

ORBOST HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

P.O. BOX 284 ORBOST VIC 3888



President: Beryl Macalister
Vice President: May Leatch
Secretary: Paul Dawson
Treasurer: Paul Dawson
Museum Curators: Eddie Slatter
Marina Johnson
Margaret Dewar
Heather Terrell
Research Secretary: John Phillips

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 2006

'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday evening, November 12, 1924:

Proposed Public Hall at Brodribb

The Brodribb River folk have come to the conclusion that a public hall would prove a great acquisition to their community life, and, in an enthusiastic manner, they are setting about the task of attaining this desirable goal. If they are ambitious, who will blame them.

Before any attempt can be made to erect such a building at least £300 must be secured, and a committee has been formed to devise ways and means whereby the money can be raised to carry the project through to a successful issue.

Mr M. Lynch has generously donated a block of land situated on the Princes Highway, and has thereby helped the promoters over the first hurdle.

To assist the movement the committee has decided to hold monthly dances, and in the near future the Rev. F. G. Faram will be organising a concert program by Orbost artists.

The Rev. H. C. Busby has promised to give a moving picture program and a big fete is being organised for the beginning of the new year.

Already the district is being canvassed and the project promises to be carried through successfully. The hon. Secretary of the movement, Mr Ray Lynch, will be glad to receive and acknowledge donations from any source.

'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday evening, July 28, 1928:

TENDERS

Tenders are invited (labor and material) for the erection of a Public Hall at Brodribb. Plans and specifications may be inspected at Mr. R. Mosley's Office, Nicholson street, Orbost.

Tenders returnable Wednesday, August 1st, 1928, with the hon. secs., Allan Ritchie or Ray Lynch, Brodribb, up to 8 p.m.

Deposit of 5 per cent. To accompany tenders.

The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

Ray Lynch, Allan Ritchie,
Joint Hon. Secs.

**'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday evening, February 27, 1929:
(Advertisement)**

BRODRIBB HALL
OPENING CEREMONY
SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1929
AT 8 P.M.
DANCE TO FOLLOW

'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday evening, March 6, 1929:

Brodribb Hall

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TO BE OPENED NEXT SATURDAY

Saturday evening, 9th March, will mark the fulfilment of a long felt want; the opening of a public hall at Brodribb

The opening ceremony will be performed at 8 p.m. by the president of the shire, Councillor Cumming, in the presence of Councillors and the public. The Hall was erected by Williams Bros., to plans prepared by Mr. R. G. Davey and specifications prepared by Mr. J. Rae. It reflects great credit on those concerned.

The building is of wood, 62 ft. long by 25 ft. wide. The floor, which is a feature of the hall, is dressed Jarrah, tongued and grooved.



'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday evening, March 13, 1929:

Opening of Brodribb Hall

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MONSTER ATTENDANCE

DOOR TAKINGS £28/8/.

When the President of the Shire (Cr. Cumming) rose to commence the official task of declaring the newly erected Brodribb hall open for public use, the spacious building was crowded, and it appeared as if half Orbost had turned up to participate in the proceedings. Mr. Hungerford acted as chairman, and in his preliminary remarks said that by the assemblage that evening it looked as if extensions would have to be at once made to the hall.

Cr. Cumming thanked the committee for the honor conferred on him. Judging by the attendance it would have been fitting had Lord Somers been asked to perform the ceremony. He knew the Brodribb years ago when the population was small and none were wealthy, but by clubbing together they had achieved something tangible in a £500 building. He was sure the people of Orbost would learn from such an effort. They had been wanting a hospital for years and also a hall suitable to accommodate the public of the district. Many people had stated that they were too big to tackle, but the result viewed that evening showed that there was no more to say. The object in the building of a hall was wise, as there was a tendency on the part of farmers' sons to make towards Melbourne. If the old people had sense they would see that the young people were provided with amusement close at home. He could see in the audience his old friend Mr. Mat. Lynch, who with Mr. Cooper were the pioneers. In those days of the 1890 flood there were blackberries and scrub, and very little cultivable land, and the self sacrificing efforts of the men and women of those days were deserving of applause. He could honestly say that it was a credit to the district, and he hoped the committee would receive such assistance from the public as to enable them to line and finish off the interior. He thereupon declared the hall open for public purposes. (Applause).

Cr. Perry endorsed the remarks of his brother councillor. He congratulated his friends, the pioneers of the district on the success achieved. They had spent their lives in opening up the

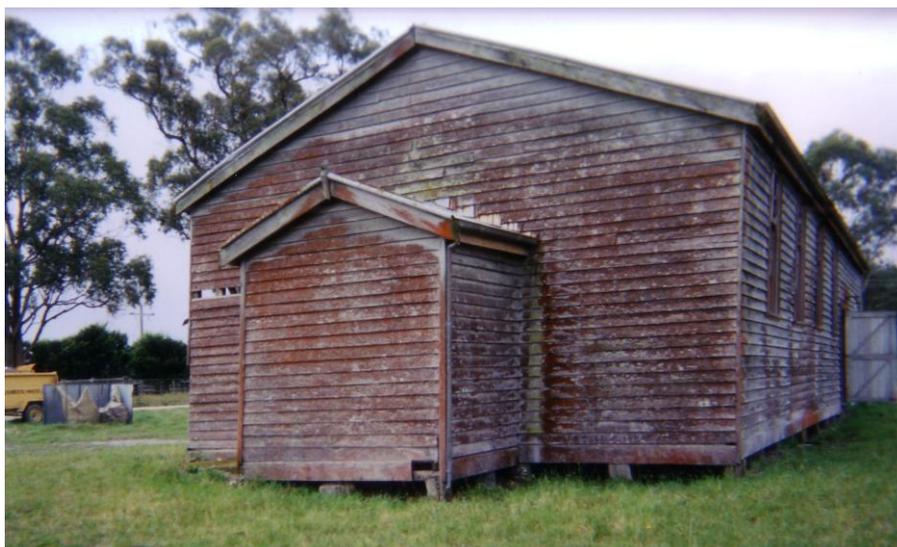
district, and the people of Orbost and district appreciated the result as seen that night for their fine work. (Applause).



Cr. Tomlinson said he was proud to be present to congratulate the Brodribb people on the fine building. Over 40 years ago he had passed the Brodribb. It was then a place of big trees and scrub, and the fine hall erected spoke volumes for their perseverance and energy. He congratulated his old friends of 40 years ago who had been leaders in all forward movements. When he landed on the Brodribb he had to cross at Hazel Dell, and there was always difficulty in getting a horse to take to the water, and John Cook was always to the rescue. The Orbost people had been struggling with the hospital project but could now see reward for their efforts. It now remained for Brodribb to stand behind them.

Mr. Tompkins said he could only go back 15 years. As he considered "brevity was the soul of wit", he would confine himself to extending congratulations to the successful result of their efforts. He knew the work attached to the raising of money, and such had been creditably performed by the Brodribb people. (Applause).

Mr. Alex. Rodwell spoke on behalf of the Orbost Race Club. It was sporting of the Brodribb people to take on the building of a hall. Talking about an Orbost hall, the people were doing well. He was pleased to see "Father" Lynch, one of his oldest friends, present. He was the Father of the Brodribb as far as he knew. (Laughter and applause). He wished them every success and expressed the hope that there would be a big attendance at every dance, and that the expression would be – "Brodribb is the place."



Mr. W. Cowell said it was not altogether the old fellows who built the hall. Ray Lynch, the hon. sec., was one of the hardest of workers. (Applause). Ray was the man behind the gun. If he were not, the gun would not have been fired, and the hall would not have been there. He could assure the old fellows that the young fellows would carry on; also the mothers were as good as the old fellows. When it came to any movement for the public good all should pull together. He congratulated the Brodribb people on their success achieved. (Applause).

Mr. Hungerford proposed a vote of thanks to the visitors, which was carried with acclamation.

The hall is a fine structure with floor space 48 x 25, and this was fully taken up. The orchestra was supplied by Eaton & Son, Mrs. McLaughlin and Messrs. Ward and J. Lynn.

Supper was provided and visitors were cordially welcomed. Mr. Ray Lynch being ubiquitous in his efforts to make people feel at home.

The financial aspect is good as the debt remaining is only £150.

BRODRIBB PUBLIC HALL

This information supplied by: Marina Johnson, Judy Farley, Bev Farley, Sheryn Day and Pam Steed.

The Brodribb Hall, built in 1929, has served the local community well over the years. It has been used for dances, school concerts, voting, church services, Sunday school, sporting activities, markets, catering, birthday celebrations, weddings, receptions, and as emergency accommodation.

As can be seen from the accompanying photos the building has gradually fallen into disrepair and will probably soon be lost to the Brodribb community forever.



The Hall was well renowned for its excellent dance floor and the accompanying delicious suppers. The tongue and grooved Jarrah floor was usually prepared for dances with candle wax, kerosene and saw-dust. Palais wax was also used at times. A wooden sleeper wrapped in hessian was then dragged up and down the Hall until the floor surface was so fast the sleeper would slide on its own from one end of the building to the other. Gum-tree branches were usually used to decorate the Hall.

Mrs Kendall and Mrs Answer were noted for their coffee-making ability. The coffee was made in kerosene tins on the open fire in the Hall, using separated-milk which was brought to the boil. Ground coffee beans which had also been boiled were stained and added together with a pinch of salt.

Supper would be served with someone going along each side of the Hall with a box of cups, with another person following with a large enamel jug of coffee. Sugar, sandwiches and cakes would follow close behind.

Over the years music was supplied by a number of locals. Mr Harry Nankervis, Mr Joe Eaton and his son, Joe, and Mr Bill Strickland played button accordions and the violin. Mr and Mrs Maurie Stephenson and their son, Brian, played the piano, drums and saxophone. Others were June and Jim Edlington on the piano and saxophone, Alice Robinson and Harry Grosvenor, and DJ Kevin Ingram. A three-piece band from Melbourne played for a Snowy Rovers Rover Football Club dance and barbecue. In earlier years the 3TR Ladies auxiliary also organised dances.

The small back room was used as sleeping quarters for young children while their parents enjoyed the dances. A dance held in 1986 called "Up the Broddy" was one of the last dances held in the Hall.

In the early days people came to the dances by horse-back and horse and buggy from as far away as Murrungowar. Ryan's mail and passenger bus from Orbost and Mr Jim Richardson's taxi conveyed people to the dances at Brodribb. The taxi brought as many people as could be comfortably seated as well as men standing on the running boards and holding on through

the windows. Later on 'Blondie' Florance would run his school bus to the dances in the early 1950s. He would pick-up from the Post Office in Orbost, then drive across Nicholson Street to the Club Hotel where some of the men would have their gallon-jars filled with wine, before heading to the dances.

The Hall was used for Brodribb State School concerts, fancy dress nights and family Christmas parties. The voting booth for both State and Federal Government elections was held there for many years. When Brodribb had teams entered in the local Orbost and District Table Tennis and Badminton competitions the Hall was used regularly. Euchre card nights and markets run by Apex also used the facilities and the Cross-country Horse Riding club used the Hall as a checkpoint and for food catering purposes.

A number of locals celebrated their 21st Birthdays in the Hall. These included: Sheryn Day, Peter and John Farley, Lynette Webb, Denis Webb, Wendy Leatham, Kevin Ingram, Leon Brunt and Robyn Johnson. Weddings and receptions held there were: Pam and Eric Steed, Nora and Denis Webb and Margie and David Webb.

Three families have used the Hall for emergency accommodation, spending the night there when they have been cut off by flood waters. On two occasions the Hall has nearly burnt down. Two locals crawled under the building and put the fires out on one occasion. Another time the milk tank driver was passing by so used milk from the tanker to put the fire out.

'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday evening, April 11, 1928:

BRODRIBB SPORTS

A SUCCESSFUL GATHERING IN GLORIOUS WEATHER

Brodribb and district people assembled on the prettily situated sports ground adjacent to the school building on Easter Monday, and in glorious autumn brought off the annual Easter Monday sports.

Reminiscences were brought up in a chat with some of the old residents, and it was elicited that about 25 years ago Messrs. Mat. Lynch, Bob Ritchie, Jim Swanson and Jack Cook decided that a school was necessary. The Lands Department was approached and a grant of five acres was made for a school house and ground. Going fifty-fifty with the Education Department, the local residents contributed towards the school cost, of £45, and looking at the building to-day one realises the great difference in cost of then and now, as such a building could not be erected to-day under £200 or £300.

Prior to that Mr. Stagg, who lived on the Orbost side of the river engaged a governess to teach his family of six or seven, and Mr. Swanson sent his girl along to take advantage of such educational facilities, the fee being the modest sum of 1/- per week.

Floods in those days came along even as at present and the present school house was considered necessary. The first head teacher was Mr. Nivel, and there were 6 to 7 scholars in attendance. Progress has not gone ahead by leaps and bounds as the roll call of the present day is but 14 or 15.

The five acres have been reserved and half cleared. The sports are held in aid of the school funds. Miss Allan is the present head teacher.

Two years ago there was a great crowd present, and from all sources about £70 was realised, and the dance in the evening is always looked forward to with anticipation.

One of the prominent officials, Mr. Mat. Lynch, had the misfortune to severely gashing his left hand whilst assisting to unload a lorry on which material was brought by Mr. A. Hewat, of Errinundra. Mrs Harrison, of Sale, a guest of the injured man, rendered first aid.

The refreshment booth was presided over by a lady's committee consisting of Misses Hungerford, Ritchie, Cook, and Mesdames Lynch, Lay and Rozynski and exceptionally good business was done.

Mr. J. Cook acted as gatekeeper, and Mrs. Green of the Cabbage Tree hotel, had charge of the publican's booth and her investment of £3 for the right to it must have been remunerative.

The dance held in the evening was a great success and little full room was available for the throng. Music was supplied by Mrs McLachlan, Miss Parker, and Messrs. J. Huston, Les. Day and Rowley Robinson.

The nett proceeds of the dance and sports will be approximately £50. The committee are grateful to the public for support accorded, and the ladies for assistance rendered; and to the business people for donations.