



## SCONE (2) NSW



The opening of the Scone Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts in Kelly Street  
by Mr Arthur 'Advocate' Smith on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1924

**Name: School of Arts (1917 - 1924)**  
**Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts (1924 - 1954)**

**Address: 214 Kelly Street Scone NSW 2337**

### **Establishment:**

After the Kingdon Street School of Arts building was resumed by the Defence Department, it was decided to erect a new building, so the hunt for a new site began and a building fund was established. With the intervention of the First World War, it was eight years before this goal was realised. The building was to be called the Scone Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts.

The aim of the committee was to acquire a site that was centrally located in the business district of the town so that the institution was more accessible and its activities were better known. Several sites were available and there was considerable debate over which was the most suitable in terms of location, price, and size. In 1916, it was decided that when there were sufficient funds, the Committee would purchase the site on the corner of Liverpool and Main streets, offered by the Presbyterian Church for £300. The Annual Report of 1917 confirmed that this sale had been concluded.

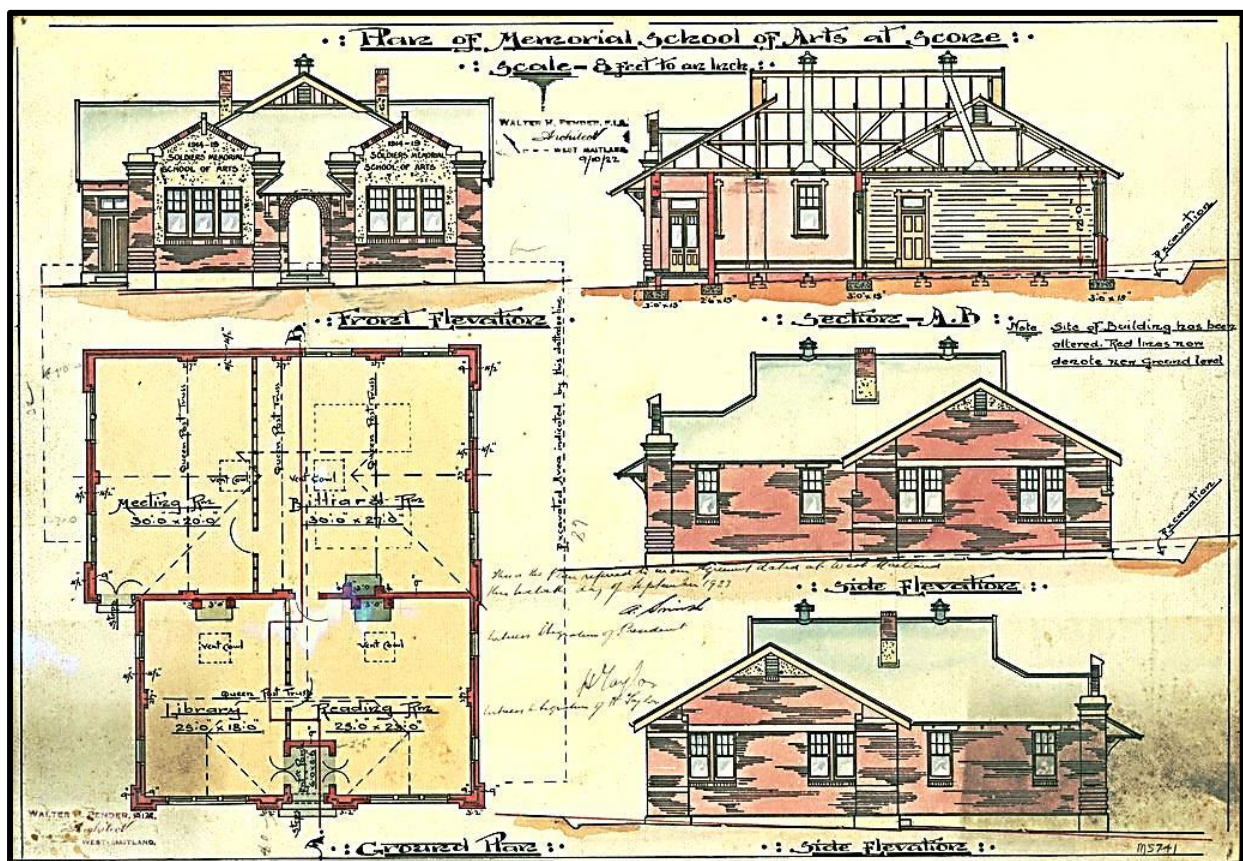
Meanwhile, because the existing building had been handed over to the Defence Department, the institution needed to relocate its facilities to new premises.



The contents of the Library and Reading Room were moved to rooms rented in Campbell's Chambers, with the billiard tables installed in another location, an arrangement that was really not satisfactory. The need for another building was obvious but the war situation made it difficult to find funding for this purpose. Meanwhile, there was continuing discussion about the suitability of the site that had been acquired, with many of the opinion that any new building should be located in the main street of the town, Kelly Street.

## The Building:

Eventually in 1921, it was settled that what was known as Lot 2 of the subdivision of Fox-Parker's paddock with frontage to Kelly Street should be bought at a cost of £330, a site that had been proposed as far back as 1914 when the original building was offered to the Defence Department. The block previously acquired from the Presbyterian Church was sold at a small loss. The committee engaged renowned Maitland architect, Mr WH Pender, to draw up plans, with Mr H Taylor from New Lambton, engaged as the building contractor.



### Plans for the Scone Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts by WH Pender of Maitland

The Library was entered by steps to the portico, which had two doors: the door on the right led into the Library and the door on the left into the Reading Room, which could be converted into a Lecture Hall.

From this room, a door led to the Billiards Room and thence to a Meeting Room.



Funds were urgently needed to support the cost of a new building, expected to be £1800. The Committee negotiated a bank loan of £1000 at interest of 6 ¼ % per annum. As well, the local branch of the Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) donated £100 towards the fund, with the stipulation that they should have the use of the lobby to display their Honour Roll, together with the use of a room in which to hold their meetings.

The building was officially opened on 24 March 1924 by the President of the Committee, Mr Arthur ('Advocate') Smith, with a very successful concert held in the evening to celebrate the important event. The *Scone Advocate* reported fully on both events a few days later on 28 March. The total cost, including furniture and fittings was £2100 with the remaining debt £900. The annual report, delivered just a few months later, showed that the expenses of moving to the new building were considerable but the facilities of the School of Arts were now located all together and this was expected to encourage greater interest from the community. This proved to be so, with membership increasing to 220 (previously 140). Membership fees remained at 10/- a year, a figure that seems to have persisted since the very early years of the institution.

Five months later, in August, the memorial to the soldiers of the district who had served in the Great War of 1914-1918 was unveiled at the entrance to the School of Arts.

### **The Soldiers' Memorial**

There was considerable controversy relating to the involvement of the returned soldiers of the district in the development of a new building for the School of Arts. It was widely accepted that there should be a memorial to mark the service of the Diggers, particularly to commemorate those who had lost their lives in the war. The returned soldiers had shown an interest in the idea of a Soldiers' Club where they could gather and where there would be appropriate facilities for meetings and recreation. It had earlier been suggested that this could well be incorporated in a new building for the School of Arts but this was thought to be simply a means of taking over any money available for a memorial in order to subsidise the School of Arts building. It was criticised as appearing to exploit the deeds of the soldiers for civilian purposes.

An alternative proposal was to build a new facility for the Scone Hospital, a maternity wing, and dedicate that as the Soldiers' Memorial. This was not well received by the soldiers: the hospital was already dedicated as a memorial to Dr HJH Scott and it was thought that adding another memorial would dilute the importance of that commemoration. Another suggestion was to install a sewerage system for the town and identify it as marking the service of those who had gone to war.

In the end, the soldiers made the decision. The *Scone Advocate* published a report on the preferred option in the edition of Friday 16 July 1920:





## THAT MEMORIAL CONTROVERSY THE DIGGERS' VERDICT

*'A block of buildings comprising an up-to-date hall, School of Arts, and, if possible, Municipal and Shire Offices, and two rooms for the exclusive use of returned soldiers; the hall to have a good frontage, with a marble slab embedded to hold an Honor Roll of all those Scone district members of the A.I. F. and the edifice to be situated fronting Kelly Street.'*

*That was the Diggers' verdict on the Scone Memorial controversy at a well-attended meeting of the local sub-branch of the RSSILA at their rooms last night week [Thursday 8 July 1920]. The whole matter was discussed at considerable length and the verdict returned was unanimous. The general view taken was that this form of memorial was the one that could best fulfil the dual requirements of town beautification and public utility and at the same time hand down to posterity a noble and lasting memorial of those who had made the supreme sacrifice for the Scone district.*

The building was designated as the 1914 -1919 Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts. It displayed this title prominently across the double gable frontage of the newly erected building in the main street of Scone, Kelly Street.



**Unveiling of the Memorial Arch by Lieutenant Colonel Donald Cameron DSO and Bar  
26<sup>th</sup> August 1924**



This list of names inscribed on the pillars of the Memorial Arch was published in the *Scone Advocate*

Friday 29 August 1924



Also included was the following description:

*Each of the pillars measures 6ft by 1ft 6 ins. Attached to the front are marble panels 5ft 6ins in length, incised on which in everlasting lead letters are the names of the men who made the supreme sacrifice in the Great World War. Across the pillars at the top is a coping stone 10 ft by 2 ft. with a marble tablet inset bearing the inscription*

*“To the Memory of our Fallen Comrades”*

*Surmounting the whole in white marble is a beautifully carved emblem of the AIF 3ft by 2ft with supporting scrolls on each side.*

*On the bases of the pillars are also marble tablets with inscriptions. The one on the left reads*

*“Erected by the Returned Soldiers of Scone and District”*

*and that on the right*

*“Unveiled by Lt Col D Cameron DSO and Bar 26<sup>th</sup> August 1924”*

The pillars bear the following names:—Adams, J. E., Ashford, G. Bowd, A. S., Boyd, A., Bush, M., Bradley, R., Baker, H. H., Blayden, T., Battye, E. C., Bird, S., Campbell, N. H., Campbell, S. J., Campbell, D. A. R., Campbell, I. F., Caslick, J. P., Collison, E., Crossing, G. C., Corbett, B., Carter, E. H., Carter, G. M., D., Cross, R., Conn, W., Crichton, W. D., Cumberland, J. H., Cumberland, O. H., Coombes, A. R., Costello, J. L., DeAlvion, R., Dunbar, R., Driscoll, O., Davis, P. C., Elpper, K. M., Fowler, F., Field, J., Felan, J. R., Gunter, R. C., George, W., Geary, D. D., Gardiner, B. J., Goodworth, F., Gray, A., Grimes, M., Hudson, V., Howe, T. J., Hayne, T., Halliday, F., Hill, F., Howard A. E., Harvey, W., Isted, W., Johnston, Harold, Jarvis, E. E., Johnston, H., Keene, R. O. C., Kiley, E., Kelly, J. J., Keevers, W. M., Logan, J., Lee, S., Leard, G., Loos, J., Morrison, G., Mychael, A., Mychael, C. J., Mitchell, S., Morrissey, P. P., Mulholland, D. V., McMullin, W. J., McDonald, J., McNamara, A. H., McLoughlin, M., McInnes, I., Noonan, J., Nicholson, S., O'Neil, T. F., Pinkerton, W. H., Parbury, F. N., Page, J., Quinn, M., Quinn, C., Riley, J. P., Robertson, F. C., Robson, W., Rossogsky, I. P., Stoops, H. S., Stewart, A. L., Scott, D. B., Skeys, A., Spencer, L. G., Taylor, E., Thompson, C. W., Thurlow, S. S., Tanner, S. J., Turner, C. E., Wakeling, H., Wakeling, R., Wildon, W. G., Welsh, R., Worrad, C., Worrad, J. H.

The addition of this Memorial entrance was part of the arrangement made by the Committee of the School of Arts with the Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Imperial League in return for their support for the new building. The Committee had agreed to house the Memorial in the building, where it was intended to mount panels in the entrance vestibule. The Arch was a more imposing and more visible addition and as remarked by members of the Committee, made a more impressive entrance.

The Committee agreed also to offer free memberships of the School of Arts to all the returned soldiers of the district.



▲ Detail of the Memorial Arch ►



▲ Pediment: right hand side

From the *Scone Advocate* report of the unveiling, Friday 29 August 1924 :

*The stone is the best selected Waratah freestone from the quarries of Messrs Meldrum and Markey, trading as GP Lock Monumental Works Newcastle, whose design and tender for the completion of the memorial was accepted through their local agent Mr WT Cooper junior.*





### ***Lieutenant Colonel Donald Cameron 1877 – 1950***



Donald Cameron was born at Rouchel, near Scone. A grazier, he enlisted in the 1st Australian Light Horse and served twice in the South African War, each time as part of Australian mounted units attached to British Army units. At the outbreak of the First World War, he enlisted again with the Light Horse. After training in Egypt, he moved with the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment to Gallipoli in late August 1915, where the regiment was split up to provide reinforcements for the Regiments already serving there as dismounted infantry. After the evacuation from Gallipoli, the Light Horse regiments re-formed in Egypt, with Cameron in command of one of the squadrons of the 12<sup>th</sup>. He served in all the campaigns in Sinai, Palestine and Syria.

In 1917 at the second Battle of Gaza, the Commander of the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse, Lt Colonel Harold McIntosh was killed. Cameron was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and given command of the Regiment. At the historic Battle of Beersheba, it was the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiments of the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Brigade that were deployed on 31 October 1917. They made the historic charge through the Turkish defences which would capture the strategically important town. The 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, commanded by Cameron, actually took the town, capturing guns and taking prisoners along the way. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for directing the attack *in an extraordinarily able and determined manner*. In September 1918, he was awarded the Bar\* to his DSO for operations leading to the capture of Damascus. He led a spirited mounted charge on Kaukah *seized his objective with great dash, and drove the enemy towards Damascus*.

[\*A Bar is a second award of the same medal for the same level of exemplary performance of duty in action. It does not occur often].

On return to Australia Cameron was a lieutenant colonel in the Australian Military Forces from 1920 until he retired in 1933. Popular and highly respected, he was very active in local affairs. He organised the Volunteer Defence Force for the Hunter Valley in the Second World War.

### **The Building - Uses and Social History:**

As always, the building debt was a constant problem and the Committee appealed to the citizens, especially the ladies of the town, to support the School of Arts with fund raising activities. This resulted in an event titled the “All Nations Fair” a brilliant spectacle with stall holders dressed in costumes of various nations and a wide range of goods for sale.



It was also a record financial success, making a total profit of £530/13/4 of which £430 was allocated to the building fund.

The debt continued to be reduced annually so that by 1929 it stood at £253. Then the 1930s brought the Great Depression, which inevitably affected the School of Arts. Again there was the appeal to the ladies, who ran regular socials to support the Committee. 1931 saw the possibility of closure, a fate common to many of these institutions at the time, with the financial situation aggravated by the withdrawal of the Government subsidy.

Expenditure was curtailed. Money for books and periodicals was greatly reduced and instead, books were donated in response to appeals. The Committee cancelled the employment of a Secretary-Manager, an innovation which had worked very successfully, and this work was done instead on a voluntary basis, using a roster system. Street stalls and euchre parties provided much needed income.

An advertisement appeared several times in the *Scone Advocate*, appealing for help and support.

*Scone Advocate* January and February 1930 ►►

The response was the best since the opening of the building. It was also decided to hold another "All Nations Fair" in the hope that it would echo the success of the one held in 1924. The ladies were again to rescue the institution: the Fair, opened by the Minister for Education, was a resounding success with £253 raised for the School of Arts. The existing debt of £240 was wiped off.

## SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL SCHOOL OF ARTS

### Scone.

—:—:—

#### REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD LEND IT A HELPING HAND.

- (1) Because it is a Soldiers' Memorial, offering many privileges to Returned Men and their Dependents.
- (2) Because it is a Public Institution, and as such should claim the undivided support of all Citizens.
- (3) Because it is conducted by officers who give their services gratuitously because of the first two reasons. Therefore, express your appreciation of their services in a tangible way.
- (4) Because it contains well-appointed Billiard Parlours, in which there are three first-class tables.
- (4) Because it has a Library containing thousands of volumes, including reference works, which should be equal to catering for the tastes of all readers.
- (5) Because the shelves of the Library are kept replete, the additions being selected from a range considered most suitable.
- (6) Because of the advantages of its Reading Room, wherein all city dailies and leading country journals, in addition to illustrated weeklies and the best periodicals are to be found.
- (7) Because the above enumerated privileges may be had on payment of a Nominal Fee of

**2/6 PER QUARTER.**

Less than a shilling a month.

While the debt was always a worry for the Committee, the School of Arts continued to offer facilities for its members and the town in general. The library was stocked with 3000 books;





the reading room was provided with numerous national and international papers and magazines. These amenities were always an important focus for the Committee.

Billiards also remained popular and the billiard tables were a constant source of income through good times and bad, though the amounts fluctuated to reflect this. It was a matter of considerable satisfaction for the members who had struggled for so long to have the equipment purchased for the School of Arts. Those who had fought against the introduction of the game were gracious enough to admit the success of this venture.

*[See the account in Scone (1)].*

In 1933, the Australian billiard player Horace Lindrum, termed ‘boy wonder’ (he was 20 years old) visited Scone under the auspices of the School of Arts Committee. He held the record for the world’s highest score. It was arranged that he play games of billiards and snooker at the School of Arts against the town’s best player Leo Byrnes, who was conceded a start of some hundreds of points. Lindrum won resoundingly just the same, though Byrnes was thought to be ‘not at his best’. Lindrum also gave an exhibition of trick shots which were much admired by the audience.

Concerts, socials, and euchre parties provided entertainment and raised funds. A popular ‘Diggers Ball’ was organised from time to time, contributing much needed funds. A Debating Society was established and there was a proposal to provide a program of University Extension Lectures. Board games were always available. For a short time in 1931, when funds were very short, the School of Arts also benefitted from race meetings held locally.

Apart from the free memberships available to returned soldiers, the Committee also offered scholarships for students from local schools. Introduced in 1914, they were now offered again and extended to include the convent schools. They allowed nominated students free membership of the institution to encourage use of the Library in particular.

In 1936, the Scone Branch of the CWA [Country Women’s Association] moved their Rest Rooms to the Scone Memorial School of Arts building in Kelly Street and in 1938 the much-awaited Baby Health Clinic was officially opened by Mrs P Stacey, State President of the CWA of NSW. The Baby Health Clinic remained in this building until 1955, when the clinic moved to its own premises nearby in Surman Street.

From 1934 when there were only 70 members of the School of Arts from a population of 4000 and fees provided only 13% of revenue, by 1937 this had increased to 189 members. In 1939, it was proposed to install sewerage to the building and to undertake much needed refurbishment. A mortgage of £200 was raised and the CWA promised to assist in supporting repayments. The work was eventually undertaken, assisted greatly by a legacy of £250 from the estate of Mr J Londrigan, a long-time supporter and member of the School of Arts.

The Committee of the School of Arts could claim in 1942 that it was free from debt for the first time in 75 years.



Nevertheless, the 1939-1945 War was taking its toll with many of the younger people of the district enlisting to support the war effort. Inevitably, this had a significant effect on membership and in 1947, the free membership list was withdrawn.

Another event with very significant impact was the passage of the Free Public Library Act. The School of Arts had always provided library services and this was regarded as one of the most important benefits of membership. Now it was proposed that local Councils would provide free library services which would be subsidised by the State Government. It was thought likely that the School of Arts Reading Room would be made available for this service. The proposal was deferred for some time but in 1953 the School of Arts Committee proposed that they hand over the building to the Scone Council on the condition that it be used for a Library, though some Council members felt the terms were too restrictive.

On 9 April 1954 the Scone Council agreed to accept the transfer of the building from the Trustees of the Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts with the condition that  
*the building, land, and assets be used solely for library purposes.*

The building was rejuvenated and modernised and stocked with new books. On Friday 31 July 1954, the new Library was opened by the State Governor, Lieutenant General Sir John Northcott.

In 2011 the then Upper Hunter Shire Council transferred the library to the old Council Chambers in Liverpool Street and sold the building to Transcare, a not-for-profit community organisation providing support and services for local residents.

### **Service to the Institution....and the Town**

A marked characteristic of the School of Arts, throughout almost 100 years that it served the people of Scone and district, is the long and devoted service offered by those who gave their time and energies to manage its affairs. It is an indication of how civic-minded many were that they also served in other important roles, often as Mayor of the town as well as President or Committee members for many other civic organisations.

There are so many such names over the long period of the life of the School of Arts that there is risk in singling out any; but one notable example was Mr EJ Sherwood who joined the School of Arts aged 16. He held every office of the institution, from being a member of the Committee to a Trustee. There are other numerous examples: benefactors William Dumaresq and Thomas Cook, and at a later time, Mr JP Londrigan. Mr NF Asser was one of the 'fathers' of the institution and members of the Asser family served regularly on the Committee. Mr JJ Dodd and Mr EJ Solomons were involved from early times. As might be expected, the members of the clergy were great supporters of the institution during their tenure in the district, serving often as office holders. Mr JAK Shaw was a member and office holder for almost all of the 30 years he lived in Scone until his untimely death; Mr JW Joughin and Mr WJ Moxham were Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer respectively for more than 20 years, and referred



to as ‘the lifeline of the Committee’. The service of Dr HJH Scott, including to the School of Arts, is recognised in the naming of the Scott Memorial Hospital; Mr Arthur ‘Advocate’ Smith, proprietor and editor of the *Scone Advocate*, served for many years, including as President.

Eventually, ladies became members of the Committee, recognising their invaluable service in sustaining the institution through difficult times but probably also because so many men were away during the Second World War.

### **Currently (2017):**

The building, formerly the Soldiers’ Memorial School of Arts, is now used as a base for TransCare, which received in 2011 a generous bequest from the late Syd and Percy Barwick. This was used to purchase the old Scone Library building at 214 Kelly Street from the Upper Hunter Shire Council. With funding from the Department of Families & Community Services, as well as a loan, TransCare undertook renovations to make the building suitable for their purposes. It was re-named in recognition of the donation from the Barwick brothers. Today, TransCare provides a range of services to more than 3,000 clients in the Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook areas.

The new owners have agreed to maintain the Memorial Arch which still stands at the front of the building and where the Anzac Day Service in Scone is held each year.



**2017: Scone Memorial School of Arts as it is today**





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### Photos

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**This contribution to the ADFAS School of Arts/Mechanics' Institutes Project  
celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> 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**