

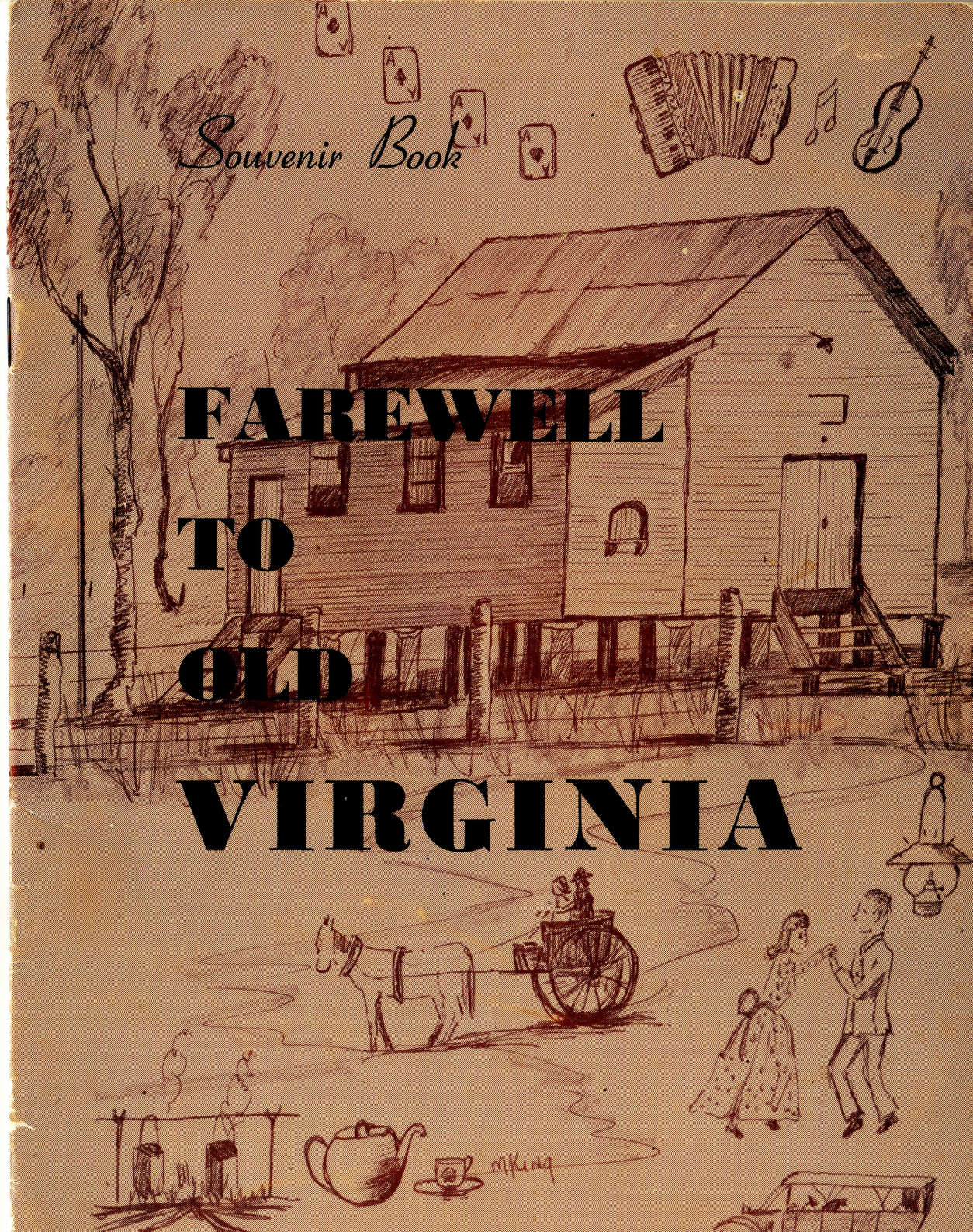
*Souvenir Book*

**FAREWELL**

**TO**

**OLD**

**VIRGINIA**





## INTRODUCTION

The printing of this booklet brings down the final curtain of the Virginia Hall.

To the casual passer-by, the Hall was just that — a building isolated on its tiny unmown block of land; slightly unkempt and forlorn with its inconvenient convenience "down the back". But to all of us who live in small farming communities scattered across Australia, the Hall was the centre of social activities and the meeting-place where diverse interests came together, when some problem arose in the district and the decision was made — "better call a meeting, I suppose".

Committees in the area used the Hall for their meetings and club dances. These included the Football, Cricket and Tennis clubs. Football was played on the flat where Trevor and Merle Hartwig now live, and Tennis was enjoyed on the courts every week-end until 1964. Virginia could also boast a very strong Cricket team. On 7 consecutive Sundays, the team made in excess of 300 runs, and some of the players went on to representative honours. Notable among them were that keen sportsman, the late Fred Gerard, the finest batsman the Crow's Nest district has ever produced, and Jack Gleeson, now aged 66, who was recognised as one of the fastest bowlers in the area.

The closure of such a Hall therefore brings a touch of sadness and regret. The good times and the bad times are recalled, and nearly every conversation begins "Do you remember the night when . . . . ."

The Virginia Hall was sold by auction on September 24th by Mr. Ian MacDiarmid at his auction rooms in Curnow St., Crow's Nest and on October 14th, the last function will be held.

On behalf of the Hall Committee, I would like to invite you to join us for the last dance — a night of nostalgia at the old Virginia Hall.

And now Gentlemen, your partners please.

*Ken Christensen*

CHAIRMAN



## THE FIRST MEETING

On Monday, 23rd May, 1921, a meeting was held at Virginia at the residence of Mr. Fred Smith (Snr.). The object being to construct a Hall in the Virginia district. Mr. Smith was appointed Chairman for the evening. It was moved by G. Austin and seconded by W. Fowler that the Hall be a public place. F. Smith (Snr.) and S. Fuller offered half acres of land for the building site at 1/- (10 cents) rental per annum. A list of timber measurements were read out that would be required for its construction.

A Trustee Committee was formed and the following gentlemen were elected:—

Smith (Jnr.) F	M. Paton
King Phillip	D. Christensen
Fuller Steven	J. Blinco
Austin (Treasurer) George	E. Austin
Gleeson M	H. Fowler
Dempster (Secretary) E	

Dan Christensen is the only surviving member of this committee. The duties of the committee were to inspect the site, and also to transact business in connection with the building. On a motion by M. Paton, the Secretary was advised to draw up four subscription lists, and that outsiders be asked to subscribe to the project. M. Paton, H. Fowler, G. Austin and S. Fuller were engaged to canvass the Anduramba, Mountain Camp, Glenaven and Crow's Nest districts. Promises received for the building fund amounted to £44/4/0 (\$88.40) in cash, and nine loads of log timber. And so, with this generous support assured, the decision to go ahead with the building of the Hall was made.

## THE BUILDING OF THE HALL

Blinco & Sons, Crow's Nest, quote 10/- (\$1.00) per hundred super-feet to cut the timber was accepted. Applications were called for a working foreman to take charge of construction. Prices for roofing material and nails were also obtained. Mr. J. Fortescue's application for working foreman was accepted on the recommendation of G. Austin and H. Fowler, and a tender of £30/0/0 (\$60) by R. J. McCollim for iron, nails etc. was successful.

The Hall Committee volunteered to assist Mr. Fortescue in putting down foundations. Dempster and D. Christensen were engaged at the rate of 7/- (70c) and 6/- (60c) per day respectively to assist Mr. Fortescue with the building from the foundation upwards. The Trustees accepted Mr. F. Smith's offer as the site for the Hall, which was to be situated four miles North of Crow's Nest on the Crow's Nest-Blackbutt Road.

A working bee on Thursday, 15th October, 1921, was organised to erect fences etc., and have all in readiness for a Sports Day and Dance at night to mark the opening for Tuesday, 18th October, 1921.

## Pre-War Snippets from The Minute Book

- 1921** The first of several meetings were held at Mr. F. Smith's residence. Some gentlemen attending included Messrs. F. Smith (Jnr.), S. Fuller, G. Austin, M. Gleeson, D. Christensen, P. King, E. Austin, J. Blinco, H. Fowler, M. Paton, E. Dempster, L. McPhail, R. Barlow and W. Fowler.  
Tuesday, October 18th was the date set for the official opening of the Hall.
- 1922** Admission to a Sports Day of this particular year was Adults 1/6 (15c) and Children 9 pence (8c). A profit of £18/7/3 (\$36.72) resulted.
- 1923** An Anniversary Ball was held.
- 1924** The Annual Meeting of the Trustees took place. On the motion of D. Christensen, accounts amounting to £3/3/6 (\$3.35) were passed for payment. Mrs. Fuller was re-appointed caretaker for the ensuing two years, with an allowance of £2/0/0 (\$4), with free admittance to all functions.
- 1925** At a Hall Dance, J. W. Blinco and G. Austin were appointed door-keepers. B. Paton was in charge of tea-making.
- 1926** It was agreed by the Trustees that the Virginia Hall situated on one acre of land be made freehold.
- 1927** At a dance on October 14th, a ten shilling note (\$1.00) was drawn at a charge of sixpence (5c) per ticket. A Ladies Novelty Waltz highlighted the evening.
- 1928** After a ballot at the Annual Meeting, P. J. King was elected Chairman, L. D. Christensen, Secretary, and F. Smith (Jnr.) Treasurer.  
A Grand Sports Day was held on Wednesday 26th December. The programme featured open Wood-chopping, Over at Wicket, an Obstacle Race and Throwing the Broom.  
Mr. Ben Fitch was Judge of the Wood-chopping events.
- 1929** The Tennis Club were given permission to build a Tennis court at the Hall grounds at a rental of 1/- (10c) per year.  
Messrs. W. Rasmussen and W. Sperling were appointed Committee-men of the Virginia Public Hall. A presentation was made to M. Paton on his resignation.
- 1931** It was suggested by H. Fowler that grammophone and records be rented with the Hall at £1/0/0 (\$2.00) per night as relief music only.
- 1932** The Secretary was instructed to purchase three unbreakable globes for the Hall lights.
- 1933** The Committee discussed the necessity of having a piano in the Hall. An advertisement in the Toowoomba Chronicle read: "Second-hand piano in exchange for Victor Cabinet Gramophone". Apply S. Fuller, Crow's Nest. A loan of £35/0/0 was obtained from the Bank of Australasia for the purchase.
- 1936** Mr. S. J. Drew very generously offered his services free of charge for the construction of closets. The lights at the Hall were overhauled by M. Patrick. Plates and trays were also purchased.
- 1938** In attendance at a Committee meeting of the Virginia Hall on 22nd April were Messrs. E. Barnes, H. Fowler, L. D. Christensen, F. Barnes, E. Fowler, N. Phillips, F. Jones, J. Drew, M. Gleeson, W. Fuller, G. Horricks, S. Fuller and J. Austin.

And so the Virginia Hall progressed through the years, with Committee names changing as residents came and went, the monitor of progress in the small farming community.





# **VIRGINIA HALL 1921 - 1977**

Farewell to Old Virginia,  
Now a Dance Hall of the past.  
Thank you for the good times,  
And the memories will last.



## THE PASSING YEARS

During the war years, the Hall played its part in raising funds for war effort. Each fortnight, dances were held, benefitting alternately the Comfort Fund and the Red Cross. Every soldier who enlisted from the area was farewelled in the Hall.

In the years 1945 and 1946, the following functions were held: Band Dance, Red Cross Dance, School Dance — to aid the Pierce's Creek School; Hall Dance; Limbless Soldiers; Cricket Club Dance; Welcome Home function; and Returned Soldiers.

Time elapsed and then on 10th July, 1977 on the motion of Dave Gust, Bundara and seconded by Pat Austin, the Committee agreed that the Hall be sold.

The present Committee is Ken Christensen, Chairman; Bill Fowler, Secretary; Valda Fowler, Treasurer; D. Schefe, Caretaker; Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hill; J. Gleeson; M. Gleeson; D. Gust; R. Kahler; P. Austin; R. Mengel; Mrs. G. Dukes; L. D. Christensen. Others closely associated with the Hall over the years include:— Mick and Eric Austin; Arthur Walker; Leo Smith; Roy Gust; Ernie Fowler; H. Drew; Alan Trost; Max Kanowski and Neville Ludke. The appointed Trustees are Jack Hill, George Fitch and Jack Gleeson. Past Secretaries include Jack Hill, Ken Christensen, L. D. Christensen and George Horrocks.

We regret that it has not been possible to mention all those connected with the Hall over the years, but we know that you all have happy memories of your association with the Virginia Hall which has been sold for \$1,100 to Mr. Lawrence Middleton, Oakdale whose property is in the area where the Cressbrook Dam is being built.



**At left: Mr. L. D. Christensen, the only surviving member of the original Hall Committee.**

**Mr. Christensen also served a record term of 37 consecutive years as a member of the Crow's Nest Shire Council.**

## RECOLLECTIONS

The Virginia Hall Committee, at a meeting on February 11th, 1946, decided to erect a Granite Tablet in honour of those who served in World War II. Mr. Drew was instructed to erect the Honour Board.

Romance blossomed under gas lights at the Hall, and pre-wedding evenings were given in honour of happy couples. Mr. and Mrs. Bill Rasmussen's wedding reception was actually held at the Virginia Hall.

At a meeting of the Trustees on 5th July, 1935, the Secretary was instructed to make inquiries regarding the Insurance of the Piano and Hall Furnishings and to have the old valuation of the Hall reduced. Total value not to exceed £200 (\$400).

At a dance in 1955, L. Schefe and D. Gust supplied batteries for lighting purposes

Among the Masters of Ceremonies who officiated at the hall in the early days were W. Genrich and F. Brown.

A dance was held at the Hall on 26th May, 1945 to raise funds for the Crow's Nest Brass Band and it was agreed that 30/- (\$3.00) of cake be purchased for this occasion.

Ken Christensen and H. Drew were approached to supply music at a Barbecue and Dance on 24th January, 1959. At this function, admittance was 4/- at door and 3/- per steak.

White ants were discovered and removed from the hall in 1952.

Added assets to the hall in 1922 were four dozen cups and three dozen pannikins and in 1924 an accordion was also secured for the supplying of light dance music.

Besides being the venue for many an old time waltz, Virginia has produced some outstanding cricketers, namely Fred Jerrard, Mick Gleeson, Walter Genrich, Dan Christensen, Ron McGreevy, and in later years, Ken and Laurie Christensen, Les Schefe, Alan Trost and Merv Fowler.

The first meeting of the Anduramba Bus Conveyance committee was held at Virginia when Pierce Creek and Anduramba Schools closed.

Present at a meeting on 10th July, 1977, to decide the future of Virginia Hall, were: K. Christensen, W. Fowler, D. Schefe, J. Gleeson, M. Gleeson, D. Gust, R. Kahler, M. Austin, P. Austin, A. Gleeson, S. Gleeson, N. Fowler and Mr. and Mrs. J. Hill.

### FOOTNOTE:

The committee would like to record their thanks to Peter Gleeson, Ray and Merle King and Crystal Stark for their contribution in the production of this booklet.



A Sports Programme of 1929

# GRAND SPORTS

in aid of Virginia Public Hall Funds.

To be held at **VIRGINIA** on

## BOXING DAY

Thursday, December 26, 1929

Commencing 10 a.m.

### XX PROGRAMME XX

- 1—Girls' Race, under 14 years, 50 yds. Prizes, 1st 2/6; 2nd 1s.
- 2—Boys' Race, under 14 years, 65 yards. Prizes, 1st 2/6; 2nd 1/-
- 3—Stepping the Distance, 100 yards. Prizes, 1st 7/6. 2nd 2/6. Ent. 1/
- 4—Open Wood Chopping Contest (underhand), 12in. block. Handicap.  
Prizes 1st £2; 2nd £1; 3rd 10/6. Entrance 4/-
- 5—Open Handicap, 100 yards. Prizes, 1st £1/1; 2nd 7/6. Ent. 2/
- 6—Youths' Wood Chop, 10in. block; 18 years and under. Handicap.  
Prizes, 1st 10/; 2nd 5/-; 3rd 2/6. Entrance 1/
- 7—Bang and Go Back Race. Prizes, 1st 10/-; 2nd 3/; 3rd 2/- Ent. 1/
- 8—Stepping the Distance (Ladies), 50 yds. Prizes, 1st 5/-; 2nd 2/6. Ent. 6d
- 9—Over at Wicket. Prizes, 1st 7/6; 2nd 2/6 Entrance 1/
- 10—Obstacle Race (on horseback). Prizes, 1st 7/6, 2nd 2/6. Ent. 1/-
- 11—Pole Vault (boys under 14 yrs. Prizes, 1st 5/; 2nd 3/; 3rd 2/- Ent 6d
- 12—Knocking Aunt Sally. Prize, 1st 5/. Entrance 6d
- 13—High Jump. Prizes, 1st 10/-; 2nd 5/ Entrance 1/-
- 14—Throwing the Broom (Ladies) Prize, the Broom. Entrance 6d
- 15—Mixed Tennis Tournament (Handicap). First £1/1/- Entrance 2/-
- 16—Sawing Contest, 14in. block. Prizes, 1st £1; 2nd 10/- Ent. 2/- per man

### CONDITIONS—

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1—Post Entries for all events, except for Open Wood Chop.                        | 5—The Committee reserve the right to cancel any event if insufficient entries be received or otherwise.               |
| 2—Entries for Open Wood Chop closes 19th December, with last three performances. | 6—All protests must be lodged in writing accompanied by a fee of 10/- not later than 10 minutes after close of event. |
| 3—All prizes will be paid on the ground.   | 7—Judges' decision in all events to be final.   |
| 4—All disputes will be settled by the committee.                                 |   |

### Admission to Grounds :

Gents, 2s.; Ladies, 1s 6d.; Children Free

## GRAND BALL at Night

Special Music. (Virginia Public Hall). Refreshments

Gents 2s. Ladies 1s 6d.

L. D. CHRISTENSEN.

W. RASMUSSEN