

McCabe Academy

Dressmaking Afternoon	30/-
A.Marshall Table Tennis Final	£2-10-0
Boulcott School 7.30 - 10.30pm	£3-
Drama Festival League, 2 nights	50/-
	per night
R.S.A. & Military Dance	£5- to 1.30am
End Sept. or Oct. Chamber of	
Commerce Exhibition Week	£ 30- including
	lighting
British Israel Assembly	£1- plus lighting

The Secretary's reimbursement was set at £52 per annum to be made up of £28 from the Society and £24 from the Hall Account.

In September 1936 the Secretary reported having posted the Show Schedules. Sixty advertisements had been obtained to the value of £42 - 14 - 6 and that printing costs had been £33 - 12 - 6!

The minutes of 7th February 1956 record the following :-

Hall valuation	Unimproved	£ 5,100
	Building	11,600
	Capital	16,700
	Rateable	635

DISASTER.

In the early hours of the morning of the 12th April 1957 the Hall caught fire. There had been a Social Evening for the Council workers as a follow on from the Civic Ball which celebrated the opening of the newly constructed Town Hall a fortnight before.

Despite the best efforts of the Fire Brigade the Hall was a loss.

This left both the Society and the Council in an unenviable position. Our President G.G. Gibbes-Watson Q.C. and the City Mayor, Percy Dowse stood on the footpath watching the Brigade dampen the last of the embers and in principle agreed on what both parties would do.

Without going into deep and possibly boring detail the following was to take place. But only after some heated argument in Council about going into further debt. Mayor Percy Dowse's favourite comment "*that money will never be cheaper than it is today*" won the day and plans proceeded.

To replace our Hall with a modern structure

would have cost at least £70,000 (\$140,000). This the Society could not see as a viable thing to do. The agreed alternative was, that we, the Society, gift the City of Lower Hutt the land and in return the Council would construct a new hall of as large a size as the land would accept. The new Hall to be called the Horticultural Hall and we, the Society, were to have the use of the Hall for a specified number of days each year. We were also to be able to use the Little Theatre or any other Council Hall in the City for some of those specified days.

Also we were to receive storage space in the basement for our show equipment. To the eastern side of the Hall there was to be an annex with a meeting room and facilities for our own use. In return we were to invest the bulk of our insurance money, from the loss of our Hall, in City Council Debentures.

At this point we struck a stumbling block. As an Incorporated Society we could not "Gift our property away". This needed an Act of Parliament to give the official approval for such an action. Here we were again fortunate in having Walter Nash M.P. as both a member and a sympathiser with what we wished to achieve. With his pressure in the House the Act went through in very short time.

After the usual period for the legality of it all to be arranged a contract was signed and the new hall construction began. April 1959 saw the new hall ready for use. Quite an achievement by all concerned. The cost of building the Hall was £123,000 (\$246,00).

The Architects were King, Cook, & Dawson and W.M.Angus Ltd., the builders.

During all the demolition and re-construction what happened to the "Cooper Memorial Gates" seems to be a mystery. There is talk of them having been re-erected at Mitchell Park and also at the entrance to Aroha Home in Taita. This definitely needs more research.

Our salvaged show equipment was stored in a specially constructed loft in the Tractor Shed at the Council Nursery while the new hall was under construction. A file from the LHCC Parks and Reserves (151/2 Vol.1.) refers to the remission of expenses totaling £72- involved in transport and