

Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association

Our Beginnings



The old Institute c 1902 (quarried from local stone) was the original Community Hall of Middleton, and the home of the original Middleton Hall Association who organised regular, well attended functions for the benefit of the Middleton community within it. By the 1960s the Institute building became too small to cater for the increasing attendances, and with the sudden closure of the school in 1968 an opportunity was presented. With the help of David Brookman the then local Member of Parliament, the Education Department agreed to make the school complex available to local Council for the use by the then Middleton Hall Association.



In response the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Committee led by Mr Bob Coote, set about raising the capital to build a new hall attached to the Old School Room, and with the pro-bono help of Architect Mr Jonas Rudzinkas, plans were drawn up and accepted by the Hall Committee on the

24th May 1977. Funding was raised through the proceeds of sale of the three titles of land generously bequeathed to the committee by Mr Thomas Garner Rose and Mrs Effie Jean Rose, plus a Citizens' interest free loan, a Bendigo bank loan, and a SA Government Grant. Building commenced in 1979 and was completed and officially opened by the Hon. Ted Chapman MP, Minister of Agriculture on the 17th May 1980. Further extensions of a smaller hall and kitchen were added in 1990. Extensive paving was also completed in 1990, a unisex disabled toilet added in 2003, and the land generously donated By Mrs Beryl Tuckwell adjacent to the hall (under the Certificate of Title Volume 4143 Folio 586), was resurfaced and developed into a carpark, now known as the Beryl Tuckwell Carpark.

The Middleton Institute building remained vacant for a number of years. However, after a second submission to Council by Middleton Arts and Crafts Association (MACA) in November 1995 failed to reach agreement on lease terms due to the concerns of Council over MACAs ability to meet costs for maintenance, and perceived low percentage of profits being returned to the community, the Middleton Pioneer Hall Association stepped up and was granted the lease for the Institute building, on the agreement by Council that MPCHA could manage the property and 'under license' sublet the Institute to MACA to conduct an arts and crafts 'market'.

Our Plan

The Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association's current lease from Council now consists of the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall building, and the School Masters Residence.

The Old School Masters Residence was determined by Council to be structurally unsafe in 2024 due to a crack in an internal wall after the Council Assets Team conducted a BCA Audit. Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Committee was advised verbally at a meeting on the premises with Council Property Officers and other Council Officers on the 10th September 2024 that we would be unable to sub-lease or use the Residence until the Council Property Maintenance Team were able to complete the scheduled work. As advised by Council, the Residence has remained vacant since. The Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Committee regularly attends to garden maintenance which is completed by both paid and volunteer help.

It has been decided by the MPCHA members to concentrate our operations going forward upon the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall business operations of regular and periodical rental use only.

This new lease would exclude the old Middleton School Residence and Grounds.

Our Members

There are currently 18 members of the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association, all of which provide volunteer support to run and maintain the hall and premises under our care. This involves managing bookings for the hall, maintaining grounds, managing finances, correspondence, scheduling outsourced services including sanitation, electrical, gas, pest control and fire and safety, attending to booking enquiries, maintaining and updating the facilities and equipment, and has

provided regular on-call assistance to our sub-leasees, along with corresponding and consulting with Council. The value of work provided by our volunteers is deeply appreciated, and although not currently costed in our financial statements, according to the Volunteering SA&NT website should be valued at \$56.95 per hour. We estimate this equates to a monetary value of more than \$40,000 per annum.

This estimate does not include the voluntary help that we both receive and likewise provide to our colleagues of the Middleton Community Association. Volunteer time donated to water the street plants, drop event flyers into letterboxes, bump-in and bump-out for community events, cooking, cleaning and many other valuable activities, that add value to life in the Middleton community, and promote and keep the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall both active and relevant.

All of our activities are funded from the rental income generated from the hire of our facilities, and the fund raising activities such as BBQ sizzles and Sing by the Sea events, organised and conducted by our wonderful volunteers.

Our Constitution

On the 30th of October 1978 a new constitution was adopted by the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association to meet the needs of the changed circumstances of conducting the building project of the new Hall lease, debt structure and receipt of donated land. This constitution was amended in 1991 and 2000.

Our current constitution was adopted and accepted by our AGM on the 23 Nov 2022 based on the Amended Associations Incorporations Act of 1985, and guided by the Consumer and Business Services Consumer and Business Services examples and guidance. Our current constitution would need to be amended to be in line with the new lease arrangements.

Our Strengths

Our committed team:

The Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association has a long history reaching back to its origins over 120 years ago. With very little external help, MPCHA has maintained healthy finances and paid off all debts. Some of our members of the current committee already have years of experience with the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association and welcomed two new Committee members at our AGM held on the 11th of December 2025. The committee is made up of experienced and dedicated people with diversified life and professional experience and qualifications from business, finance, building and construction, PR, arts and horticulture.

Our Stable Finances:

Over recent years we have been able to continue to maintain a minimum balance in our accounts of at least \$25,000, during a period of change to our structure and circumstances. This has been achieved by increasing our use of the hall by both permanent and casual hirers

achieving a 30% growth in hire income, and keeping a firm hand on operating expenses. During this time we have also been able to spend considerable funds making significant capital improvements to the hall, including:

- \$8,000 to resurface our specially sprung dance floor,
- Installation of a large smart TV at \$5000,
- Installation of air-conditioning in the old school room at \$4,500.

The current 25-26 financial year has also required considerable outlays on maintenance including:

- Renovation to the door system between the Hall and Dining area for \$5,500,
- Maintenance at the Institute for the Middleton Arts and Craft Association for \$4,500.

Yet we have maintained our core balance of \$25,000 throughout.

Our Assets:

The Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association has over the years acquired many valuable and useful assets that add convenience to the use of the Hall facilities:

- Title over the carpark adjacent to the Hall, providing easy access to all the hall facilities.
- Tables, chairs, crockery, tableware, a bar fridge, standard fridges, BBQs, projectors, hi-fi system and many other very useful unfixed assets supporting a variety of activities by our hirers and community.

Our Clients:

The great financial results over the last two years were achieved by increasing our profile within the community; offering competitive rates; streamlining operations; making substantial improvements to our facilities; and building strong relationships with our current and new clients.

Our regular hirer client base

has increased substantially over the last few years and includes many disparate local and non-local community groups, providing regular base income and increased exposure, including:

My Care Solutions (disability and NDIS provider)
Fortuna House of performing arts
Middleton - Fleurieu Scottish Dancers
Yoga
Goolwa Dharma Meditation
Reiki
Port Elliot Probus meetings
Dance classes

Zumba classes
Chilates exercise group
Southern Fleurieu Spiritualist Centre
The Revival fellowship Team meetings
Both State and National electoral commissions
Middleton Community Association meetings and events
PHA and LETS wellness bi-annual Expo, and general meetings
Dance Fitness classes
Middleton Playgroup Association



Our Casual hirers have included:
Goolwa Community cooking classes
Various Community information forums
Country music event
Black Tie and Boardies charity fundraiser
Sip and Paint sessions
Goolwa Big Band
and a Book Launch

Our Vision

By securing a lease with Council on the Middleton Pioneer Hall building only for **Ten Years**, MPCHA will be free to concentrate our efforts and income on improving the hall. With the support of our generous volunteers and continued good financial management, we intend to make improvements to the facilities as funds become available, and would like to achieve the following:

- Develop a new marketing strategy to increase community awareness and use
- Improve the grounds, establishing a child-safe lawn area, and develop a hall entrance garden
- Improve our hire management booking system to streamline operations
- Investigate installation of acoustic panels and funding assistance
- Renovate the historic Old School Room by painting and re-carpeting
- Install internet and security systems
- Update the bathrooms and kitchen facilities
- Revise and update our Maintenance program to reflect our changed circumstances
- Update our Asset Register
- Revise and update procedural guidelines, forms and contracts
- Investigate EV chargers as a potential income opportunity and service to our community and more particularly tourists/ visitors.

Summary:

The Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association wishes to secure a ten year (5 + 5yr) lease of the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall and Old School Room only. This will allow us to expedite our change to operations and allow volunteers to concentrate efforts on the Hall operations and future promotion and growth.

However, we realise this will extend the process and require community consultation, and therefore also request that we receive immediate relief from council rates for the residential property deemed by Council 18 months ago as structurally unsound.

Our application is supported by a very long history of managing the Middleton Pioneer Community Hall, and other leasehold properties for Council, and the financial success and stewardship we have achieved during those years.

This will also require:

- The Middleton Pioneer Community Hall Association to return to council the dwelling and land associated with the old School House.
- Separation of Water supply between the Middleton Pioneer Hall and the Old School House Dwelling.
- Redrawing the leasehold boundaries.
- Altering our Constitution to reflect the changes.