citizens contributed towards the cost of the curtains for the new rooms, while the Ex-Servicemen's Club purchased new chairs and tables.

Since its construction the Hall has been used extensively. A number of community groups, such as the Senior Citizens, Playgroup, C.W.A. and Ex-Servicemen, use it regularly for their meetings and activities. The facilities provided by the Hall cater easily for the many and varied activities conducted there: from the needs of the children attending Playgroup sessions to the bowls afternoons organised by the Senior Citizens.

The Hall has also provided an ideal location for wider community activities. The annual Carols by Candlelight service, conducted by the combined Tarooma churches, is held at the Hall, as is the Anzac Day service conducted by the Ex-Servicemen. In 1984 the Tarooma rest Area was awarded a Certificate of Merit in the Tidy Towns Competition and the award commemorating this now hangs just inside the Hall. In 1983 the C.W.A. planted a rose garden around the flag pole to commemorate fifty years of C.W.A. worldwide. Adjacent to the Hall the Children's Playground has been developed and the area now incorporates the newly located Child Health Clinic. On the eastern side of the Hall an adventure playground is planned for older children.

In addition to its community role the Hall is available for private hire to both the local and wider community. Over the years it has

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been the venue for a number of weddings, engagement and birthday parties, fashion parades, dances, afternoon teas, family gatherings, commercial activities, school functions, meetings, conferences, church services, immunisation sessions, sporting activities and fitness classes. The money received from such hire is used by the Management Committee both to maintain and upgrade all the furnishings and equipment.

Thus the Hall has come to provide a focus for community life in Taroona. It is used regularly by a number of local groups and is hired often by private individuals and other organisations. It is managed and maintained by the community and over the years has come to provide a meeting place for young and old. It is an invaluable facility within the suburb, greatly appreciated by all.



Taroona Park after the 1967 bushfires. The New Community Hall is now built in the middle foreground.

PHOTO PAMELA MOORE.



New Community Hall, Batchelor Way, 1986.