

KOOTINGAL WAR MEMORIAL HALL COMMITTEE

S355 Committee of Tamworth Regional Council

ORDINARY MEETING - Monday 1st NOVEMBER 2019

MINUTES

Present: Pam Crayn, Lyn Eccleston, Pauline Barber, Andrew Eccleston (KWMHCtee), Dorothea Vaux (Moonbi Museum & Moonbi WM Hall & Rec.Reserve Ctee), Teresa Kuczera (CWA Kootingal Branch), Ann Maher (CWA Kootingal President), Meagan Moffat & Terrie Holz (Kootingal Physie & Dance), Jenni Sadlier (Tamworth Cloverleaf Square Dancers), Paul Summers & Peter Summers.

Apologies: Lawrence Watts, Charlotte Brittan, John Barber, Bill Humphrys (RSL), Mayor Col Murray, Brian Betts (RSL).

Pam Crayn opened the meeting at 9.00am, noting that this meeting will precede a meeting with representatives of Tamworth Regional Council who are expected to attend at 10.00am to discuss the results of the recent Survey undertaken by the Council to assess the wishes of the community with regard to the Library.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Previous Minutes have been circulated and are taken as "read".

MOTION: That the Minutes of the previous meeting be accepted.

Moved Pauline Barber **Seconded** Andrew Eccleston **Carried**

Correspondence

All correspondence, except a letter received last week by mail from Barnaby Joyce, has been circulated to the Executive members as it is received by the Secretary and is taken as "read".

Lyn read aloud the letter from Barnaby Joyce, in which he stated that he had received Lyn's submission regarding the Kootingal Library and Kootingal WM Hall, and had forwarded it on to Mr Paul Bennett, General Manager of TRC, for comment. Mr Joyce will reply with Mr Bennett's comments in due course.

MOTION: That the correspondence be accepted.

Moved Lyn Eccleston **Seconded** Pauline Barber **Carried**

Business Arising from previous Minutes of 29/7/2019, and Meeting with Greg Tapper on 26/9/2019:

1. The removal of the Blackboard and its chalk tray in the covered courtyard area was discussed with Greg Tapper at our meeting on 26th September 2019. The chalk tray, which had broken off from the bottom of the board, had been placed on the ground at the base of the boundary fence.

****INCIDENT 31/10/2019:** The chalk tray had not been removed by the work crew when the board was taken down and removed leading to an unfortunate incident where a child stepped on the piece of timber injuring herself on nails protruding from the board.

2. The ripped Shade Sail has been removed from the rear yard.

3. Young trees around toilet block appear to have been removed.
4. Essential Energy Communities Grant – the new Microwave has been purchased. We need to take a photo and send it off to Essential Energy.
5. Sink for new kitchen – an application for funding has been submitted to Council. Our contribution to this project includes a handbasin and mixer tap donated by Bunnings, and more than half the cost of the sink, bearing in mind that Council needs to contribute the labour to install both the sink and the handbasin, the latter of which will require considerable plumbing works.

Secretary's Report

See Report attached

Treasurer's Report

Pauline Barber's report is attached.

Current balance as at 25/10/2019	-- \$2,009.10
Outstanding accounts of	-- \$2,354.00
Plus Lions Club hire fee	-- \$ 150.00
Petty Cash Balance	-- \$ <u>203.75</u>
Our total cash position will be	-- \$4,716.85

Less an account for Wizard Cleaning which is yet to be received.

Both our regular hirers are behind in their rent since we went onto EFT payments.

MOTION: That the Treasurer's Report be accepted

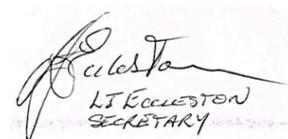
Moved Pauline Barber **Seconded** Andrew Eccleston **Carried**

General Business:

1. **Storage** rooms – sort out both storage areas – Pam noted; Pauline elaborated on the possibility of removing shelving in the rear storage room.
2. **Glasses** for kitchen – Lyn has some in container from her mother's.
3. **Grant for toilets and dishwasher** – will have to wait until next year –
Rear toilets require remodeling to replace the children's toilet with an adult one and enclosing it with a screen.
4. **Original leaflet for the original Grand Opening of the Hall** – has been donated by David Northey after the passing of his mother. Pam to get quotes for enlarging, printing and framing.
5. **Sale of rooftop evaporative air coolers** to Summers IGA – has been raised with Council and hopefully a positive outcome may be achieved as early as possible.
6. Anne Maher noted that she has been elected as President of the local CWA Branch. Pauline asked her to complete a new hire agreement, noting herself as *keeper of the keys*.

There being no further General Business the meeting paused for acknowledgement of new arrivals at approximately **10.00am** for our meeting with representatives of Tamworth Regional Council for discussion around the recent Survey conducted by Council into the possible augmentation of the Kootingal Library into the Hall.

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L.I. ECCLESTON
SECRETARY

Further attendees: Kay Delahunt (Tamworth Regional Council, Manager Cultural & Community Services), Jodie Archer (Community Working Group Officer), Phill Betts (Deputy Mayor)

Apologies: Mayor Col Murray, Kay Burns (Senior Place Manager – working with RFS at Nundle Goddo Road Fire)

Kay Delahunt addressed the meeting referring to the “Cultural Plan” for the Tamworth Region which, for the last 3 years, has had the size of Kootingal Library as a concern.

The Cultural Development Officer did the recent Survey Monkey survey to gauge the feeling of the whole community. *It was noted by many present that the questions in the survey were heavily loaded and the true goal hidden until Question 7 where it asked if people thought that it was a good idea to take more space from the Hall.*

Kay’s Powerpoint Presentation showed that Kootingal Library has **more loans** but **less visits** than all the other four smaller libraries in the district.

It also has **less computers**, but **more WiFi use** than other libraries.

It was pointed out to Kay that people sit in the car park in their cars, using the WiFi on their devices, while others sit on the porch with their devices...all at times when the Library is not open.

Kay emphasized that in Libraries today Early Childhood Programmes are growing; she also emphasized that outreach programmes such as teaching robotics and coding are also available. She highlighted the availability for book groups, etc., to use the Library. So far, the local “book group” have not chosen to use the library.

In deciding the need for Libraries, there are **Benchmarks** based on population catchment. The area for Kootingal Library includes Moonbi, Limbri & Bendemeer – a population of 3,862. The 10-year projection has the population going up to 4,000+. So, Kootingal Library is very undersized according to the benchmarks. In fact, the space required under these parameters would be over **3,000 square metres** – which would equal *the size of the local Hardware store, or the Ishka store in Tamworth.*

*That would take up most of the space in the Kootingal WAR MEMORIAL Hall!! A somewhat ludicrous notion having regard to the **less visits** attendance figures quoted by Kay above.*

It should be noted here that Kootingal Physie and Dance use the Hall on three afternoons and early evenings every week, and some weekends – most of these times clashing with Library opening hours, making the theory of the Library using part of the Hall unworkable.

To that notion, **Terri Holz and Meagan Moffat**, from **Kootingal Physie & Dance** stressed that their requirement for space is *growing exponentially*, and they, in fact, will need MORE space to cater for their growing number of participants. ***They also stressed that it is of paramount importance that they be able to continue using the Kootingal War Memorial Hall, due to its ability to provide secure privacy for the young girls as they dance in leotards – the Hall was selected because it meets “child protection” criteria.***

Their registered name is, after all, “KOOTINGAL Physie & Dance”, and there is no other facility in Kootingal that can meet their special, and growing needs.

Regional Libraries are proposing the use of portable bookshelves on rollers, and armchairs for use by readers; they also propose bifold doors between the two areas.

Lyn pointed out to Kay the existence of the large storage room between the Library and the Hall, which houses chairs and tables, Hirers' storage lockers, the piano, and other sundry items. Therefore the adjoining wall cannot be opened up between the two facilities.

There is no room for these items in the Hall when it is being used by hirers, and the prevention of damage must be a priority. There is also a security risk for the contents of Hirers' possessions at such times.

Lyn noted here that when the Preschool moved out and the renovations were done to create the opening between the centre and rear portions of the Hall, the Committee applied for the provision of acoustic stacker doors to make the area a multi-purpose Function Centre, that could be divided for different purposes. **Andy advised Kay** that the doors would have required a heavy i-beam to be installed in the opening to take the weight. The whole proposal was quashed by Council as being too expensive.

The Committee feel that if the bookshelves were to be rolled in and out of the library area through any access door/s, there is also the question of the possible damage to the Hall floor from heavy bookshelves being rolled across it on a daily basis, the cost of repair being a question that needs to be clarified with Council, as it has just cost the Committee, without assistance from TRC, **\$5,500.00** to resurface.

The proposed bi-fold doors between the areas (which would need to be lockable and solid – not glass) could also be damaged, either by rough use, or accidentally during party hires, and may or may not be sound-proof, thus not providing an ideal environment for a library when others are using the Hall with music and loud Instructor's directions emanating from the area.

Cockburn cottage was suggested as a possible building for the Library, but Kay said that it does not meet the criteria of an "open space". (*Note: The rear section does!*)

Pam noted that regular hirers use the Hall four days a week, the Hall is used on Anzac Day every year, the local CWA Branch use the hall for their monthly meetings and annual Cultural Days, and local service clubs such as the Lions Club use the Hall for their annual functions. She also stressed that storage space is at a premium, and the Committee cannot afford to lose that space.

Lyn also mentioned that the local Anglican Church has already firmly booked the Hall for their 2020 Annual Dinner in September next year; there is one wedding booked and two still setting their dates! What happens to those people? Their reasonably priced wedding must be reorganized! We need these large events to bring in money to continue the refurbishment work and to cater for urgent remedial work as has been the case this year.

Pauline and Lyn expressed the fact that every cent made from hall hire is spent on the hall, continuing the 10-year refurbishment project. The Committee's disappointment was made very clear about the Council's refusal to contribute to the **\$5,500.00** cost of the **essential remediation** of the damage to the floors, noting the fact that we were very lucky to find such a reasonable contractor who would accept time payment for the work he did.

Pam stressed how easy the floor is to clean now, and **Lyn** added that the same finish is on the floor in the Loomberah Hall.

Lyn explained to Kay and Jodie that the Committee feels "in limbo", not knowing whether our forward bookings – especially the one definite and two possible weddings – will be able to be accommodated let alone our desire to advertise the Hall to increase its use as a Function Centre – something a lot of people are unaware of due to the Library's very existence at the front of the Hall. **Most new residents don't realize they have such a reasonably priced facility at their disposal, catering for 120 guests. Maybe this needs to change!**

Jenny Sadlier pointed to the acoustic tiles around the walls which have reduced echo in the hall, making it a much more user-friendly space. **Lyn** added that the project was done at the Committee's expense assisted with a small Club Grant.

Kay made mention of the Demographics of Library users: there appears to be a higher proportion of aged people, and younger children.

To this, **Pauline** noted that in her experience with the aged community in the area, most of them have books delivered to their home to read at their own leisure.

She also complained that over the school holidays **her four grandchildren were turned away from the Kootingal Library on several occasions**. The eldest of these children is a 13-year-old high school student who, with his brother, wanted to use the computers for school research work, and the younger two of the four wanted to sit and read books.

Kay stressed that this is not Library policy, and that she would be taking the matter further.

After showing a picture of a children's workshop held at the Kootingal Library where children were seated on the floor, **Kay** addressed problems with the Kootingal Library other than the space – the Counter is too low, there is only one entrance/exit door, and toilets are an issue.

Pauline and Lyn explained that there used to be access for the Librarian to the Hall toilet facilities, but after **confidential meetings** were interrupted several times by the Librarian walking through the Hall, without apology, a padlock was put on the access door. Sadly, the damage had been done and the Committee lost the contract for those confidential meetings to be held in the Hall, which meant the loss of income for the Committee.

To a further question, **Kay** showed that the survey responses yielded a somewhat shocking result... *from 224 responses, 74% were in favour of taking more space from the Hall.*

Pam suggested that the Library should not expand as the area they have is not being used or utilized fully, therefore they need to use the space they have "smarter" by updating fixtures and shelving, and Tamworth Regional Council should put larger premises in future budgets.

Lyn noted that the comparison between the pie charts and the percentage above do not seem to correlate. [The Survey gleaned 224 responses = only 5.8% of the total catchment of 3,862, *most of whom don't use the library*. $74\% \text{ of } 5.8\% = 4.29\% = 165.6 \text{ people from } 3862.$]

Phill Betts expressed his **disapproval** of the expansion of the Library into the Hall. On the figures shown by the "pie charts" in Kay's presentation, the Library is not getting the use to warrant its expansion. His preference would be for the Library and Council "one-stop-shop" be moved to a purpose built or repurposed building, and the Hall returned to the purpose for which it was built.

The Committee feel that the people saying they were in favour of taking more space from the Hall are unaware of the use and purpose of the Kootingal War Memorial Hall, and the disruption it would cause to the current hirers and future hireability of the Hall.

It was questionable whether some members' survey responses were registered due to a "glitch" in the survey itself, as no formal acknowledgement was provided once the response was submitted. Therefore, the results could feasibly be disputed and some feel that they cannot be a true reflection of the whole of the community, noting the lack of responses.

The Committee would like to see the numbers and demographics of responses to the survey.

The Committee also feel that there was not enough advertising – other than online – about Regional Libraries' desire to expand Kootingal Library, or the Survey itself.

The Committee also notes:

Regular hirers who require the full floor space (and possibly more) use the hall during Library opening times.

Friday evening functions would mean that the Hirers would be in the process of cleaning the Hall on Saturday mornings – clashing with Library hours.

When the Library encroaches on Hall floor space on Saturday mornings it would hinder hirers setting up for Saturday functions, therefore precluding the Committee from hiring the hall out for Parties and/or weekend functions concerts, dances and any other spirit-lifting events, both public and private – the very purpose for which the hall was built by the community...resulting in a severe loss of income?!

The Committee currently have enquiries for classes for other Dance genres which would also require times which may or may not clash with Library use.

These conditions are conflicting and completely unworkable!

Dorothea then read a statement to the meeting (copy attached), ending with an **emphatic disapproval** of the reduction of Hall space, and in fact stating that the Library should be moved out of the Hall all together to a purpose built or refurbished premises, returning the Kootingal War Memorial Hall to its former purpose. This statement was drafted and delivered on behalf of the Moonbi Museum and Moonbi War Memorial Hall & Recreation Reserve Committee, with the backing of local RSL Sub-Branch members.

During the extensive discussion it was voiced unanimously, that any expansion of the Kootingal Library should be done elsewhere, not taking further space from the Kootingal War Memorial Hall.

Pauline proposed a concerted joint fundraising effort by those willing to take part, for the building or repurposing of other suitable premises for the Library, so that the Committee's vision to restore the Kootingal War Memorial Hall can be brought to fruition.

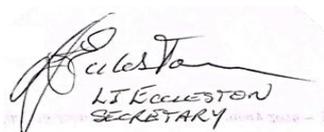
Peter Summers asked if Council would be open to a proposal from the Summers family to supply the land and build a suitable building for Council to lease. There was no response.

Paul Summers then raised the fact that *this situation has been ongoing for 28 years* since the permission was granted for the Library to use the front portion of the Hall on **a two-year lease**. When the two-year lease was up, special dispensation was granted for the lease to be extended; but *nothing has been done in all those years* to consider the other premises around the town which have come up for sale – particularly the old dentist's surgery at the front of the school - for the relocation of the Library.

Phill Betts summed up saying that they would take all comments and concerns back to Council for discussion. To Lyn's question to that effect, *Phill guaranteed that no movements would happen without consultation with the Committee.*

The meeting closed at 11.10am.

After closure, Kay Delahunt and Jodie Archer were shown both the storage rooms so that they are fully aware of the amount of furniture and hirer's cupboards are stored, and the lack of free space in those storage rooms.



L.I. ECCLESTON
SECRETARY

SECRETARY'S REPORT – 1st November 2019

1. Our two regular hirers are still taking advantage of the facility on four afternoons/evenings each week, with Kiara also using the hall on several Saturdays and some Sundays for practice and 101 practice sessions. The income from these hirers is small but steady and it is pleasing to accommodate these two not-for-profit groups while they provide a very worthwhile service to the community.

2. Bookings:

Bookings are coming in from both the Facebook page and the Tamworth Regional Council website, to all Executive Committee members.

Party/Weekend Bookings have been and are as follows:

13th July 2019 -- Lions Club Function
10-11 August 2019 -- Kootingal Physie & Dance – 1on1 Training & Practice Days
28th September 2019 – Kootingal Physie & Dance – 1on1 Training & Practice Day
5th October 2019 -- Kootingal Physie & Dance – 1on1 Training & Practice Day
12th October 2019 – 80th Birthday party
30th November 2019 – Naming Day
8th December 2019 -- Kootingal Physie & Dance – Presentations
25th April 2020 -- ANZAC Day
18th September 2020 – Kootingal & Moonbi Anglican Churches Dinner
Dates to be fixed 2020 – *TWO WEDDINGS!!!*

It is hoped that we can have some landscaping done before our December wedding!

3. Refurbishments:

Our old kitchenette has had issues since the break-in, and our new kitchen has had several issues still requiring rectification, but work has commenced over the last week to remediate the problems.

- (i) There were some cupboards in the kitchenette which were damaged in the break-in, which have been fixed with new hinges; the locks having been repaired.
- (ii) The broken tile in the splash-back behind the microwave is being repaired.
- (iii) The hole in the ceiling in the disabled toilet block has been repaired.
- (iv) The cupboard door beside the stove in the new “Event Kitchen” was hinged on the wrong side, making the door inoperable due to hitting on the stove. This is being rectified.
- (v) The sink in the Event Kitchen is still an issue, particularly having regard to the non-provision of a dishwasher. We have submitted an application for funding for the new sink through the Facility Improvement Fund, and we hope that it will be approved as we have had a handbasin and mixer tap donated by Bunnings, which will be installed in the right hand corner of the kitchen to meet regulations for commercial kitchens.
- (vi) The dishwasher is still a matter for consultation with Council.

4. The **Facebook Page** is still receiving almost daily views and it is from that page that a lot of enquiries come.

I would love to be able to promote the venue for garden weddings, engagements, family reunions, etc., but until the back yard is landscaped, we are at a disadvantage. I noticed the artificial grass that has been used outside "Hopscotch" near the playground in Bicentennial Park – this would be ideal for our back yard, requiring nothing more than an occasional going over with a blower to get rid of dropped leaves. The gardens need some attention, but with a good mulching they should come up well.

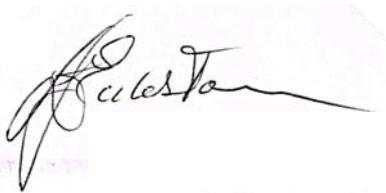
It is hoped that we can have a meeting with Greg Tapper to discuss these matters.

5. **Recent Audit?**

To date we have not received a report from the audit which was carried out on the several Halls in the area last year. It would be very interesting to know the outcome of that audit, particularly with regard to some of the necessary items we have already listed with Council, and which were pointed out to the auditor at the time of his visit:

- (i) Upgrading of wiring throughout the Hall, to prevent the frequent power outages during event hires;
- (ii) Replacement of gutters and fascia boards;
- (iii) Replacement of windows with larger ones, and the addition of security screens;
- (iv) Replacement of the main entrance door, which again is sagging, and the fitting of fly-screen security doors to all doorways;
- (v) Removal of the old air conditioners from the roof, and replacement of the roofing iron with new Colorbond material.

In the event that I should continue as Secretary of the Committee, I look forward to another year of progress towards the complete refurbishment of Kootingal War Memorial Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lyn Eccleston', written over a light pink rectangular stamp.

Lyn Eccleston – **Secretary, Kootingal War Memorial Hall Committee.**

KOOTINGAL WAR MEMORIAL HALL

On the recommendation of Kootingal War Memorial Fund Committee, Cockburn Shire Council acquired a block of land at Kootingal, from Mr. Thomas Betts, for the purpose of erecting a War Memorial Hall.

It was officially opened by Mr. J. M. PHELAN, Cockburn Shire President, on the 17th December 1954. A ball was held that evening.

The War Memorial Fund was first proposed in 1946, formerly known as the Kootingal Patriotic War Fund.

The committee was re-formed in 1952 and commenced raising funds with the aim of erecting a War Memorial Hall.

20,000 pounds was raised by voluntary effort, entertainment and donations.

1,400 pounds in cash and assistance was provided by Cockburn Shire and Central Committee of the War Memorial Fund.

The Kootingal War Memorial Hall was erected by voluntary labour.

The Hall committee comprised 13 men and 11 ladies. Hall Trustees were Shire President, Mr. J.M. Phelan, Shire Clerk Mr. T. H. Mulvogue and Councillors Messrs. Hyson, McIlveen, Walker, Bright and Lonergan.

In 1988 the War Memorial Hall also housed the Kootingal Pre-school, and the Regional Library which also had a depot at Kootingal School.

Over 100 men and women of Kootingal and District enlisted and served in the various branches of the Armed Services during the Second World War.

Kootingal's War Effort in raising funds and providing clothing and comforts was worthy of mention and part of the overall Cockburn Shire effort.

In June 1946 a function was held at Hyson's Hall, Limbri, to welcome home some 30 ex-servicemen..

Together with a sizable number of Moonbi residents, the opinion is, that Kootingal War Memorial Hall should be restored so that it becomes again the Kootingal War Memorial Hall - It would be a valuable community asset which could be hired for social functions, meetings, weddings etc. .

Kootingal should also have an independent library building which could also house an office for Tamworth Regional Council. The library is very important to all residents whether adults or children and it would be appropriate for Council to have an office in the area.

This is the general consensus from Moonbi Museum Committee and Moonbi War Memorial Hall and Recreation Reserve Committee...

I know that all this would be a costly exercise but with successful funding applications and local fund raising it is indeed a possibility.



Dorothea Vaux, Secretary

31/10/2019

MOONBI MUSEUM COMMITTEE

MOONBI WAR MEMORIAL HALL RECREATION RESERVE

COMMITTEE