

University of Melbourne Archives

Melbourne Trades Hall and Literary Institute

Accession Number 102 24

Historical Note:

After the gaining of the Eight Hour Day for Victorian building workers in 1856, a small nucleus of tradesmen, most of whom were involved in the Eight-Hours Day campaign, lobbied the Government of the Colony of Victoria for a Crown Grant of Land on which to erect a building for the use of “artificers and operatives”. One acre of land was allocated for this purpose in 1858 and gazetted in the names of ten Trustees approved by the Governor-in-Council, although the Crown Grant was not formally issued until 11 October 1875. The Trades Hall and Literary Institute Committee was formed on 3 December 1858 to erect buildings on this land. (Records from the period are at the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.) The first Trades Hall was erected in Melbourne in 1859. The original building was replaced with a grander one between 1873 and 1925 in order to reflect its status as a 'parliament' of the working class. The Trades Hall and Literary Institute was, and is, a separate organisational entity to the Trades Hall Council. The Trustees of the Trades Hall Property manage the buildings and land of the Trades Hall complex. A dispute in 1885/1886 between the Trustees and the Trades Hall Council concerning relative powers in financial and building management matters led to revised Trades Hall and Literary Institute Regulations being adopted on 11 March 1886.

Collection Category: Labour, organization

Activities: Trade Union; Industrial Relations; Trades Hall Building

Note on Collection:

The collection was found at the Trades Hall in 1995, by the then VTHC Assistant Secretary Max Burr. It was housed in a tin trunk, labeled ‘Trustees’. The collection was transferred to UMA in 1995 but not accessioned at that time. The tin trunk and reproductions of some of the documents are used in a display at the Trades Hall.

Note on Listing:

No original order could be reconstructed, apart from some items housed together in envelopes or packets. The material has been roughly sorted chronologically into artificially created series, and listed by an imposed sequential item number. Where material was housed in envelopes or bundled together this has been noted.

Transferred: 21 October 1995

Access: Open

Date Range: 1857 - 1934

Quantity: 24 cm (2 archive boxes)

Related Collections: Melbourne Trades Hall Council; Victorian Trades Hall Council;
Note also: Trades Hall, Melbourne Collection at Mitchell Library 1848-1915 (MSS 308)

Listed by: Sarah Brown

Date: 17 June 2002

Box Number	Item Number	Description
1	1	Printed sheet titled <i>Documents in connection with the Trades Hall and Literary Institute 1858</i>
	2	Printed sheet titled <i>The National Trades' Hall and Literary Institute Objects and Rules [nd]</i>
	3	Correspondence: Loose items of correspondence. No particular order was discernable, so they have been sorted chronologically and ordered as follows:
	3.1	Correspondence 1857 – 1863. 17 items of correspondence between the Trades Hall and Literary Institute Committee and Commissioner of Crown Lands concerning the Crown Grant of Land. The letters appear to form part of a registered correspondence system, annotated with sequential numbers as follows Reg. No. 1 [18 July 1857], 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 30 [13 October 1863].
	3.2	Correspondence 30 November 1885 to 1886 concerning replacement of Trustees and dispute between Trades Hall Council and Trustees, new regulations adopted 11 March 1886
	3.3	Correspondence: From Attorney-General to W. E. Murphy 1886; Crown Land Office 1886
	3.4	Correspondence 1887
	4	Envelope labeled Trustees Dispute 1886 containing 2 handwritten copies of legal opinion dated 31 March 1886
	5	Printed circular in connection with the dispute existing between the Trustees of the Trades Hall Property and the Council 1886
	6	Notices of Objection (under Electoral Act 1865) to names on roll 1886
	7	Resolutions or (draft) motions c.1886
	8	Envelope labeled Mr. C. Rawlings containing printed Supreme Court Judgement Rawlings and anor. V. Trenwith and Others 4/2/1887. 3 copies (printed) [relates to Trustees Dispute]
9	Crown Grant; Regulations 1886. 2 printed copies	
10	Tenancy Agreement 1887	
11	Counsel's opinion: Railway Labourers' Union 1888	
12	Agreements for loan [with various unions] 1882, 1883, 1887. 1	

- packet
- 13 Wharf Labourers Union Balance Sheet 1886
 - 14 Tender 1888
 - 15 Trades Hall Committee: 1 packet financial records
 - 15.1 Balance sheets 1883 1884
 - 15.2 Comparative statement of Trades Hall accounts 1885 1886
 - 15.3 Auditors reports and balance sheets 1887 1888 1889 1891? 1892?
1897 1898 1893 1894
 - 15.4 The Trades Hall Additions and Portico – Lygon Street Summary of
Expenditure 1917
 - 16 Agreement: Melbourne & Suburban Timber Merchants & THC
1911. 2 copies
 - 17 Specification Bates, Peebles and Smart Dancing Hall 1916
- 2
- 18 Quote for additions 1918
 - 19 Receipts 1887; 1890
 - 20 Receipt for loan 1900
 - 21 Receipts 1904
 - 22 Receipts [1919] 1 packet
 - 23 Wages and materials costings [nd]
 - 24 Insurance Policies. 1 packet: Fire Policies; National Insurance
Company of Australasia Ltd; The Liverpool and London and Globe
 - 25 Tasmanian Government Insurance Office Fire Policy 1926
 - 26 Printed booklet: The “Wood” Electoral System [pp. 1-2 missing; c.
early c20th.]
 - 27 “To the trade unionists of Australia” re Labor Papers Ltd. [leaflet]
c. 1910
 - 28 Trades Hall Council Report of the Grouping Committee 1921 [8
copies]
 - 29 Tasmania Certificate of Title 1924
 - 30 Envelope labelled *Geelong Trades Hall Building Loan
Correspondence; Plan of Building* containing correspondence from
various unions re loans; report of visit to Geelong; plan of Geelong
Trades Hall building by Laird & Buchan architects 1925
 - 31 Victorian Unions Cooperative Loan Committee correspondence
1925-26
 - 32 Typescript. Official Statement to delegates to the Special
Conference Australian Labor party May 19, 1934. Issued by the
Trades Hall Council Executive. [2 copies]