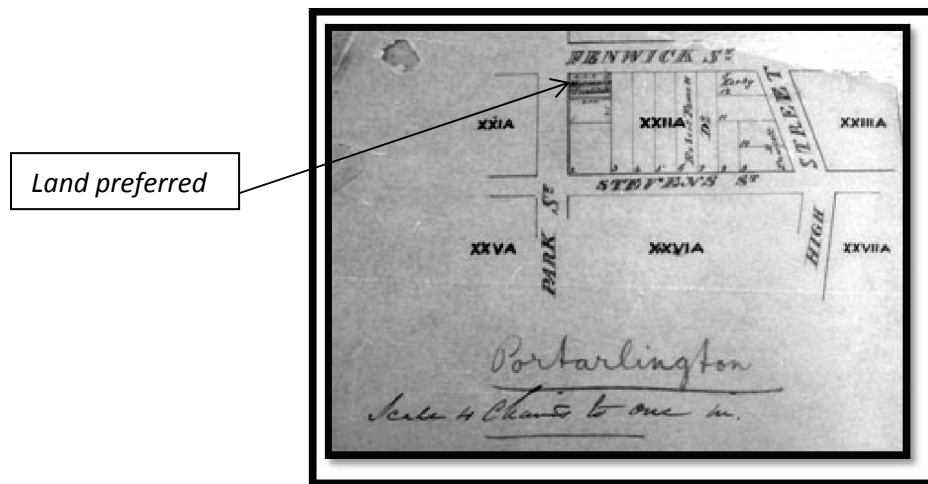


PORTARLINGTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE RESERVE

[Information from PROV, Land Files VPRS 5357, Unit 314]

In February 1860 a memorial by various settlers in the Portarlington district was tendered to the Commissioner of Lands requesting a grant of a section of land in Fenwick Street for the establishment of a Mechanics Library. The appointed Secretary was Charles TONNER.



"The Memorial of the undersigned land owners, lease holders and tradesmen and residents in Portarlington and its vicinity, respectfully shewth that it is the wish of the inhabitants of the district generally, to establish a Mechanics Institute in Portarlington and in order to be able to do so, your memorialists respectfully solicit a grant of an allotment of land in the township whereon to build an Institute, to be call the Portarlington Mechanics Institute.

Your memorialists agree to abide by whatever regulations may be required in establishing and conducting the said Institute and would respectfully request that the grant of land may be one acre on any of the following blocks, namely Blocks 21A, 22A, 23A and 24A and your memorialists as in duty bound shall ever pray

By April 1860 a site was set aside and Trustees for the land were duly elected.

By June 1870 a letter was sent to the Chief Secretary advising that two new Trustees, Peter Cameron and John Hamilton, had been elected to replace Mr Alexander Hood (who had left the district) and Mr Thomas Hart (who had left the colony).

In 16 Nov 1870, Mr W Marchant, the Secretary, on behalf of the residents, applied for an exchange of Allotment 11, Sect XXII for the original grant.

"The said allotment was found unsuitable and a more central piece of land has been obtained and new Hall erected hereon. And further that if said applicants cane make use of the allotment referred to we make no claim thereon- requesting at some time that should said applicants initiate a new Mechanics' Hall, as we understand they intend, we would respectfully request that they be required to adopt some names that will distinguish that contemplated institution and not clash with this one, established 10 years ago.

In July 1874 the Order of Foresters applied for the unoccupied land to be used for their Hall. The District Surveyor reported in May 1875 that there was no building of any kind on the land and that it was not required as a Mechanics' Institute and that it formed portion of Mr Gallop's fenced in paddock.

In June 1875 a cancellation of reservation for a Mechanics' Institute was ordered and a temporary reservation for the Foresters purposes was made. The execution of this order (as of 20 October 1876) was delayed due to the pending report from the Friendly Societies Committee.

In 1948 a letter signed by K L Chapple suggested that 'the Reserve be revoked and offered for auction at the next Geelong Land Sale. The suggested price was £150. A re-survey would be necessary'.

