

Narooma Memorial Hall project completed after four years

The School of Arts' Hall project team were excited last week when the scaffolding was removed signifying the end of construction on the Hall Project. Shown are H & A Builders' Kane Ayres, left, Jai Shears and Harvey Shears, Hall lessee Janette Griffiths, and the School of Arts management committee of Jenni Bourke, Laurelle Pacey, Marg Ingamells, Anne McCusker, Ingeborg Baker, John Doyle, back left, and Bob Aston.

There was rejoicing around the Kinema last week when the scaffolding was removed from the back corner of the building. This marked the end of four years' major work on Narooma's School of Arts Memorial Hall, known as the Kinema.

This work was organised by the School of Arts, which owns and manages the building on behalf of the Narooma community.

School of Arts management committee spokesperson Laurelle Pacey said the work was staged over more than four years as grants became available and to minimise disruption to the commercial operations of the Kinema, leased by John and Jeannette Griffiths. The first stage had been re-sheeting and insulating the roof.

"We're very proud of what we've achieved for our community," she said.

"The work we've done protects the fabric of our much loved Hall, highlights its significance as the district's First World War Memorial, makes it function better as an arts venue, improves access, and provides patrons with improved facilities.

"The Project's seventh and final stage just completed will facilitate live theatre and concerts in the Kinema by creating more wing space and two dressing rooms."

The final construction involved an infill of the back corner of the Hall, work that was delayed by a combination of heavy rain in December and then the tourist season with screenings seven days a week limiting construction.

"This latest work follows up on recommendations made by local theatre groups and former lessee Stephen Walsh about 20 years ago," Ms Pacey said.

The building work was done by the dedicated team from H&A Builders and funded largely by a grant under the ArtsNSW Regional Capital program.

A new theatre curtain with associated machinery will be installed in April.

"Minor work will be done later this year to ensure the best use of the improved stage, but that will require additional funding," Ms Pacey said.



DRESSING ROOM: Some of the School of Arts management committee with builder Harvey Shears in one of the new Kinema dressing rooms.