

## 17/ TOWN HALL

Location: Verdon St

Allotment: Reserve for Municipal  
Purposes and Public Gardens

Date: 1883

Architect: F. Harrison

Builder: N. Irwin



### **DESCRIPTION:**

A double storeyed, towered and stuccoed building. Arched windows and doors are outlined with classical architraves and the parapet is balustraded. The main entrance porch is bordered with Jacobean strap work which extends upward to the clock tower. Umber posts support an aluminium cupola replicating the original wooden cupola which was removed in 1970. Several mature palm trees stand to the front of the hall. The Hall is built of local bricks from Phillips' brick kilns.



## **HISTORY:**

Until 1883, when the town hall was erected, Inglewood was without its own council chambers and local functions were usually accommodated either in the Royal Hotel or in an open marquee. The town finally gained its Town Hall in 1883 on the site of Inglewood's old market place. Although the cost of L2595 was considered to be excessive, the Town hall provided a much needed venue for a wide variety of carnivals, dances, balls, public meetings. Until their own barracks were built in Brooke Street the Salvation Army held their meetings at the Town Hall and during the 1930s and 1940s pictures were also shown there every Saturday evening. Ornamental gardens were planted around the Hall and these became well known for their beautiful roses. They were finally replaced by lawn in the 1930s and only the palms to the front and side of the Hall have survived. In 1891 Charlie Taysom was employed to add a new stage and strong room to the town hall and, in 1892, to replace part of the roof. Both these operations were supervised by William Vahland. Extensive alterations were carried out on the Town Hall in 1935. These were designed by Mr. Leith and built by Jim Seacombe. One of the Town Hall's most distinctive features is the large, chiming clock which sits below the cupola. It was placed there as a memorial to those who enlisted during the Second World War and did not return to Australia..

## **SIGNIFICANCE:**

Architecturally this is Inglewood's most impressive public building, reflecting the optimistic spirit of the 1880s and residents desire to express pride in their own and the town's achievements. The Town Hall formed the administrative centre of the borough of Inglewood until it was annexed to the Shire of Korong in 1961 . Since its erection it has been the focus for all large social and civic events within the town.

**SOURCES:**

I.B.R.B. 1866,70,79,89.

Inglewood Advertiser. 25 Oct& 18 Nov. 1892.

National Trust File No. 2192

Nixon, Inglewood Gold, p.37.

Inglewood Town Hall Centenary Celebrations. 1983.

Wemyss, Back to Inglewood, pp.28-29.

## INGLEWOOD TOWN HALL - 1883

### 1.0 STAGE SCENERY

There are two stage settings for the main hall.

#### 1.1 "The Ball Room"

This consists of a painted canvas backdrop and 4(?) sets of folding side panels. It is painted as a lavish room of "Victorian" character, the decoration consisting of rich drapes and stencilled wall panels above a dado with rich gilded mouldings. This could be the set referred to as being loaned to the Tarnagulla Hall in 1885 which had been previously bought from the Inglewood Hospital.<sup>(1)</sup>.

#### 1.2 "The Bush Scene"

This set comprises a canvas backdrop, a 'balance' and four sets of folding side panels. It is painted in very realistic detail by an artist of considerable observation and talent. It is a setting outside a dense forest with distant glimpses of a cleared hillside at the rear. A broken post and rail fence crosses the set.

#### 1.3 Significance of Scenery

The age of the sets is unclear. The Bush Scene incorporates plywood in its framing which could indicate its age. A limited inspection under poor conditions did not reveal any signatures or dates. Whatever the age and significance of the scenery its maintenance and protection should be a high priority as they are probably rare examples of their type.

#### 1.4 Condition

The sets have been damaged over time but are generally in good order. The main concern is the backdrops which are weaker and are torn in places, particularly the bottom of the bush scene which is tearing away from its rolling rod.

Funds should be sought for restoration of this scenery and reinforcement of the backdrops.

#### 1.5 Funding for Repairs

Probably via agencies like Youth Sport & Recreation or Ministry for Arts. Possibly Central Goldfields Restoration Fund, but unlikely. Technical assistance may also be available from Ministry for Arts.

### 2.0 COLOUR SCHEME

The town hall history<sup>(1)</sup> notes changes to the stage in:

- 1891 - tender for new stage at 419 pounds
- 1909 - extensions to stage (also interior wall and woodwork)
- 1935 - extensions/alterations to the hall (presumably including the balcony).

The stage area beyond the proscenium is clearly an addition. The price of 419 pounds in 1891 suggests that this was the time of its construction.

The extension in 1909 completed it in its present form and the green colour scheme used on this work extends through the whole of the hall as the decoration of 1909.

This later scheme (1909) is the basis for the colours proposed. (See attached sketch.)

\*These recommendations were prepared by Trevor Westmore in his role with the Loddon Campaspe Heritage Advisory Service. Permission to reproduce these guidelines is acknowledged with thanks.

### **3. DAMP**

Internal plasterwork has been damaged by both falling and rising damp.

#### **3.1 Falling Damp**

Appears to be due to faults in roof and eaves gutters. Eaves gutter leaks are still apparent and should be repaired immediately.

#### **3.2 Rising Damp**

The building has a damp proof course which is generally effective but in various locations around the building the d.p.c has been bridged by high ground levels or by concrete slabs. This permits damp to pass into the walls above the d.p.c.

Also downpipes are ejecting water directly onto the ground at the base of the building or roof gutters are leaking directly onto the ground and splashing the base of the building. This makes the ground excessively wet and the d.p.c. cannot cope apart from direct transfer of water through the wall thickness.

#### **Treatment**

1. Connect all roof water to underground drains or appropriate spoon drains which carry water well away from the building.
2. Reduce all ground levels to at least 1 brick course below the d.p.c. (at the bottom of the sub floor vents) and slope ground away from building to surface drain.
3. Remove concrete slabs and brick tank stand which bridge d.p.c.
4. Concrete paths against building can contribute to rising damp by causing moisture in ground to attempt to 'breathe' through walls rather than through ground surface. Ideally they should be replaced with gravel.

### **4. HALL INTERIOR**

The walls and ceiling of the hall have been clad with soft board for sound control when the hall was used as a cinema.

In many places on the walls this is now loose and buckling. For conservation purposes it should be removed from both walls and ceiling so that original materials are exposed - plaster on the walls and lining boards on the ceiling. This may reveal additional damage to walls. The community must determine whether they want the soft board to stay, either as a whole or in part (say the ceiling only) bearing in mind that it will remain a blemish on the appearance of the hall, possibly becoming worse over time.

Three options for painting are given whilst the soft board remains. It should be noted that its effectiveness as a sound absorber is considerably reduced when painted. The options are shown on the attached page.

**Note on colour scheme**

If proposed scheme is considered too costly, the amount of picking out could be reduced particularly on the ceiling where the general surfaces could be painted L (grey green) and the structural parts and other detail in M (Slay).

The vents should remain in L.

Doors could be painted M with architraves and frames in D.

Window arches and frames could also be painted D only with remaining in M.

It is important that the proscenium and stage front be painted as shown as the detail helps give focus to the stage.

# COLOURS (HAYMES)

W = WHITE

D = deep brunswick green

M = sky

L = grey green

B = maricla

Semi-gloss enamel  
on timber and dado

Flat acrylic elsewhere

OPTION 3  
paint both  
walls and  
ceiling

OPTION 2  
paint all wall  
surfaces  
leave ceiling

OPTION 1 (present paint line)  
paint to have  
leave above  
unpainted  
fit mouldings at  
paint boundary