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Memorial Hall

The first meeting of the Orroroo Institute was held in 1879 and they erected a wood and iron building and set up a library of books on loan from Adelaide. Libraries were one of the principal functions of Institutes at the time and continued to be part of the Institute until 1981 when the Community Library was set up at the school.

In 1880 a contract was let to build the present hall for £1,058 (\$2,116). Mr J Moody, Institute President, laid the foundation stone on 21 June 1880. In 1893 the front rooms were built. The Hon William Copley, Minister for Education, laid the foundation stone on 10 May 1893. William Copley lived 2 kms west of Black Rock on his farm.

Stone for the additions came from Northcott's and Brooks quarries above the reservoir, the brown sandstone came from Peterborough and the bricks from Zanker's brick yard. A further extension was made at the back of the hall in 1924.

The Institute Committee got into financial difficulties during The Depression and the District Council of Orroroo took over the management of the building and moved their office into the Hall in 1940 from their previous premises in Fourth Street.



Post Office

The present post office building in Orroroo was opened on 11 November 1880 by the Postmaster-General, Mr (later Sir Charles) Todd and the mail was delivered to Orroroo by the Burra to Blinman mail coach until the railway was opened in 1881. In 1892 four people were employed in the post office. A telephone exchange was opened in 1893 in the post office building and as the number of subscribers

increased and neighbouring exchanges opened, more room was provided by removing the front veranda and extending the office in 1923.

Police Station

In the early days the nearest police station was at Melrose. The Orroroo Police Station building was opened in 1880 and has remained as a one-man station ever since. There have been no changes to the building but the three cells at the rear were demolished a few years ago.

Blacksmith's Chatter

Richard Parnell set up business in partnership with J Nankervis as a blacksmith, wheelwright and agricultural machinery manufacturer in 1880. Nankervis died in 1885 and the Parnell family continued the business. They manufactured ploughs, cultivators, harrows, buggies, sulkies, wagons, drays, trolleys and strippers and 40 men were employed in the blacksmith shop. The introduction of the car and truck, along with more sophisticated farm machinery saw the decline of the blacksmith and they entered into the motor vehicle trade, then the trucking business freighting fuel. The building is now a Conference Centre and Restaurant operated by Susan Woolford (nee Parnell).

Butter Factory

The former Butter Factory is a rare example of a previously vital industry in Orroroo. The original Butter Factory opened as Walloway Butter Factory in 1907. It was erected by J.M Cadzow who then sold the business to E.H Fromen in 1917 who in turn sold it to the South Australian Farmers Union in 1919. Shortly after the wood and iron building was destroyed by fire. The SAFU then erected the stone and brick building that still occupies the site. During 1908, the Walloway Butter Factory exported 40 tonnes of butter to London and it won first prize in the London Show. Butter production ceased in 1971 and the building and nearby residences were sold.

Pekina Water Feature

Situated on the eastern entrance to Orroroo, this feature is in recognition of the early Pekina Irrigation Scheme initiated by early pioneers to support growth to the district. The completed reservoir and irrigation scheme supported the grazing of close to 1,000 milking cows on the Walloway Plain, was opened with great occasion on 10 February 1910. Construction consisted of men using horse and bullock teams, horse drawn drays and wheel barrows carrying out excavation work and puddling the base of the dam. The scheme was experimental and one of the first of its kind in South Australia.

Changing farming practices from the 1950s reduced erosion, but by 1971 the sediment volume attributed to silt build up in the reservoir preventing it to be used as a community water scheme. The reservoir is now virtually full of silt, but when filled with floodwaters, is a picturesque site in a very dry area.

Hospital

The foundation stone of the hospital was laid on 2 April 1919 by the Governor of SA, Sir Henry Galway with the hospital opening on 26 January 1920. The original building has been extended several times since and is now a 20 bed facility. The original building was built with clay bricks made locally at Zanker's brick yard.

Early Settlers Cottage

This is probably the oldest existing building in Orroroo, but the date of its erection is unknown, it is thought to have been built after the vacant lot was bought in 1880. The construction of this home is typical of many throughout the district in the early days. Native pine round or split logs were stood upright and plastered over with mud and then given a lime and sand finish. A stone fireplace and chimney at one end and an iron roof completed the home. Floors were usually large flat stones.



Forbes Sulky

Donated to the Orroroo community by Mr Ken Bemrose. The Sulky was built by coach builders F. Forbes & Sons who commenced business in 1884 in Morchard and later in 1905 moved to Orroroo, employing approximately 20 people. Many vehicles such as express buggies, Rosa buggies and dog carts were prize winners in country shows. The Forbes Plough was generally recognized as equal to any produced in the Commonwealth. Descendants ran the business until 1952.

Orroroo Area School

The first school room and residence were built in 1880. For the first thirteen years there was only one teacher and a student assistant to teach 150 – 180 students. The school was extended in 1920 with the building of another stone class room. The first class room is now the Community Library and the second is now part of the administration offices.