

SCONE (1) NSW



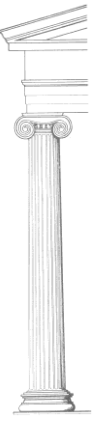
Name: School of Arts (1868 – 1916)

Address: 91 Kingdon Street Scone NSW 2337

Town and District:

Scone is located in the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales on land once belonging to the indigenous Wanaruah people. Lying about 270 kilometres north-west of Sydney, the State capital, it is a thriving town, 2 hours north of Newcastle on the New England Highway and Great Northern Rail line. The local population is a little over 6,000.

Scone is the commercial and administrative centre of a pastoral, agricultural and dairying shire. It is an important stock-selling centre noted for its horse and cattle studs. It is known as '***The Horse Capital of Australia***' and claims to be the second-largest thoroughbred breeding area in the world, after Kentucky in the United States. For nearly 200 years the Scone area has been home to world-class thoroughbred studs, broodmare farms and many equine support industries.



There are few more seminal areas that drove the growth of New South Wales in its fledgling colonial days than the Hunter Valley. One of the most important figures in the development of the Upper Hunter Valley region was Thomas Potter Macqueen. As a British Member of Parliament, Macqueen was permitted to apply for a land grant in the new colony of New South Wales and acquired 8,100 hectares in a rich valley which was to become Segenhoe.

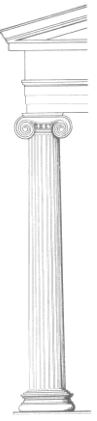
Having acquired the land, a ship was purchased, managers hired, and people, livestock (including horses), and building essentials were dispatched to Australia. By 1829, Segenhoe was fully operational and boasted a community post office, hospital, police station, jail, homestead, church and schoolhouse, some of which still stand today. At its peak, the property was home to one of the largest contingents of convicts in the new colony. Whilst there were thoroughbreds on Macqueen's ship, a stud was not established until 1913, when William Brown set up a thoroughbred stud on the property.



Mare and Foal Statue by Gabriel Sterk in Elizabeth Park

The Segenhoe valley is now the heartland of Australian thoroughbred breeding in the Scone area with such studs as Arrowfield, Kia Ora, Vinery, Segenhoe and Darley Australia. Other notable studs in the Scone area include Yarraman Park, Kitchwin Hills, Cressfield and Sledmere.

Scone is also home to The Scone Equine Hospital, the largest equine veterinary hospital in the southern hemisphere, the Australian Stock Horse Society, and the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association. Each year in May, it plays host to the Scone Horse Festival – a celebration of all things equine.

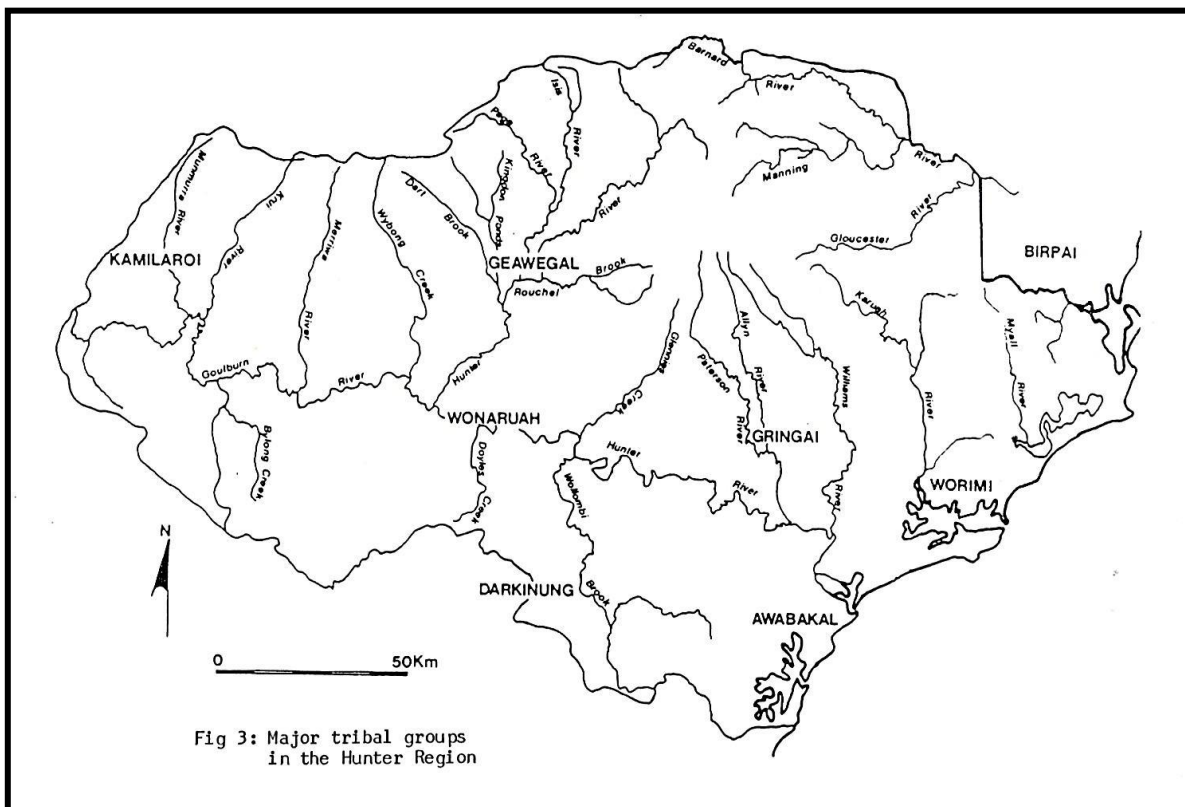


The History

Traditional Owners:

We acknowledge the Wanaruah people (sometimes spelled Wannarua or other variants) as the traditional owners of the land in the Upper Hunter. In pre-colonial days the Wanaruah people occupied the district. The people of the hills and plains, they were united by a common language with strong ties of kinship and survived as skilled hunter–fisher–gatherers in family groups or clans scattered along the inland area of the Upper Hunter Valley.

Their traditional territory spreads from the Upper Hunter River near Maitland west to the Great Dividing Range towards Wollombi. The major tribal group in the Upper Hunter was the Geawegal. The local Dartbrook-based tribe was the Tullong with the Murrawin on Pages Creek. It is known that the Wanaruah had trade and ceremonial links with the Kamilaroi people who may also have occupied the area to the immediate west. The Wanaruah favoured goannas as a food source, covering larger animals in hot ashes and stuffing them with grass. They also adopted burning-off practices as the new shoots which emerged after fire attracted kangaroos which they surrounded and killed with clubs and spears (du-rane) barbed with sharp stones. They also used stone axes (mogo) made of hard volcanic rock bound to a wooden handle. Another food source was lerp, a sweet, edible waxy secretion found on eucalyptus leaves and produced by the young of the psyllid (an insect) for protection.



Major Aboriginal Tribal Groups in the Hunter Valley

(Reproduced by kind permission of Scone Library and Dr Helen Brayshaw)



European Settlement:



The first European in the area was the 29 year old Government surveyor Henry Dangar who, in 1824, passed by the area just west of the present site of the town of Scone. He crossed over the Liverpool Range but retreated when attacked by the Geawegal clan of the Wanaruah people, west of the present Murrurundi town site.

Dangar's favourable report on the district led to an immediate land grab by wealthy settlers who had been issued warrants authorising them to take up land. One of the first to investigate the new area was Francis Little, who was seeking land for himself and his uncle, Dr William Bell Carlyle. Little established Invermein in 1825.

Mary Ann Sutton, later known as 'Granny' Sutton, came to Australia as a housemaid to Francis Little of Invermein. She is believed to have brought with her a small plant from England, the prickly pear. She was not to know what a serious pest the plant was to become, spreading far and wide through farming and grazing land throughout the colonies.

Dr Carlyle was issued the grant of Satur which is now a suburb on the western side of Scone. William Dangar, Henry's brother, claimed Turanville and Dr Archibald Little settled for Cressfield. John Bingle established Puen Buen and Thomas Potter Macqueen took up his land grant at Segenhoe in 1826 -7.

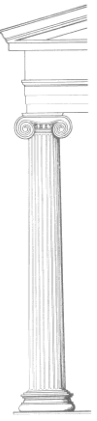
Allan Cunningham

The noted explorer and botanist Allan Cunningham, passed through the area in 1827 when he followed Dangar's route north and went on to discover the Darling Downs in Queensland.

Early Town Beginnings

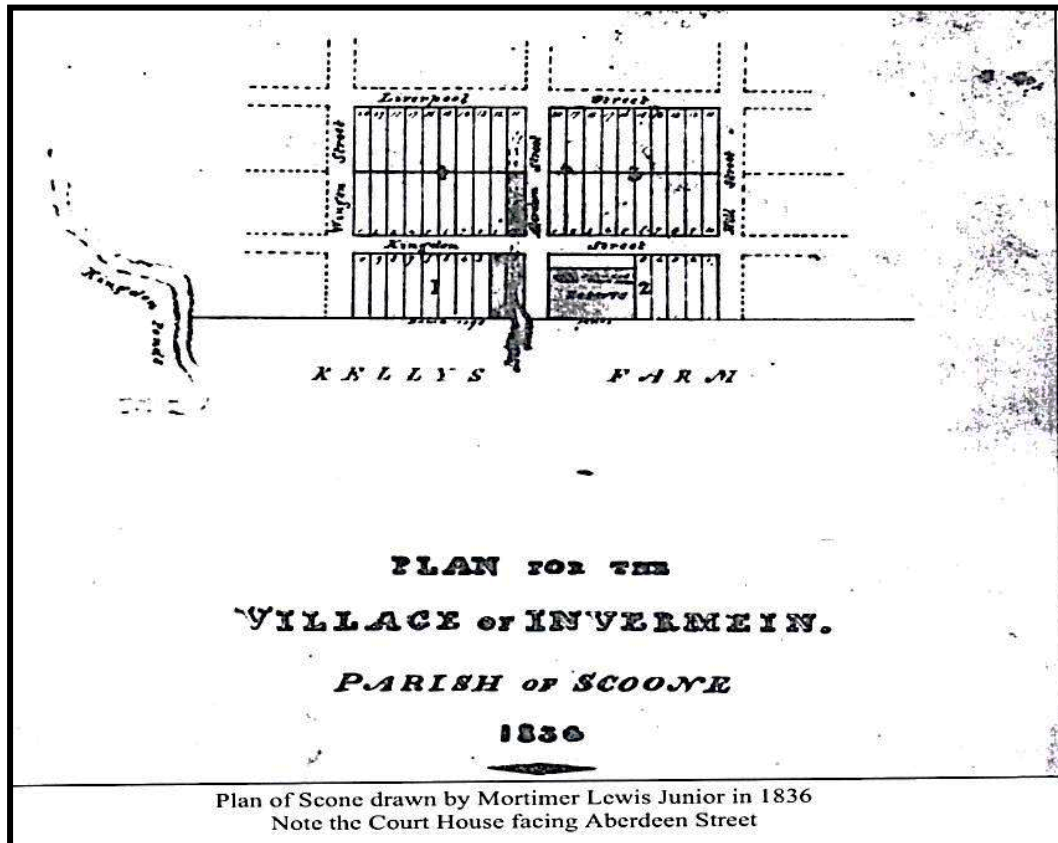
The Crown had reserved three square miles for a town site on the eastern bank of Kingdon Ponds, another creek just west of present-day Scone. The remainder was re-surveyed and became part of the land purchased from the Crown by William Dumaesq whose St Aubins estate was soon to enclose Scone.

A village named Redbank had begun to emerge by 1828 to the west of that site. A hospital was established there in 1834, along with an inn and a store. However, the traffic began to shift to the east when William Nowland discovered the pass now named for him at Murrurundi in 1827. His route eventually became part of the Great North Road. Built by 3000 convicts between 1826 and 1834 at the behest of Governor Ralph Darling, this was the first road into the Hunter Valley. In 1836 the St Aubins Arms and a store were established adjacent to the track. This formed the seed from which the present township grew.



Scone Township

The newer settlement, officially called Invermein but locally known as St Aubins, was gazetted in 1837 as Scone. The latter name was suggested by Hugh Cameron and received a favourable hearing in the ears of fellow Scotsman Thomas Mitchell the Surveyor General. It was also decided that the parish should be called Strathearn. Both names reflect the heritage of the early European settlers - Scone being the residence of the Scottish kings and the Stone of Scone the site of their coronation. The new name was taken up by locals in 1838. The spelling of Invermein was later changed to Invermien.



Early development was slow. In 1841, when the first Anglican Church was completed, the population was only 63. At the time the area was noted for its large pastoral properties (Belltrees, Segenhoe, St Aubins, and Invermein).

Bishop Broughton complained of 'a great insensitivity' to religious duties amongst the community, none of whom turned up to witness the consecration of St Luke's churchyard in 1843. The first school (Anglican) was established in 1845-46 and a proper courthouse, still standing, was built in 1848. In the early 1860s a flour mill was constructed (now the RSL Club) and gold was discovered in the mountains to the north-east. A national school opened in 1863.

The town received a boost when the railway arrived in 1871 but by 1881 the population was still only 214. A new courthouse was erected the following year.

Scone was declared a municipality in 1888.



John Graham and the Jewboy Gang

Thomas Dangar, Henry's brother, was the first postmaster at Scone from 1836 to 1840. He established its first inn and store, and carried mail and stores to stations beyond the Liverpool Range. In 1840 a bushranger, Edward 'The Jewboy' Davis and his gang held up the St Aubins Arms and Thomas Dangar's store. John Graham, an employee of the latter, shot at the gang when they were leaving then set off to alert the police but he was pursued and killed by one of the highwaymen.

Captain Richard Kelly of Kelly's Farm

Captain Richard Kelly was born in Parramatta on 30 March 1800 and died there on 31 October 1878. He was buried in Waverley Cemetery on 1 November 1878. Both his parents, James Kelly and Mary Langan, were Irish convicts, transported to Australia. They were married in 1800 producing three children of whom only one, Richard, lived on to old age. Richard Kelly married first Elizabeth Green, the step-daughter of William Green and Mary Rose, who was herself the step-daughter of William Singleton. Richard and Elizabeth had one child, James, who was born about 1819. Later, on 21st September 1838, Richard Kelly married Mary O'Keefe of Aberglassyn, West Maitland.

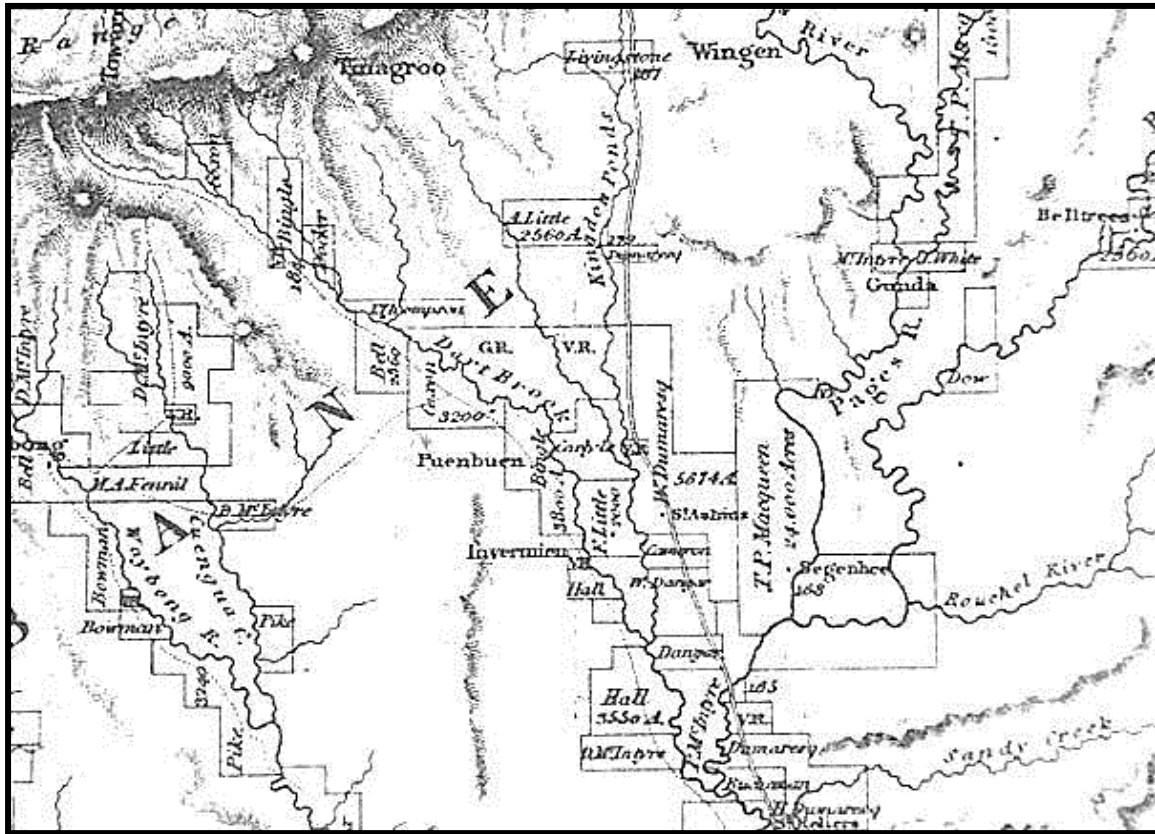
Beginning life as a currency lad growing up on the Hawkesbury River, Richard Kelly had an early successful and adventurous career as a ship's captain. His first ship, a schooner named *Black Jack*, was shipwrecked while carrying government stores to the convict settlement at Port Macquarie. It was destroyed while crossing the bar to the harbour in 1823. Kelly bought another vessel, *The Isabella*, but this ship was hi-jacked in 1824 by the crew of the pilot boat at Port Macquarie, taking the ship's crew along with it. The fate of *The Isabella* is unknown to this day: it was never heard of again. Possibly because Richard Kelly had been involved in government service, on 27 December 1826 Governor Darling recompensed him with a grant of 1920 acres of land. Kelly's Farm ran east from Kingdon Ponds to the Segenhoe boundary and the track through his land eventually became the main street of the town Scone. The Government Gazette of 5th June 1833 states:

"Gov. Gaz. Wed 5 June 1833, 1920 acres, Co, Brisbane, Parish Scone, bounded on North, partly by a Village Reserve being a line commencing at the S.W. corner of said reserve at a marked tree and bearing E. 246 chains on the S. on a line bearing West, by those ponds to a marked tree; promised by Governor Darling on 27th December 1826 as indemnity for the loss of two vessels, 'The Black Jack' and 'The Isabella' while employed by the Government; quit-rent £16 p.a. from 1 January 1834."

There is no evidence that the Kelly family ever occupied the land, although according to Scone historian Nancy Gray, Richard Kelly was often seen by locals driving his cow along that part of the Great North Road which subsequently became known as Kelly Street. The popular name stuck. The Kellys also had land grants at Morpeth. It seems the family may have lived there. The 1920 acres in Scone was sold at auction on 28 March 1833 and bought by William Dumaresq who added Kelly's Farm to his St Aubins run.



Upper Hunter Land Grants c. 1832



Governor (Sir) Ralph Darling; 7th Governor of New South Wales



Governor Darling had married Henry and William Dumaesq's sister, Elizabeth Dumaesq, on 13 October 1817. Elizabeth may have been born in Macau although other reports say Staffordshire, England. Governor Ralph Darling was the seventh Governor of New South Wales in office from 19 December 1825 to 21 October 1831. He had earned a somewhat dubious reputation and was regarded as a 'tyrant' who tortured prisoners and banned theatrical entertainment. His departure for England was greeted by public rejoicing.

Governor Darling extended the boundaries of the colony. Significantly, from 1826 he instigated the construction of the convict-built Great North Road linking the Hawkesbury settlements around Sydney with those in the Hunter Valley, including the St Heliers and St Aubins estates of his in-laws Henry and William Dumaesq.



Henry Dumaesq (1792 – 1838) & William John Dumaesq (1793 – 1868)

Henry Dumaesq (1792-1838), and William John Dumaesq (1793-1868), were sons of Colonel John Dumaesq of Bushel Hall, Shropshire, England, and his wife Anne, née Jones. Both attended the Royal Military College, Great Marlow, and served during the Peninsular War and in Canada, where William, a captain in the Royal Staff Corps, was engaged in the construction of the Ottawa Canal. Henry, who served with the 9th Regiment (Lieutenant-Colonel 1818), was severely wounded at Waterloo, his gallantry being recorded by Sir Walter Scott in *Paul's Letters to His Kinsfolk* (1816). While on service in Mauritius in 1818-25 he became military secretary to General (Sir) Ralph Darling, who had married his sister Elizabeth. When Darling accepted office as Governor of New South Wales, Henry was invited to become his private secretary and arrived in the *Phillip Dundas* in October 1825 to prepare accommodation for the governor's party. Another brother, Edward Dumaesq, accompanied Darling as far as Van Diemen's Land and William came with him to Sydney.

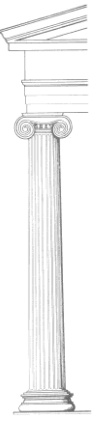
In Sydney on 15 October 1830 William Dumaesq married Christiana Susan, second daughter of the colonial secretary, Alexander Macleay. St Heliers, Henry's estate near Muswellbrook, and William's St Aubins, near Scone, named after the home of their forebears in Jersey, were extended by grant and purchase until each amounted to approximately 13,000 acres (5261 ha). Their large New England stock runs were Saumarez and Tilbuster.

One of the best-regulated estates in the colony is that of Colonel [Henry] Dumaesq wrote John Dunmore Lang... the law on his estate is the law of kindness, and incitement to industry and good conduct are rewards, not punishments. The convict labourers reside in whitewashed cottages, each having a little garden in front. Prizes are awarded to those who keep their cottages in the best order ... The result of such a system is just what might be expected; the men are sober, industrious and contented.

James Backhouse added further praise, pointing out the advantages of Dumaesq's system of *classifying the single men and placing the married men with their wives and families*, while both he and Charlotte Anley also commended William's St Aubins establishment.

Sir Edward Parry of the Australian Agricultural Company visited St Aubins in 1832. He had previously visited St Heliers, the property of Colonel Henry Dumaesq and found it a beautiful estate. However, when Henry Dumaesq's brother William took him on a tour of his own estate, St Aubins, Parry was far less impressed stating afterwards that he did not like it at all. William, who had recently resigned from his position of surveyor of roads and bridges in the colony, moved to St Aubins where he built a wooden homestead, probably with the use of convict labour. Convicts at St Aubins in 1832 included William Kennedy, Lewis Ward, William Jones, and Robert Morrison. They were at St Aubins seventeen months later when the estate was robbed by bushrangers. All were associates of the infamous John McDonald.

After 1840 William lived mainly at 'Tivoli' Rose Bay in Sydney, but continued his association with the Scone district. He was largely responsible for the erection in Scone of St Luke's Church of England.

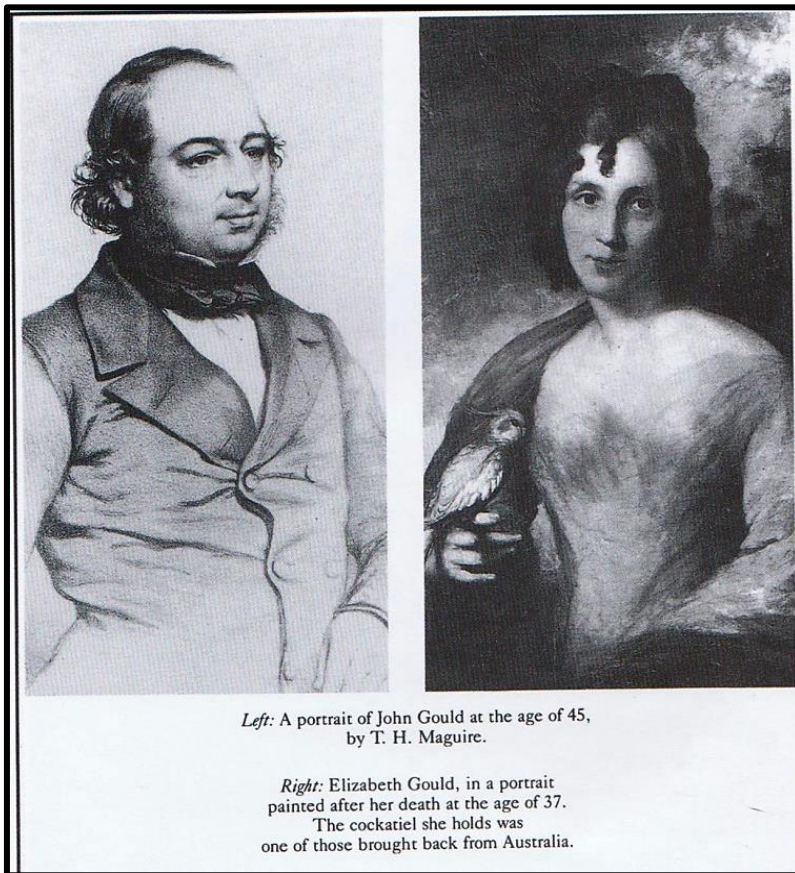


He was a foundation member of the church and hospital committees, gave the land on which the first Scone Hospital was built, and was a member of the bench of magistrates and of the Scone District Council. He represented the districts of Hunter, Brisbane and Bligh in the Legislative Council in 1843-48. He was the first President of the Scone School of Arts.

He was re-elected to the Legislative Council in 1856 but resigned before taking his seat in favour of his friend Joseph Docker of Thornthwaite. During the next ten years almost his only public interest was in church activities and, after his wife's death at 'Tivoli' on 2 May 1866, he moved to Queensland. William Dumaesq outlived his brother Colonel Henry Dumaesq by thirty years. He died on 9 November 1868 at Cleveland, the home of his daughter Susan, wife of the Honourable Louis Hope, a brother of the fifth Earl of Hopetoun.

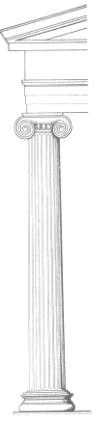
His only surviving son, William Alexander Dumaesq of Furracabad, Glen Innes, married in 1870 Helen Gladstone, a sister of Lady Belmore. A grandson, Rear Admiral John Saumarez Dumaesq, commanded the Australian Squadron in 1919-22, the first Australian-born officer to do so.

Elizabeth and John Gould



English natural history artist **Elizabeth Gould** (*nee* Coxen) (1804-1841) and her husband John Gould spent time at 'Yarrundi', near Scone, in the late 1830s. Yarrundi was owned by Elizabeth's brothers, Charles and Stephen Coxen.

The brothers provided Elizabeth and John with hundreds of Australian bird specimens, which were illustrated and described in the two volume publication, *Synopsis of the Birds of Australia* (1837-38). Elizabeth busied herself sketching birds while her husband and Aboriginal helpers collected new species.



John Gould FRS* (1804 –1881) was an English ornithologist and bird artist. He published a number of monographs on birds, illustrated by plates that he produced with the assistance of his wife, Elizabeth Gould, and several other artists.

[* Fellow of the Royal Society]

He has been considered the father of bird study in Australia and the Gould League in Australia is named after him. His identification of the birds now nicknamed "Darwin's finches" played a role in the inception of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection. Gould's work is referenced in Charles Darwin's book, *On the Origin of Species*. He is buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, London.

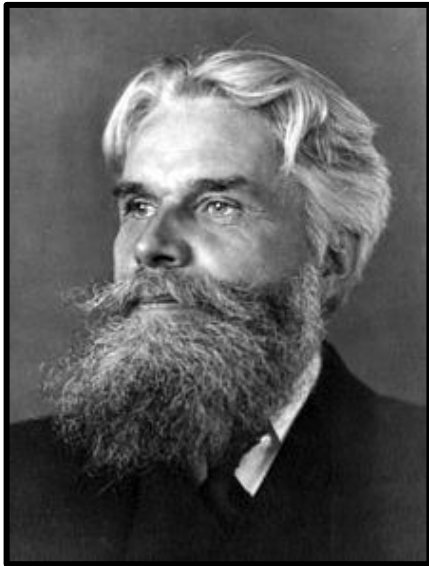
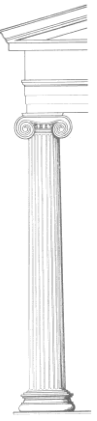
In 1838 John and Elizabeth Gould sailed to Australia, intending to study the birds of that country and be the first to produce a major work on the subject. They took with them the collector John Gilbert. They arrived in Tasmania in September, making the acquaintance of the governor Sir John Franklin and his wife. Gould and Gilbert collected on the island. In February 1839 Gould sailed to Sydney, leaving his pregnant wife with the Franklins. He travelled to his brother-in-law Stephen Coxen's station at 'Yarrundi' Scone, spending his time searching for bowerbirds and lyrebirds in the Liverpool Range.

He reported to Elizabeth that 'he was in excellent health and the colony agrees with me well'. He also mentioned the devastating drought. In April he returned to Tasmania for the birth of his son. In May he sailed to Adelaide to meet Charles Sturt, who was preparing to lead an expedition to the Murray River. Gould collected in the Mount Lofty Range, the Murray Scrubs and Kangaroo Island, returning again to Hobart in July. He then travelled with his wife to 'Yarrundi'. They returned home to England in May 1840.

The result of the trip was *The Birds of Australia* (1840–1848). It included a total of 600 plates in seven volumes, 328 of which were new to science and named by Gould. He also published *A Monograph of the Macropodidae, or Family of Kangaroos* (1841–1842) and the three volume work *The Mammals of Australia* (1849–1861).

Elizabeth died in 1841 after the birth of their eighth child, Sarah, and Gould's books subsequently used illustrations by a number of artists, including Edward Lear, Henry Constantine Richter, William Matthew Hart and Joseph Wolf.





◀ *Henry Havelock Ellis in 1913*

A British physician, writer, and social reformer who studied human sexuality he was known as **Havelock Ellis** (2 February 1859 – 8 July 1939). He was co-author of the first medical textbook in English on homosexuality in 1897, and also published works on a variety of sexual practices and inclinations, including transgender psychology. He is credited with introducing the notions of narcissism and autoeroticism, later adopted by psychoanalysis. He served as president of the Galton Institute and, like many intellectuals of his era, supported eugenics.

In April 1875, Ellis sailed on his father's ship for Australia; soon after his arrival in Sydney, he obtained a position as a master at a private school. After the discovery of his lack of training, he was fired and became a tutor for a family living a few miles from Carcoar. He spent a year there and then obtained a position as a master at a grammar school in Grafton. The headmaster had died and Ellis carried on the school for that year, but was unsuccessful.

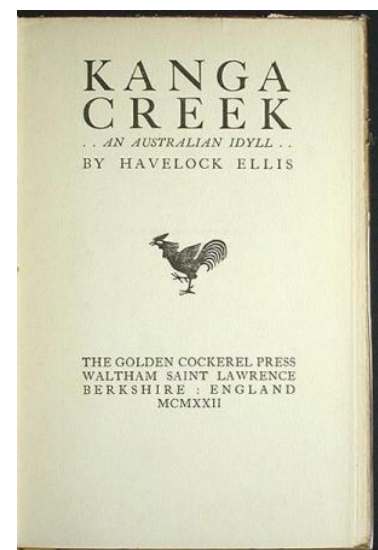
At the end of the year, he returned to Sydney and, after three months' training, was given charge of two government part-time elementary schools, one at Sparkes Creek and the other at Junction Creek (now Tinagroo) near Scone. He lived at the school house on Sparkes Creek for a year. Ellis taught about 30 pupils from surrounding properties, many of whom were girls. Alternating between the two schools, he would spend three days at Sparkes Creek and two days at Junction Creek. He lived in a timber cottage of two main rooms. One room was used for lessons, the other was for Ellis's personal use.

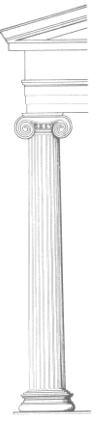
He wrote in his autobiography: *In Australia, I gained health of body, I attained peace of soul, my life task was revealed to me, I was able to decide on a professional vocation, I became an artist in literature . . . these five points covered the whole activity of my life in the world. Some of them I should doubtless have reached without the aid of the Australian environment, scarcely all, and most of them I could never have achieved so completely if chance had not cast me into the solitude of the Liverpool Range.*

Ellis documented his experience in the Upper Hunter in his novel, *Kanga Creek*, written eight years after he left Sparke's Creek. In many ways, Ellis was ahead of his time. He resolved to return to England and sailed in *La Hogue* in January 1879.

On 27 February he confided in his diary:

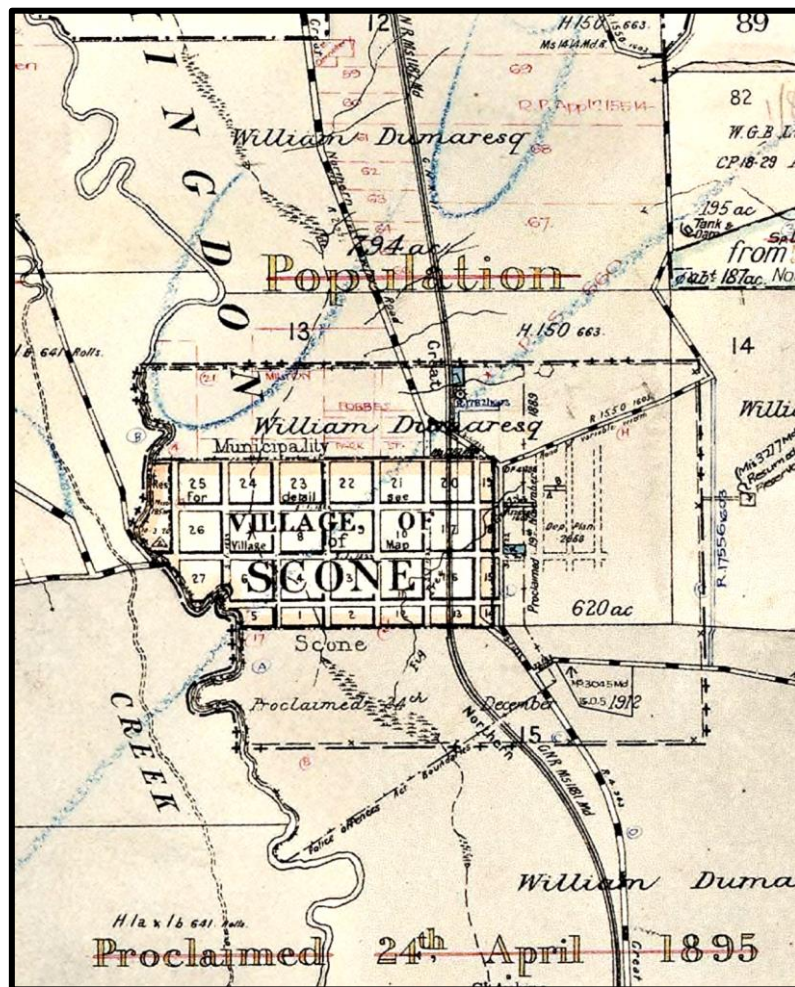
These three years I have spent in Australia seem to me like those three during which Paul was in Arabia.





The School of Arts (1868 – 1916)

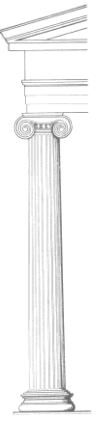
Address: 91 Kingdon Street Scone NSW 2337



Establishment:

The original Scone School of Arts dates from 1868 although an earlier reading society, called The Scone Book Society, existed from 1841 making it one of the earliest of such groups to be established in New South Wales. There is an absence of records for this early period, perhaps either lost or mislaid, but it is generally accepted that regular meetings were held at Dangar's Store at the corner of Gundy Road and New England Highway.

In December 1854 a report in the *Maitland Mercury* refers to the Scone Mutual Instruction Class and Juvenile Library for which funds were secured by subscription to provide 238 volumes, not including 62 'class books'. The following year there was further reporting on a proposal to collect subscriptions to establish a reading and news-room for the adult population. Yet it was not until June 1868 that the *Mercury* reported more concrete evidence of progress: a Mutual Improvement Association was formed, with a reading room available and forty members already signed up. Neighbouring towns had similar institutions, with the aim of combining entertainment with improvement. The Scone group followed their example.



Formal meetings, including an arranged debate, were held each Monday *but the room is open for reading the papers, draughts, chess &c every evening and the privilege seems thoroughly appreciated.*

By August, the report of the regular Monday meeting showed that the Committee gave notice of a general meeting of members, to be held on the 24th day of the month, to consider whether it might be desirable to alter some of the existing rules. This meeting determined that the institution would henceforth be identified as the School of Arts, so that the Committee might be eligible for Government Grants that would assist them to erect their own building.



The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser of Saturday 5th September 1868 reports

...that the members of the Scone School of Arts society met last Monday evening to elect officers under the new rules; WA Dumaesq, Esq. was elected as president without opposition. Messrs J Cole and J Mulholland were elected as vice presidents and Mr A Johnston was elected Hon. Treasurer, and Mr NF Asser, Hon. Secretary.

WA Dumaesq, Esq

President and benefactor of the School of Arts in 1868

The first meeting of the newly named institution was on 19 September and Mr Dumaesq had already made a room available in an old building on the St Aubins road, where the members of the School of Arts could meet. This arrangement was to continue for some years to come.

The first half-yearly report, delivered in January 1869, showed the School of Arts in a satisfactory position, with 70 members enrolled and the meeting room furnished from existing subscriptions. Mr NF Asser, one of the originators of the institution, complimented the Committee on the progress made. The one great failure, identified by a number of those present, was the lack of a Library.

This failing was addressed with some urgency. Already by February, steps had been taken to establish the Library, with books purchased and a Librarian appointed. By the time of the second half-yearly report in July, the Committee was able to state that the Library had opened on May 3rd, already stocked with a good number of books and magazines, including those donated by members who had by now made good use of this important facility. The report also commented on the number of ladies who had taken up membership of the School of Arts, adding the hope that they too would make the most of the opportunity to use the Library.



The Building:

The question of a building for the institution was referred to in the half-yearly report of July 1870, with the view expressed that the current meeting room was not conveniently located. Especially in bad weather, when the roads were wet and muddy, it was difficult to reach and as a result, many people did not attend the meetings.

This was discussed again at the next half yearly meeting in January 1871 and it was decided to make efforts to raise funds for a building. A successful bazaar was held, raising more than £100. In June, a Building Committee was formed and Mr Matthew Miller offered to give a “valuable piece of land, most conveniently situated” with the provision that it would be used for the new School of Arts. By July, a plan for the building was provided by Mr John Garrett, the local Police Magistrate, and approved with some slight alterations. It was proposed to build a Hall 50 x 25 feet in size, with two skillion rooms at the stage end. The construction was to be in brick with a shingle roof.

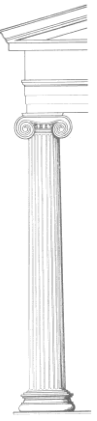
At the half-yearly meeting later in July, it was reported that the Committee had decided not to accept the very generous offer from Mr Miller, concluding that the block was too small. Instead, they had purchased a block of half an acre at an advantageous price, seemingly just £11, and situated in a most convenient location for a School of Arts, between the Presbyterian Church and the railway line. In September, it was reported optimistically that tenders were to be called ‘shortly’ for putting in the foundations for the new School of Arts and for producing the required number of bricks. By November it was noted that 50,000 bricks for the construction were being produced locally with the quoted cost from Mr John Newman being £2 per 1000 bricks.

Fund raising was slow and at the half-yearly meeting of January 1872, the Chairman encouraged all members and residents of Scone to offer support for a building to benefit all. Donations followed, including a very liberal £100 from the President Mr William Dumaresq and £50 from Mr Thomas Cook, a Vice-President.

Specifications and plans for the building were forwarded to the Committee by August 1872. They directed that tenders were to be called for erecting the building with advertisements to be placed in the *Maitland Mercury* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. A report from the *Maitland Mercury* in January 1873 stated

SCONE SCHOOL OF ARTS: The new Building in connection with this institution, so long spoken of, is being proceeded with at last. The contractor, Mr Pritchard of West Maitland, is to complete the building by the end of June next.

The building was officially opened on 9 September 1873 “with a large and fashionable crowd assembling.....every seat in the hall was occupied.” The inaugural address was delivered by the Rev. James Shaw and was followed by a musical and literary entertainment. “The audience were highly delighted all through.”



The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River Advertiser of 11th September 1873:

The new building occupies a prominent position in Kingdon Street, close to the railway line. It has a handsome stuccoed front, of the Tuscan order and has two windows there, and four windows on either side. It is built of brick on a stone foundation, and is roofed with galvanised iron. The interior is plain, and the roof is open to the top, the joists, beams and ties being painted a pale blue, picked out with red. At one end of the hall is a platform, from which two small rooms open, one of which is shelved as of a library. The supply of books at present is small but additions are contemplated. In every respect the building is an acquisition to the institution, and highly creditable to the pretty township of Scone. Mr. Backhouse [sic] of Sydney, was the architect, and Mr. J. Pritchard, of West Maitland, the builder. The hall has a very neat, cheerful, and comfortable appearance inside, and is amply lighted and ventilated. The lighting at night is effected by means of kerosene chandeliers. It is calculated to hold two hundred and fifty persons.

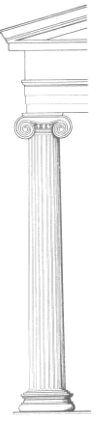


The Scone School of Arts in Kingdon Street as it was when opened in 1873

The Treasurer's report showed that the total cost of the building was nearly £900, with a cash credit of £250 from the Bank of New South Wales required to meet all the expenses. A request for a grant of £300 had been put to the Government estimates for the coming year in the hope that it would cover the outstanding debt.

In December 1874, a grant of £233.19.0 was received from the Government, and the Annual Report, delivered in January 1875, was able to show that the building was clear of debt.

As early as 1876, it was noted that the use of the Library had increased, especially with the extended opening hours following appointment of a Librarian. As well, a greater range of



newspapers and magazines was made available and it was becoming necessary to consider the provision of a Reading Room to accommodate the demand. This was a concern noted again in the Annual Report of 1883, though the drought in the previous years had meant that money was scarce and there was no possibility of addressing this need. The ever-generous President, Mr Thomas Cook, promised to give £100 if a further £50 could be raised. In spite of this liberal offer, the report of the following year makes rather sad reading with no progress to show on any front, little activity, and a regrettable lack of interest generally, except for the use of the Library and the Reading Room. Mr Cook remarked on his disappointment at the lack of better accommodation, promising that he would increase his existing offer by £50 to enable the alterations to proceed.

The existing building was deteriorating and in need of repairs, suffering from the ravages of white ants and time, with the floor in a particularly poor state. The annual report for 1886 showed that Maitland architect, Mr JW Pender, had been commissioned at a cost of £8.8.0 to draw up plans for alterations and additions. Finally, in July of 1887, the tender of £590 by Messrs Boyd and Lohmann to erect additions to the School of Arts was accepted, with the work to be completed within four months. The plan was to include a new stage and proscenium; at the rear, a reading room, library and ante-room; and a porch in front, twelve feet by eight. In December a bazaar to provide funds for the building raised £321.

The work was completed in April 1889 with the stage fitted up “in a most complete manner” including scenery and wings; and a large quantity of new furniture obtained. The total amount paid to the contractors was £677. 2s. 6d. As reported at the end of the year, the debt on the building after these important improvements stood at just over £100. The official opening of the newly extended hall took place on 19 July 1889, being reported in the *Australian Town and Country Journal* (Saturday 3 August 1889) as

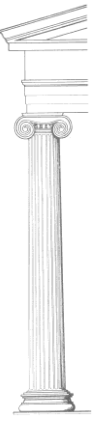
.....a building fully up to the requirements of the town for many years to come, and that without the smallest financial embarrassment. It is unpretending, commodious, well built and supplied with all requisites.



**Members of the
Scone School of
Arts
ca 1889**

(probably members of the
Committee?)

Mr Thomas Cook, long
time President and
benefactor, seated, fourth
from left.



In 1902, the overdraft was reduced by the greatest ever amount and there was a record membership of 152, which rose to a high of 192 by 1906. The debt remained, however, and it was only in 1913, following the sad news of the death of their long time benefactor Thomas Cook, that a credit balance was achieved. Mr Cook, who had been guarantor for the long standing bank loan, had bequeathed to the institution a sum of £250, which enabled the Committee to discharge the debt.



A façade was added in 1888 in honour of the Centenary of the Colonies

The double storey extension at the rear (1888) is clearly shown and the addition of fencing (1878) and tree planting (1886) had improved the site.

Uses and Social History:

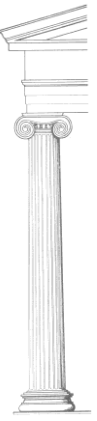
Membership fluctuated depending on the times but through all this, the School of Arts was the centre of cultural life in Scone until the First World War. Lectures and debates and musical evenings were held regularly. As well, members enjoyed popular games such as draughts and chess and a variety of card games. Other pursuits were available as the interest demanded, then lapsed when the craze passed.

Upstairs was used as the Scone Municipal Council Chambers, where they held their first meeting on 17 July 1888. It was also a meeting place for the Masonic Lodge.

Educational offerings:

Debates were popular, especially in the early years, and included some subjects that are still topical:

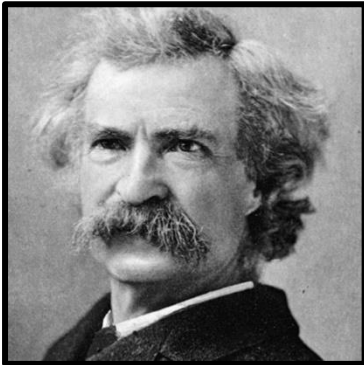
- Are strikes justifiable
- Should MPs be paid
- Liberty of thought and freedom of speech
- Was the discovery of gold beneficial to the colony
- Free trade vs protection
- Is the occupation by Europeans of countries already inhabited, morally justifiable?
- Monarchy vs Republic



Lectures were offered as part of the educational program when they could be arranged, being often provided by members of the institution. Visiting lecturers offered practical topics such as Science in Agriculture, Bee Keeping, and Mining. These seemed popular but lectures generally attracted relatively small numbers. There were attempts to provide courses of educational lectures by University Extension Lecturers but these met with little success and the programs were cancelled owing to lack of support.

From time to time, some appeared whose lectures were notable exceptions to the general lack of interest:

Mark Twain ▼



Perhaps one of the more famous speakers to give a lecture at the Scone School of Arts was Mark Twain.

Low on money, Mark Twain travelled to Australia on a speaking tour in 1895. During his tour, he travelled by train from Sydney to Scone via Newcastle. He stayed at the Willow Tree Hotel in Liverpool Street and gave his “Morals Lecture” on the evening

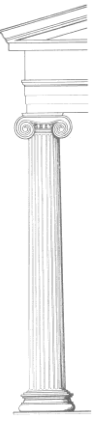


The Maitland Daily Mercury reports the following day

There was a large attendance, including visitors from Muswellbrook, Murrurundi, Aberdeen, Wingen and the district around Scone. The lecturer gave a number of humorous sketches and was at times loudly applauded, his numerous admirers being delighted with him as a lecturer as well as a man. He left by train this morning for Sydney.

◀ **Mark Twain**

by Joseph Keppler



AB 'Banjo' Paterson

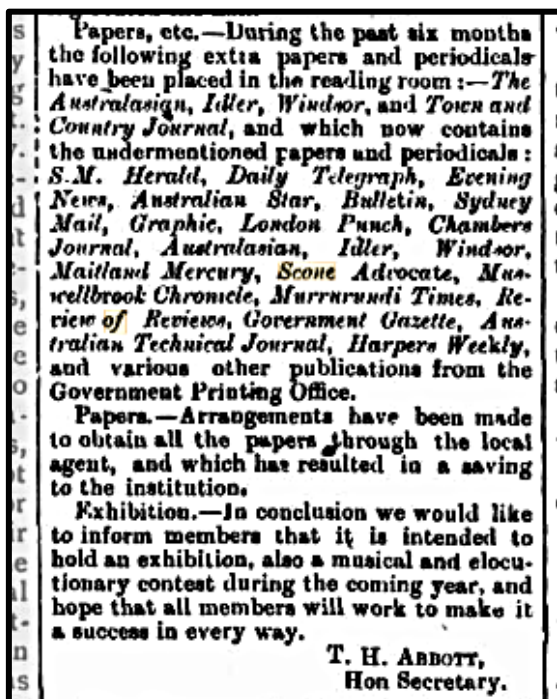


Noted Australian writer and poet, 'Banjo' Paterson, was also the special war correspondent for the *Sydney Morning Herald* during the Boer War, moving in South Africa with the contingents from the Australian Colonies for much of the war. Paterson visited Scone on 5 October 1900 to speak at the School of Arts under the auspices of the Committee, his topic being "Australians in Action".

A detailed report in the *Scone Advocate* of 12 October provides much of the content of the address and describes Paterson as being someone "who makes no pretence to oratory" not a good 'platform speaker' but that he addresses the packed hall *in an easy conversational way and keeps them entertained to a greater extent possibly than would a more accomplished spokesman*.

The Library and the Reading Room

These were the most important and the best patronised of all the facilities offered by the institution. The Scone School of Arts was home to the local library which flourished and was well patronised – 1359 volumes reported in 1886. This remained so throughout its existence with significant numbers of books accumulating and high numbers recorded for issues of reading material, even when membership numbers fell. Records show that library users overwhelmingly favoured fiction, something which the Committee worried about but eventually accepted. There was even the comment that some fiction had reached a good literary standard and would improve the minds of its readers. The Reading Room offered a wide range of newspapers and periodicals.

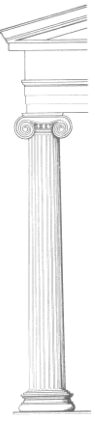


◀ *Scone Advocate* 14 July 1899. Extract from the Annual Report for 1898-99:

The report also showed the following statistics of the Library holdings:

2009 books from which were issued –
 fiction 2093
 periodicals 10
 history and biography 10
 voyages and travels 26
 poetry and drama 12
 physical sciences 14
 theology 5
 miscellaneous 4.

Total books issued 2174



Exhibitions and Competitions

In the 1890s and early 1900s, the Committee of the School of Arts sponsored exhibitions of work, especially from pupils in the schools of the district. These were regarded as having a desirable effect in terms of encouraging good standards. They proved popular, gathering a good number and a high standard of entries, perhaps also attracted by the prizes offered. Community support was also high with donations of goods and money for the range of prizes on offer. The various sections judged included needlework – sewing and embroidery of various styles, as well as practical skills such as darning and sewing; and drawing, mapping, writing etc.

A Spelling Bee also attracted interest and support and was for a time a regular feature. Elocutionary and Music Contests were popular and often presented with the exhibitions as entertainment. These competitions satisfied the aim to encourage educational improvement among the younger people, as well as advertising the institution.

By 1914 the institution was free of debt and was able to offer scholarships in the form of free memberships for the School of Arts to the best students of all the Public Schools of the district. As well, the magazines and illustrated papers, superseded in the Reading Room, were provided to the Public Schools instead of being sold.

Classes

On Friday 31 July 1908, the *Scone Advocate* notes that the School of Arts Committee had succeeded in establishing technical classes in Scone, which were held in the building.

The Technical College have now a number of students going through a course of training in wool-classing. The cost to the institution so far has been £11.13s 4d; but most of this will be recouped on completion of the course. The committee would point out to their successors the advisability of continuing these classes and would suggest that an effort be made to secure sufficient students to form a veterinary class.

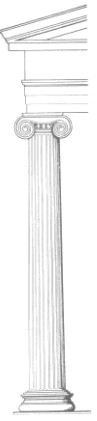
This venture proved unsuccessful and the classes lapsed in the following years because of lack of numbers to cover costs.

Later, classes were established in dress-making and cutting (1914) and millinery (1915). These were also conducted by instructors from the Sydney Technical College. By contrast they were a great success, attracting substantial numbers and providing a good financial return.

Recreation

Games of all kinds were always on offer and from time to time, the Committee also provided other facilities. A gymnasium was set up in 1890 and subsidised by the institution but interest was short lived. A Dramatic Club and a Musical Club were established.

As occurred in most other towns, billiards became a popular pastime and it was proposed that the School of Arts should provide the facilities that would enable its members to participate. This became a contentious issue and repeated motions in favour of the introduction of the game



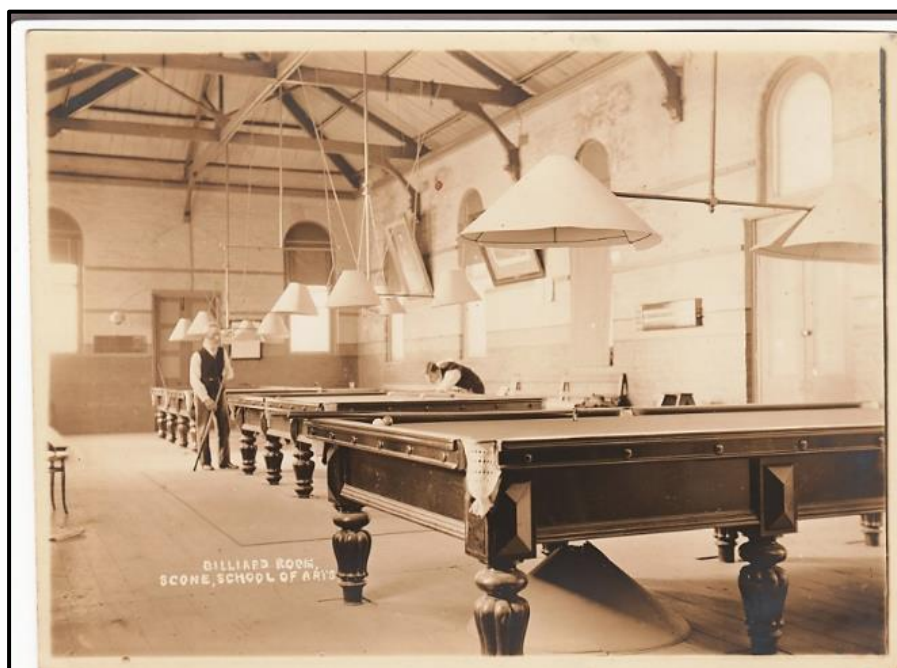
were variously approved and later defeated. One of the sticking points, even for those in favour of the game itself, was whether the table would be located in the main hall.

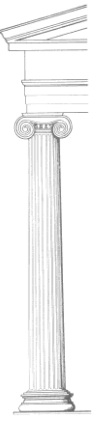
Finally, in 1905, the motion was put forward “for the fifth time in nine years” and carried in favour of acquiring the necessary equipment. This proved to be an excellent decision with membership of the School of Arts increased as a result. In spite of the outlay to buy a table, the return in fees quickly covered these costs and added valuable income. Other tables were added and the hall became the Recreation Room.



▲ ▼ The main room in the Scone School of Arts

The hall became the Recreation Room with three billiard tables eventually in use.





During the First World War the Scone School of Arts was compulsorily acquired by the Defence Department for use as a Drill Hall for local soldiers. The Committee was paid the sum of £850 as compensation.

For the next few years, the Committee rented two rooms in Campbell's Chambers together with accommodation elsewhere for the billiard tables, until a more permanent site could be found. The story of this phase of the history follows as Scone (2).

Currently (2017):

After its time as the School of Arts, and then the Drill Hall, the building over time has served many purposes including a Dance Academy, a pop-up shop, and as Willowvale Hall bed and breakfast accommodation. It is now a private residence.



2017: The first School of Arts building still stands



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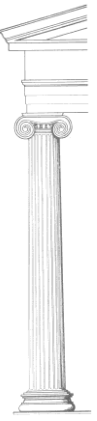
Photos

University of Newcastle libguides.newcastle.edu.au/archives/collections
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 Scone and Upper Hunter Historical Society



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This contribution to the ADFAS School of Arts/Mechanics' Institutes Project celebrates the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS) in Scone.

1991 - 2016

Sarah and Bill Howey have been members of ADFAS Scone since its inception.

2018 will mark 150 years since the establishment of the School of Arts in Scone.

ADFAS Scone

August 2017