

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Korong Miners Literary Institute

The Institute was founded on July 27th, 1859 with a Managing Committee of twenty-two. The men were -

E.C. Pringle	J. Cunliffe
J.H. Campbell	H. Watson
A.A. Sydenham	J. Morecroft
J. Holmes	A.M. Dawson
W. Steel	K. Henderson
D. Urquhart	R. Guy
J. Lockhart	J.T. Bramwell
J. Ball	J. Paterson
R.S. Tyler	J.R. Doig
J. Pugh	
H. Hunter	(President)
Samuel Rinder	(Vice-President)
Robert Steel	(Treasurer)

The Institute first opened in a building made of primitive materials - slabs and a bark roof. Mr. Arthur Pearson was appointed Librarian. He was a man of more than average ability, and his frequent contributions to the Press kept the outside world aware of happenings on the gold-field.

It was apparent fairly early on that the slab building would be inadequate and in 1863 a tender of £174 from Mr. Joseph Morecroft for a new building was accepted. The foundation stone was laid on 20th July, 1863 by Mr. Hunter, who was President of the Committee. The building was further extended in 1889 and a new Librarian, Mr. W. Orrell was appointed at a salary of £30 per annum. Mr. Orrell later committed suicide in Fremantle.

A new hall was completed and officially opened on March 11th, 1913, by Mr. T. Langdon, M.L.A.

Further extensions were carried out in 1930 when the Institute was said to contain a Public Hall, Committee Rooms, Reading Room, Billiard Room, stage and more than 3000 volumes in the library.

The buildings are sited today in exactly the same place as the bark hut first built in 1859.

"Wedderburn Express"

The first issue of this paper appeared on June 16th, 1888. Its editor was Mr. C.R. Goode, who continued as proprietor until 1907, when he accepted a position in the Government Printing Office. Mr. John R. Craig took his place until the outbreak of the First World War, when he enlisted in the forces. A committee was then formed to conduct the business and carried on until 1918, when the Express was sold to Mr. Cameron.

Brass Band

The band first formed on July 9th, 1889.

Australian Natives Association

This Association was introduced to Wedderburn on 10th July, 1889, and its aim was mutual improvements of members combined with medical benefits and assistance to members during illness.

Show Society

A show society commenced about 1883, but disbanded in the 1900's due to lack of support. Part of its site is in use today as the High School.

Rifle Club

This was formed in 1889.

Racecourse

An area was set aside for a racecourse in 1861, so this sport was very early on the scene in Wedderburn. The site was part of the present Wedderburn Golf Course. In the 1920's combined racing and trotting meetings were held. Since that time the sport struggled because of the Depression and World War II and the fact that the site was a long way from town. The Trotting Club changed venue to Donaldson Park, with the result that greater crowds were seen.

Progress Association

Thirty-three people attended the first meeting held on 23rd August, 1943. The Association was very active, being concerned with higher secondary education, a Kindergarten, improved water supply, electricity supply, better mails and a host of other matters.

Mr. R.W. Donaldson was its first President.

Swimming Pool

As a result of public efforts a swimming pool was opened on 2nd December, 1962. Up to the 1950's, the three old mining dams, known as the "Salt", the "Swimmer Dam", and the "Battery Dam" were used as swimming holes.

Golf Club

It is not known when golf was first played in Wedderburn, but the annual golf tournament drew 800 entries in 1929.

Apex Club

First formed on 20th July, 1963.

Historical Society

The Historical Society had its first meeting on 14th November, 1967 when Mr. A. Maraske was elected President.

Masonic Lodge

The Foundation meeting of the Wedderburn Lodge was held on November 5th, 1913. Worshipful Brother A.D. White of Charlton Lodge was the Foundation Master. A stone-room on the present site was the first Temple, then in 1922 a smaller building was added for a supper-room. In 1936, the present Temple was dedicated in a ceremony conducted by Rt. Wor. Bro. T. Sutherland.