

## We need your support . . .

**We have** no regular income and we're not-for-profit — yet even though many other halls have been sold off or fallen into disrepair, ours has a proud history of 136 years of continuous local commitment by volunteers. The previous committee of Wayne Patfield, Allison Cox and Janine Thomson have left a great legacy, raising funds for a new roof, kitchen, tank, wiring and insulation. But there's lots more to do and our insurance and other costs have risen steadily. Don't ask what your community can do for you; ask what you can do for your community. Join us, please.

**Please make a donation** so we can maintain and enjoy this great mutual asset, as far-sighted and community-minded people have been doing for so long. There's a secure PayPal facility on our website or see below.

### ***REMINDER: membership renewals now due!***

**Individual \$20 Household \$30 (you get big discounts for hall hire)**

Annual membership period begins 1 July. Post us a cheque with your name and contact details or pay by direct debit. Our banking details are:

Woodville School of Arts Inc **BSB 032529 A/c 981589**

*We respect privacy, but we need your name, address and contact details (send an email if paying this way) for our membership records and receipts.*

### **How to contact us (inc. hall use & hire):**

Post: c/- Woodville General Store, Paterson Road, Woodville, NSW 2321

E-mail: [woodvillesoa@gmail.com](mailto:woodvillesoa@gmail.com)

Website: <http://artswoodville.webs.com>

Phone: Viv - **0414 294 339** or Lis - **4930 3440**

### **Woodville School of Arts Inc**

**President:** Lis Smark **Secretary:** Viv Read **Treasurer:** Helen McCall

- Your community hall since 1877 -

## WOODVILLE SCHOOL OF ARTS



### **Special event: we're 200 years old!**

**Woodville** has an amazing history and this year is very special: our friendly and beautiful little community is celebrating its 200th birthday.

Way back in 1812, a strapping 17-year-old John Tucker junior set up the first farm outside the penal colony of Newcastle on our rich fertile soils. At the time, Wonnarua and Worimi aboriginal people were still living their traditional lives here and convict parties supervised by soldiers were cutting huge red cedar trees from the area's extensive rainforests. Tucker chose the best site beside the river, now Albion Farm. It overlooked Lake Paterson (now drained), which was 8 kilometres long.

To celebrate this important landmark, we're organising a special event: **"Woodville: Living History" on the weekend of October 20/21.**

It will focus on the historic precinct of Albion Farm, Iona Public School and Woodville School of Arts. We're joining forces to put together a historical exhibition of photographs (see appeal inside) and memorabilia. Attractions will include: entertainment; history walk-and-talk; raffles; sausage sizzle; local food producer exhibits; a very special historic art auction; and a chance to buy Woodville's own heritage plants.

Most importantly, Phil and Sandy Redman have generously agreed to open their fabulous gardens of Albion Farm to the public, with proceeds going to the School of Arts. We'll keep you posted in more newsletters and on our new Facebook page and website (see details inside).

**NOT TO BE MISSED - MARK IT IN YOUR DIARY NOW!**

## Our colourful story: What's worse: flood or drought?

**Do floods** cause more damage than droughts? Should bachelors be taxed? Should horse-racing be abolished?

Those were just some of the many colourful issues debated by Woodville's Mutual Improvement Society when it first formed about 1870, in the absence of other public facilities.

When John Pearse offered some land, it was decided on 29 September 1876 to form the Woodville School of Arts. A hall was duly built and it opened on 20 March 1877. Local volunteers have owned, managed and operated it ever since (the present building replaced it in 1923).

In its early days, it functioned a bit like the internet does today: a common place for people to socialise and entertain each other, keep abreast of news, discuss topical issues, play games, gather information (via a lending library) and learn from each other. Another was to provide a meeting place free from the bars, gambling and commerce that went with hotels - an attraction it still holds today.

In the Depression and beyond, the hall was a welcome source of cheap entertainment and diversion from daily worries through dances, card games, plays and concerts. At one time it was a popular venue for indoor roller-skating, and many romances blossomed at the hugely popular Saturday night dances (as the hearts above the hall's entrance symbolise).

It still serves as it has long done, as a place for meeting, socialising, special events, birthday parties, weddings, a voting place and even a flood refuge. As the area steadily grows, the need for such a place can only continue and grow.

Since its inception it has had a close link with Iona Public School and that remains one of its most important regular functions, serving as the hall for the school's children. Weekly scout and cub meetings also underline its ongoing importance for our young people - the citizens of tomorrow.

## Special appeal:

## Photos, memorabilia of Woodville

**Do you have photos or documents that will help bring to life some of the many memorable moments of the Woodville community? Floods; fires; weddings; boats; the Olympic Torch; rallies; champion livestock; ceremonies, significant local people, picnics, a trophy, newspaper cuttings . . . any image or object that relates to Woodville and may have meaning.**

The School of Arts committee warmly invites you to share your memorabilia with us to go on display at Woodville's special bicentennial "Living History" exhibition in October. We'll also add them to the historic images and documents that we have begun to build up in a digital archive—not just for safe-keeping but to share openly on our new website at:

**<http://artswoodville.webs.com>**

In time, this archive should be invaluable to historians, to newcomers to the district and to descendants tracing the genealogy of family and friends from the area. We would really appreciate you sharing your precious photos and documents with us: we don't want to take them from you, simply copy them for the record.

You can scan them yourself and e-mail them to: [woodvillesoa@gmail.com](mailto:woodvillesoa@gmail.com)

Names, places and dates really help. Otherwise, committee members will happily scan or photograph your contributions in person: [Please bring them along to the School of Arts](#) , from 11am to 4pm on Saturday, 16 June.



**Wedding party Albion Farm, 1862**