

Advertising Feature

Inkpots to Internet

Tertiary education celebrates 125 years

ON Monday, April 21 1873, the School of Mines Bendigo commenced classes, marking the start of tertiary education in Bendigo.

As reported in The Bendigo Advertiser on April 2, 1873, the object of the school was to "afford instruction in many branches of Education useful to those engaged in mining pursuits." These first classes commenced at a time when people were immigrating to the area in the hope of finding their fortune on the goldfields. As a result of more advanced mining techniques, demand for skilled workers increased and the School of Mines was established to meet these needs. The opening of this school, driven by industry needs, set a precedent for the many institutions which would be established in proceeding years.

It has been 125 years since the first tertiary classes commenced at the School of Mines, and today, advanced education is still playing a major role in the physical, economical and social fabric of the Bendigo community.

Over the years, institutions which have been a significant part of our city include the Bendigo School of Mines and Industries, Bendigo Technical College, Bendigo Institute of Technology, Bendigo Teachers' College, State College of Victoria Bendigo, Northern District School of Nursing, Bendigo College of Advanced Education, La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria, Bendigo College of TAFE, and Loddon Campaspe College of TAFE.

Each of these institutions have amalgamated or been renamed, and today, the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE (BRIT) and La Trobe University Bendigo are the sole providers of tertiary education in Bendigo.

To celebrate the milestone, an enthusiastic committee has organised a range of events and activities demonstrating the integral part tertiary education has played in the development of the Bendigo community.

Inkpots to Internet is the theme of the celebrations, reflecting the change and progress in tertiary education over the past 125 years.

While the celebrations are planned for April 17-21, two exhibitions organised specially for Inkpots to Internet opened on April 3 as a precursor to the anniversary.

A display of Historic Memorabilia and Artefacts, compiled by archivist Tim Newbegin is on show at BRIT in McGillivray Hall until the end of April. This exhibition features memorabilia from the various institutions, demonstrating the important role that historical items can play in re-creating and celebrating the past.

The other exhibition, Nucleus to Diversity, opened at the Phyllis Palmer Gallery at La Trobe University.

"The exhibition brings together a selection of artists who have been students here in Bendigo and have gone on to enjoy an art related career," Mr John Robinson of La Trobe University said. "Many of the artists are now or have been

lecturers at the University including Paul Morris, Brett McLennan, Dennis O'Hoy and Geoff Hocking."

The official 125th anniversary of commencement of classes in 1873, will be commemorated on Tuesday, April 21 with the unveiling of a plaque at the McRae Street site. Before the formal ceremony there will be a special academic procession featuring academic regalia and dress, Fortuna pipes and drums. Beginning at the Memorial Hall in Pall Mall at 10.30am and concluding at the BRIT campus, the parade is a tribute to past and present staff and graduates of tertiary educational institutions in Bendigo.

Another ceremony marking the anniversary will be held at Reunion Court, La Trobe University in the afternoon. Commemorative plaques at both ceremonies will be unveiled by Mr Roger Jalland, a graduate and former staff member who has over 70 years association with tertiary education in Bendigo.

Many of the activities organised for Inkpots to Internet have been held in conjunction with other community events including Heritage Week and the Bendigo Easter Fair.

"Inkpots to Internet is different from other tertiary celebrations because it focuses on education and its relationship with the community," said Inkpots to Internet publicity officer Mrs Penny Davies. "These institutions belong to the community and have played an integral role in its development over the last 125 years."

A highlight of the celebrations was the Bendigo Easter Fair fireworks display which were rescheduled to Easter Monday. Sponsored by the Inkpots to Internet Committee, the colorful and exciting display was held at the Queen Elizabeth Oval.

The emphasis of the celebrations shifts to the institutions themselves on April 17 with the commencement of registrations for participation in various events, and reunion gatherings for specific groups.

Over the weekend, both BRIT and La Trobe University will provide opportunities for people to renew acquaintances and enjoy entertainment, tours, food, music and wine. Highlights of the weekend include a reunion dinner at the Bendigo Art Gallery on Saturday evening, a family day at the races on Sunday afternoon and a recital by noted concert musician John Mc Donnell on Sunday evening.

"We have received generous sponsorship for the celebrations from business houses and individuals," said Mrs Davies. "Bendigo Bank is the major sponsor with support from Bendigo Tourism, the City of Greater Bendigo, Bendigo Jockey Club and Bendigo Art Gallery."

An Inkpots to Internet Raffle will be drawn on April 21, with a range of prize opportunities including accommodation, meals, travel, wine and other special prizes donated by local businesses. Proceeds from the raffle will be used for the establishment of a



Archivist Tim Newbegin has collated historical artefacts and memorabilia from Bendigo's educational institutions for a special display that will be open until the end of April.

Scholarship Trust Foundation administered by Sandhurst Trustees Ltd Bendigo.

"There is a huge variety of events and activities organised for the anniversary celebrations," said Mrs Davies. "It is an exciting time for the Bendigo community and the celebrations offer people an opportunity to reflect on the changes in education and how the various institutions have impacted on the development of our city."

According to Mrs Davies, Bendigo is recognised nationally and internationally as an important regional tertiary education centre.

"While Inkpots to Internet will celebrate the past 125 years, it will also give people an idea of where education is going in the future

