

# Soundings

EDEN KILLER WHALE MUSEUM

Established 1931

Newsletter May, 2024

## WHATEVER BECAME OF ? ..... Read on ...

Apologies for the tardiness of this edition. It's a bit on the negative side of our history but also could be food for thought for those who might.

My journey is a bit tough at the moment. Opportunity to be on site at EKWM is limited. Having done the job of newsletter editor for several organisations for varying periods, I am well aware of the challenge to produce something "half decent", without that intimacy, is difficult. But here goes anyway.

Once upon a time..... I dare say we all have similar, but at times my mind wanders back. Events of my life can come once again to the fore. They can be triggered, some by just a casual conversation. Mostly they are remarkable only for their inconsequential value.

When I was about 8 or 9, I was a member of Cubs, a great organisation which taught me a lot. I still draw on that knowledge today.

It was war time. Most fundraising was, rightly, for the war effort. A decision was made by the Scout Group to hold a fete to make a few bob. The hall was owned by the group, it being built in the street called The Mall, (long since devoured by Bankstown Square.) and donated by the Buckingham family who were huge supporters of scouting at all levels.



A bit of indulgence. That's "y.t". in the middle. frontJim, to my right, had a genuine peg leg. He kept up with us no matter what. The kid overlooking my left shoulder is my lifelong mate, Alan. He has just gone into care with dementia. My sadness compounds, knowing that he would no longer recognise me.

The Scouts had a big programme for the day with much to fill some stalls, particularly fresh foods and home baking. It was in an atmosphere where there was bugger all else available to do just. Shortages were the order of the day. The shortage of paper of all types, writing and wrapping included, had its influence on every aspect of life. We just had to make do.

The little Cubs wanted to be included, so the big kids set up an auto tent (remember these?) and we proceeded to set up a "Wazza" show. We displayed broken crockery, bike parts, old bottles etc each being labelled each item a "Wazza" this or that, with pencil on whatever it we could find that would accept that medium. Accordingly we labelled each item as being its Wazza, complete item name.

We charged 3d (2c) entry fee. The adults supported the joke and we contributed 7/3 (72c) or such figure, to the day's takings.

It Wazza trip back to that happening that I applied the Wazza to aspects of Eden's lost amenity over the past few decades. Each going few through financial hardship, all; taking money from Eden's economic well being and all leaving lost job opportunities in their wake. Some other reversal did present opportunities but the scale of community value was not as fruitful as those foregone.

Even going back to the fifties where the town's isolation would have been aggravated by the demise of the coastal shipping. Though brought about by the increase of road transport, roads to the two state capitals and the nation's capital, weren't all sealed, nor the watercourses bridged, until the seventies.

## SOUNDINGS MAY / JUNE 2024

On the north east corner of the Imlay Mitchell intersection stood the **Imlay Shire Council H.Q.**

It was early into the business and inaugurated in 1906 soon after the act was proclaimed the year before. It functioned through the travails of two world wars, the great depression (I have always been intrigued about what was great about it), droughts and floods, industries rising and falling, the coming of electric power, the telephone, water and sewerage reticulation, etc.etc.

In 1981 bigger was beautiful. Notwithstanding that, Imlay had a tidy balance sheet. it mandated that it was to join two the L.G. bodies, both of which would be hard pressed to make that same claim.

Well, savings were definitely going to be made; economies of scale dictated it must be so. Nirvana we' on our way! Our economy took a huge hit.

But did we reach the promised land? Forty years on, the jury of public opinion could now deliver a verdict.

**.The RSL Clubroom/Hall.** There Wazza 'nother one on it's present site.

Like all country towns, Eden is a very self-help town. It has had to be. As the furthest coastal town south of the capital, it was easy to be overlooked.

So it was in the late forties early fifties that the returned service people and many who had loved ones in one or both of the wars, agreed that a clubroom would be a great way to continue the camaraderie of those still with us. Accordingly, a tribute to the memory those who had gone. So in 1952 after loads of local volunteer work and donation, the hall was ready to open. Bill Yeo (later Sir), the State President of the RSL, came to Eden to cut the ribbon.

Fast forward to the mid 1990's a vandal /s lit a fire under the hall and burned it beyond any chance of recovery. It was a bitter blow to the town, none less so than those still among us who had worked in its construction four decades earlier.

Sad but undaunted, work began to plan and build



The fire damaged the first RSL Hall.1995.

a replacement.

The town took up the challenge and what stands today is testament to the grit of those in the returned ranks their partners and supporters. Particularly, it must be recorded, is the time and



expertise given by the local tradies

This time, National President Sir William (Bill) Keys (a Bombala boy. did the honours.

And again, the collective heart of Eden got behind the project with donations of money and time. The tradies once again rallied to provide that which stands on the site today.

Alex McKenzie, himself, a former serviceman, in his ninth decade of life, added to his collection of tile murals by creating the mural on the hall's western side. Each day the sun gathers towards dusk, one of the last things to enjoy for the day is to look at Alex's handiwork before going to bed. It's a kind of



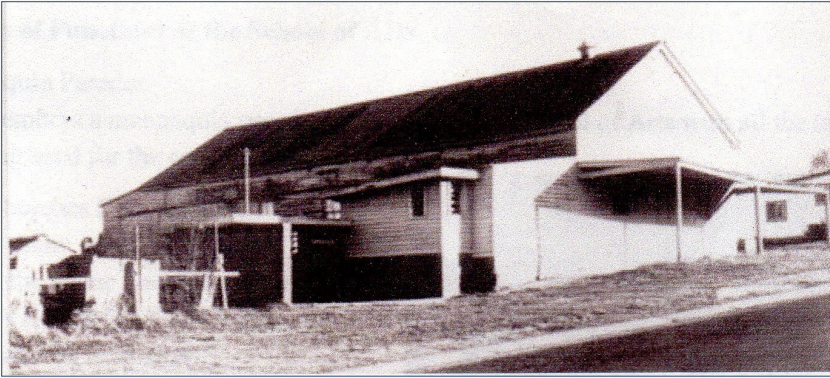
Last Post, richly rewarding of those served.

Alex was later to receive the nation's acknowledgement of his work on this and other charitable works for Eden

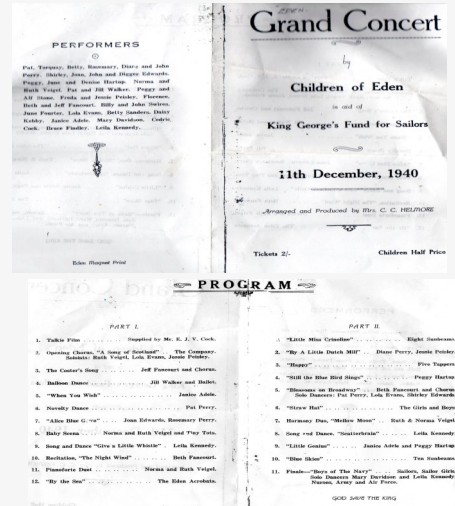
And then there "Wazza" **School of Arts** an icon of the town, serving for many decades in its central location, bounded by Flora, Chandos and Calle Calle Sts.



# SOUNDINGS MAY / JUNE 2024



Eden School of Arts



A 1940 program for A children's grand concert. Old hands will recognise names of locals, including maiden surnames. Some still survive.

Countless functions, library, picture house, skating rink and public gathering place where the joys and sorrows were written into the social history and folk lore of the town.

This came to its climax in the late seventies which saw the Eden Fishermen's Club on the rise. It came to be the entertainment hot spot. It had quite a bearing on the old venue.

The Phillips family operated the movies there for a number of years, with pianists Beatrice Fletcher and Nollie Phillipps supplying the accompaniment from behind a curtain. A large hand-held bell was rung around the streets, heralding the Saturday night line up. The bell remains in the family.

Viv and Bruce Cock took over the film business from the Phillipps'. Rod Bourke saw that side of activity until progress forced its demise.

Grid electricity arrived in Eden in the early forties albeit, serving a modest area. Though he did not live to see the switch-on, it was instigated by JR Logan. Mrs Logan continued to head manage the business following JR's demise.

Prior to that, carbide lamps lit the old School of Arts building. We have a couple of these treasured units in the collection. They were made to last. Enamelled steel, they spent "x" years under our old building, exposed to the ravages of salt air etc, Also in the collection is a painted backdrop from the S of A's, which, with a head scratch, its size is about 3 x 2 metres. Once again, it signals the determination of country of the community. to get on with life with what they had

In the late seventies I was a member of the Eden Area Committee. This was an advisory committee to the

Council. And appointed by that body.

The matter of maintenance of the School of Arts appeared on the agenda. I don't remember the amount required to bring the hall back to acceptable standard, but I do remember it was a "piddling" sum.

Notwithstanding the assurances that a new building would replace it, I was vehemently opposed to the destruction of the building, knowing that if it went, no replacement would arise.

There is no doubt that the rise of the 'Fisho's contributed to the end of the School of Arts. We now have neither.

The School of Arts allotment has lain vacant ever since. Many who witnessed the almost fire sale frenzy of Imlay Council real assets which occurred post amalgamation, wondered why this block defied the auction hammer. If my memory serves it was the Area Committee that were told the particular land title and how it was bequeathed" t would need an act of parliament to declare it free to be put on the market. Nearly half a century on, this may just be correct.

We have a land title transfer documents for this at EKWKM. Again calling on diminishing brain power, I think it was from about late 19 early 20th century



School of Arts' Site today

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# MAY / JUNE 2024

## KIAH PUTS ICING ON THE FIGHT-BACK CAKE

It often seems hard to accept that the 19/20 bushfires are four years gone. At the time, each coming day seemed a lifetime to pass with the question, "will it eveend"?



Iluka Hallinan seeks sanctuary from the flames (Coast style photo)

The Kiah community took the brunt of our district damage .

To many, the shadow of that time will have a presence for their lifetime, some having been physically

scarred and many mentally so.

The resilience of the Kiah was on full display on 27th May, when the new Kiah Hall was officially opened. An historical milestone was created and the community celebrated. It was a certainly a great achievement



From all accounts it is a great building. Mod cons and comfort are the order of the day.

It will also serve for the broader sweep of it's surrounds, especially with the dire shortage of function space that Eden finds itself. I look forward to having a peek inside, having driven out several times during the construction, to see the progress.

Functions are already planned to follow. The music of the day having pointed to the many fun nights of music and dancing ahead.

It's sad that many folk we see as part of Kiah sre not with us. New comers have embraced their new surroundings, those oldies would welcome them to fill the void left

Hearty congratulations from all at EKWM.

## Contemporary Acknowledgement Of John Ronaldson Logan

ROB WHITER has been searching for treasure on the National Library's Website; TROVE.

Should there have any doubt of the part JRL played in the establishment of EKWM, this contemporary report puts the question beyond doubt.

From the Delegate Argus, Thursday 27th November. (note the date, which is nearly three months before the public meeting was called to discuss the matter.

"Thanks to the enterprise and public spiritedness of Mr J.R.Logan, there is a chance of what is left of 'Old Tom', the last of the Twofold Bay Killers, being prepared as an object of local interest to townsfolk and visitors. The skeleton of the famous killer is being carefully prepared for preservation, and it is proposed to erect and enclose it in nicely designed mausoleum to be built on an elevated position near the Court House, overlooking Twofold Bay".

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A big cheer to Ben Neville who has left our employ to concentrate on his primary School teaching degree studies which will see him in the field at the start of term 1, 2025.

Ben came to us when we were at the nadir of our administrative endeavours and despite his young age, was of tremendous value to EKWM.

Ben has the right disposition to excel in his chosen career. My English teacher for three years, Jack Dunshea, hammered us with the maxim, "Manners make the man". I have no doubt that Jack would have been proud to have had Ben as a student. Go safely, Ben.

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Just a reminder , schools start holidays on 28th June and return on 16th July.

As they have done for many years, the Friends will be conducting entertainment for children in the Founders' gallery. Always well received, it consists mainly of simple crafts.

If you'd like to help or just see what goes on, call the 6496 2094, for further information.

Stay Safe  
*Jack*  
(With apologies)