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# HO243 - Christmas Hills Mechanics Institute and Free Library, later Harold Muir Hall, 787 Ridge Road, Christmas Hills



HO243 - View from south, with added new wing on north



HO243 - Hall interior, with added kitchen alcove



HO243 - Plan prepared from recent aerial image (Nillumbik Shire, NTS) contributory elements as shown.

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## Location

787 Ridge Road CHRISTMAS HILLS, NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Municipality

NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO243

## Heritage Listing

Nillumbik Shire

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 28, 2009

HERITAGE VALUE 2005: Local

SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

What is significant?

Fabric associated with:

-the Victorian era

How is it significant?

Christmas Hills Mechanics Institute and Free Library, later part Harold Muir Hall is locally significant historically and socially:

Why is it significant?

Christmas Hills Mechanics Institute and Free Library, later part Harold Muir Hall is significant:

-as a long-standing public building in the Christmas Hills locality and among the oldest mechanics institutes in the Shire (Criterion A4);

-part of a significant building group, including the former post office, Lee house and war memorial, each having had a major role in the local community (Criterion A4, G1)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Nillumbik - C13 Heritage Stage 2 Final Report Revised Citation, Graeme Butler and Assoc., 2001;
Other Names	Christmas Hills Mechanics Institute,
Hermes Number	118663
Property Number	

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### Physical Description 1

Harold Muir Hall is a simple, gabled roof weatherboarded hall, with corrugated iron roofing, some six-pane timber-framed glazing and a gable finial. There is a new Tasmanian oak floor in the old hall (similar to that in the

addition). The three windows along the south have top hopper sashes. Wired wall vents provide fixed ventilation to the hall. Pole-section hardwood stumps and sawn subfloor framing set the hall onto the hillside while various timber sections, general buildings debris and corrugated iron sheets are stacked on the ground among the stumps. Corrugated iron tank fragments are in the yard.

Internally, the hall has a chamfered profile ceiling clad with T&G bead-edge pine boarding, presumably once stained and lacquered but now painted. Some of the lower walls of the hall have been reclad with strap-jointed fibre cement sheet or hardboard as are the kitchen walls. A First War Roll of Honor made from polished timber, styled in a neo-Egyptian form and erected by the Christmas Hills Red Cross Branch lists John V Wilson, Harry Conway, George B Muir, George PM Saltau, Herbert Borner, Arthur S Ashmore, James E Betts and Harry T Muir.

## Physical Description 2

### Integrity

The hall is leaning to the south (tie rods have been fitted internally); floor stumps, fascias and external joinery are affected by rot. The chimney was removed from the back when the kitchen refit was carried out. One of the floor boards in the hall has been attacked by termites.

A large new gabled roof annexe was added on the north c1990, clad with large timber-framed windows to the west and north, pressure treated vertical softwood boarding and corrugated iron roofing. The annexe roof extends across the front of the hall, creating an open porch. The junction between the hall and the addition appears to be poorly flashed and has potential for leaks; the wall boarding is peeling away from the frame in part. An elevated but detached skillion-roof, three-pan toilet block (clad with fibre cement sheet) is set on high stumps on the west end (donated by Melbourne Water?). This is in fair to poor condition, with external sheeting damaged. The skillion kitchen at the west end has been refitted.

## Physical Description 3

### Context

The hall is located in open pasture on the side of a hill, with remnant fruit trees in an adjoining paddock to the north and public tennis courts located to the south (said to have been created by Melbourne Water in exchange for land used at the yacht club). The road reserve it faces is wide and fringed with native forest as are many of the farm holdings. To the north at the corner of the main road, is the Christmas Hills First War memorial. To the south is the stand of significant farm trees, including a bunya bunya, at 697 Ridge Rd.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*