

The Best Time of their Lives

Researching the History of Prahran Technical School

Dr Judith Buckrich

'The Best Time of their Lives: Researching the History of Prahran Technical School', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 5, 2006. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Judith Buckrich.

Dr Judith Buckrich was born in Budapest, Hungary and emigrated to Australia with her parents in 1958. She completed her PhD thesis on the life of the science-fiction writer George Turner at the University of Melbourne and is now an Honorary Research Fellow in that University's Cultural Heritage Unit. Judith has written commissioned histories on the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, Port Melbourne, St Kilda Road, Collins Street, and the Montefiore Homes, and is currently researching the history of Prahran Technical School for the Prahran Mechanics' Institute, to be published as *Design for living: a history of Prahran Tech* in 2007. In 2005 she curated an exhibition 'History: Community: Identity: Showcasing Melbourne's Diversity' for the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

Abstract

The history of Prahran Technical School is a remarkable story. Created by the Prahran Mechanics' Institute, the 'Tech' opened in High Street in 1915. With both junior and senior sections, a boys' school and later a girls' school, it survived for fifty years with barely sufficient funding. Art had always featured as a major stream of study, however, and in the 1960s it became Melbourne's most innovative art school. In this paper the author shares her experiences of gathering her material and shaping her research.

The research for this history began in the most ordinary way – by looking at the minute books, correspondence files and administrative records of Prahran Technical School and its parent body, the Prahran Mechanics' Institute (PMI). Most of the archives of the various institutions that began as Prahran Technical School are now held at Deakin University (which inherited some parts of Prahran Tech, but by no means all) and at Public Record Office Victoria.[1] The PMI holds its own minute books, the transcripts of a series of oral histories undertaken after a 1996 school reunion, and a bundle of website printouts about famous and infamous personalities who have been associated with the school over the years – among them Kevin Sheedy,[2] Joan Carden[3] and Sir William Dargie.[4]

PROV files include many handbooks and official photographs, which are invaluable for revealing how the school (later college) presented itself to the world. PROV also holds newspaper cuttings, festival programmes, honour rolls and staff handbooks that give an insight

into celebrations not recorded in the minute books now at Deakin. Correspondence files at PROV are also of great interest.

I found a few lists of graduates in the minute books and contacted scores of ex-students and teachers through a process of one contact leading to another. I also made use of the internet, where many former students who have become well known could be traced. Almost everyone wanted to talk about their time at Prahran Tech because it was the best time of their lives.

I approached my research in my usual way – by going through the available archives, making photocopies and taking notes in a seemingly random fashion, all the while trying to form a picture in my mind of Prahran Tech and to develop a feel for it. This is always an uncomfortable stage of the research journey for me because I'm not sure what I'm looking for and often feel as though I will never understand, let alone be able to write about, my commissioned subject. But I am also aware that I always feel like this at this stage, so I go on regardless. It all seems very messy and awkward. The best antidote for this feeling of unease is to read about the time and place into which my subject fits and try to understand the big picture. I always find this very reassuring because it reminds me of what I do know but had forgotten that I know and because the setting is an integral part of the story of any organisation – no matter how small. This part of the process was made easier because the project I had completed previously, a history of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind in the same area of Melbourne,[5] owed its existence to the same person – the Reverend William Moss.[6]

.....

Apart from time spent at PROV, in people's homes and studios, and in restaurants and pubs interviewing them, I have been (most happily) located at the Prahran Mechanics' Institute Victorian and Local History Library for the duration of my research and writing. The staff and one committee member of the PMI have acted as a constant sounding-board and source of information. So although Prahran Tech no longer exists, its founding parent has proved invaluable to my work. As well, it's important to note that the PMI is located at 140 High Street, Prahran. Not only was this the address of the Tech (the PMI was always housed within the Tech's boundaries), but Swinburne University of Technology, Prahran Tech's successor, has maintained the buildings and, to a degree, the youth culture around the site. So each day spent in the Institute's bright, window-lit space has been, in a sense, a day spent at the Tech, or perhaps more accurately, in its shadow. There are fewer students walking around and the atmosphere is no longer charged with the breathlessness of 1960s and 1970s youth culture (and its optimism), but it is still an area of intense activity and great diversity.



Photograph of Prahran Technical Girls School building, Hornby Street, Windsor, c. 1955. PROV, VPRS 9626/P1, Unit 3.

High Street near Chapel Street in Prahran is as socially broad as ever. There is a real mix of rich and poor, fashionable and dowdy, conventional and outright weird. Many students and older people throng the area, as do the disenfranchised young and the sophisticated shoppers looking eagerly at Chapel Street boutiques (though this latter group gathers momentum further north toward Toorak Road). Every day some shops close forever and new ones open, but the area has many fine and notable old buildings and 140 High Street is one of these – though admittedly more notable than fine.

.....

It is perhaps worth describing how I begin to have a feeling about a place and how this feeling changes as the research and writing proceed. As each piece of information is ingested, and as each description consolidates the picture, my subject comes more to life. In a way it is like the technique of a recent film about the Winter Palace in St Petersburg:[7] there were no clear episodes; rather, the camera moved in one long shot from room to room down corridors that were quite similar, yet not the same, through scenes of people who enacted significant moments in Russian history. All was animate and each scene built on the last. As the camera moved, the audience could remember or forget according to its own interest and intellectual and emotional focus.

This is a normal, and at the same time very exciting, process that has occurred with each project that I have worked on, but it was made much more 'real' this time by the presence in the story of so many people whom I have actually met and talked to. Prahran Tech was well known as an art school; many of the people I have interviewed are artists. They had either taught at Prahran or studied there – or, in a surprisingly large number of cases, had done both. The majority of them were at the school during the late 1960s and 1970s – a time of social, cultural and political upheaval. For almost all, this was the period in which they experienced life at its most intense. With each interview my understanding of what made Prahran 'fabulous' became more clear. The minute books and letters and brochures and prospectuses of the time describe a place in transition.

The change from the school's previous difficult and threadbare 50 years of existence was utterly remarkable. The archives covering the period 1915 to 1965 had revealed an institution that moved agonisingly slowly; it was always underfunded, badly housed and often grim. The school had opened when the Great War was just into its second year.

But my research had to go back much further – to the beginning of the Prahran Mechanics' Institute in 1854, in fact. The middle of the nineteenth century saw a flurry of activity as the idea of adult education for artisans became popular. Prahran was the sixth mechanics' institute to be established in Victoria, preceded only by Melbourne (1839), Portland (1844), Geelong (1846), Warrnambool (1853) and Port Melbourne (1853).

I also looked at the beginning of Prahran as a suburb to try and understand how it fitted into the development of Melbourne as a whole. What follows is a little of what I discovered.

The first Crown Land sales in Prahran were in 1840 but the area developed slowly until 1852 when disappointed miners began returning to Melbourne from the Central Victorian goldfields. It was, from the beginning, 'a district of sharp contrasts in its geography, its economy, its districts, streets and people'.^[8] The name Prahran had been given to the district by George Langhorne, a missionary working with Aborigines south of the Yarra River during the 1840s. The word is apparently a combination of two words used by local Aboriginal groups meaning 'land partly surrounded by water'. By 1850, it defined a small hamlet along Chapel Street, High Street and Malvern/Commercial Roads. The Mechanics' Institute was established before Prahran was gazetted as a municipality in 1855. By 1856, when the first Town Council elections were held, the district had a population of about 8000 and the new municipality was bounded by the river, Punt Road, Dandenong Road and Boundary (Kooyong) Road. It covered an area of four square miles and included two other small settlements called Windsor and South Yarra. There was high land along the riverfront and the district's eastern half, but the good stretches were separated by deep gullies, creeks, bogs and even quicksand, with a huge swamp at the river end of Chapel Street. The Yarra, where it flowed into Port Phillip, was then surrounded by swampy land and tended to flood. During the next sixty years much work was done dredging and draining the river and its surrounds until finally the Yarra's course was re-channelled in the 1880s. But even after that, swampy low-lying ground often flooded and made life uncomfortable for those living in such areas. Collingwood and Prahran residents had higher rates of summer diseases such as cholera than their neighbours in hilly Kew and Toorak, and not just because of their lower standard of living.

Prahran during the 1840s and 1850s was like a country town. The roads were rough, with side streets leading down to swamps and creeks, and there were farms and market gardens – and hotels placed at strategic corners. Wealthy families who had settled along the riverbank had gardens, poultry, farm animals, orchards, beehives and comfortable large houses with stables and outbuildings on their estates. They often needed labourers and in South Yarra, Windsor and Prahran narrow streets with small lots had one- and two-roomed cottages built to house workers. In 1856 most of Prahran's residents lived in modest dwellings like these. They were employed in the occupations that were most useful at that time in the growing city – brick-making, timber-getting, sawmilling, carting and farming, but they were also butchers, storekeepers, hoteliers and skilled artisans as well as bakers, saddlers, blacksmiths, brewers and ironworkers.



Photograph of students in the Prahran Technical Girls School library, Hornby Street, Windsor, c. 1961. PROV, VPRS 9626/P1, Unit 3.

The next step on my journey was to explain the origins of the school.

I set out to find whatever I could about the Institute's founder, the Reverend William Moss. This was not really difficult. Moss was much written about in newspapers of the time, and the annual reports of the Institute for the Blind, which he also helped found, also provided a source of information. Moss had been brought out to Melbourne from England by the Independent Congregational Church. In his *History of Prahran*, published in 1924, John Butler Cooper said about Moss and his Chapel, after which Melbourne's famous Chapel Street is named, that it

was but the husk of a visible acknowledgment of a house of prayer, dedicated to the service of God. It was the pastor, the Rev. William Moss, whose magnetic personality, charged with an abounding love of humanity, that lifted his chapel into prominence, and made it the outstanding landmark and the notable spring of good works, in early Prahran. And what manner of man was he, this pioneer of the spiritual life of the young settlement? A word-picture of him survives as he appeared in the first days of his ministry in Prahran; a curious figure indeed, somewhat out of keeping with the primitive surroundings. He is described "as a straight, well-proportioned fellow, wearing a frock coat, a black belltopper hat, with a white necktie, fair in complexion, with the large, deep, thoughtful blue eyes, gentle in manner, and soft in speech"^[9]

I knew from previous research that Moss was instrumental in founding many charitable organisations, but his first significant undertaking was the establishment of the Prahran Mechanics' Institute in 1854.^[10]

The Institute's first meetings were held in the Independent Schoolroom attached to the Independent Chapel, but in May 1854 a room in Chapel Street was acquired. The first Prahran Mechanics' Institute was built at what is now 259 Chapel Street and opened in December 1856. Some of the early topics discussed there were:

- Has the introduction of gunpowder into the art of war been more beneficial than injurious to mankind?
- The Crusaders
- Has the miser or the spendthrift been the most injurious to society?
- Comic characters of Shakespeare
- Has the pen of the novelist been a benefit or injury to the mind?
- Is America or Australia the most advantageous to immigrants?[11]

From here the story of the Institute took shape. I was able to rely on the minute books, but there was also a great deal in the local newspapers about milestone events and about the courses on offer, which were advertised regularly.

I learned that the PMI was less popular during the early 1860s because the new Prahran Town Hall offered talks and withdrew the books it had lent to the Institute in order to establish a Free Lending Library. But the PMI continued to offer soirées, dances and band performances, established a Chess Club, and offered free French and shorthand classes (for men, not women, working in law offices, as journalists etc.). In 1866 it introduced penny readings by prominent men.

During the 1860s, ideas about technical training came to the attention of the colonial government and a Technological Commission was appointed in 1868. The Commission was instructed to promote technological and industrial instruction and to establish schools of design to educate workingmen by means of drawing lessons.[12]

A School of Art and Design was established in Prahran in 1870 and classes were held at the Mechanics' Institute in Chapel Street. The Institute provided this kind of education to the public without cost to the government for more than thirty years. It also offered classes to prepare candidates for the Matriculation examination (required for university entrance, entrance to the public service and to pharmacy courses). These classes were very successful and students who enrolled in them often received honours and first and second places in their relevant entrance exams.

In 1909 the School of Art and Design was recognised as a Technical Art School with no maintenance (funding) from the Victorian Education Department, and negotiations were underway for the building of a Technical School in High Street, Prahran. The PMI offered to build a school on land it had bought and to lease it to the Education Department for nominal rent. In July 1910 the Department promised to place £50 in the Estimates (the Victorian Government's budget) towards school expenses.

In 1913 the Technical School appointed a future Inspector of Technical Schools, Mr WR Dean as its Principal. The school paid £14,000 for the building and the government promised a £1,000 maintenance grant and a £1,500 equipment grant when the building was available. The foundation stone of the new school was laid on 24 February 1915 and the school was opened on October 8 of the same year by the Director of Public Instruction, the Honorable Donald McKinnon.

The subjects offered in 1916 were Architectural Drawing, Arts and Crafts, Black and White Illustration, Building Construction, Cabinet Making, Certificates of Drawing for Primary and Secondary Teachers, Dressmaking, Embroidery, Engineering Drawing, Fashion Plate Drawing, Furniture Designing, House Painting and Decorating, Lithographic Drawing, Millinery, Modelling, Needlework, Show Card and Ticket Writing, Sign Writing and Wood Carving.[13]

All of these subjects were offered to adults of both sexes, but part of the school was a Junior Technical School for boys. By 1919 a Girls' Junior Tech was also established, with Miss FA Swan as its first teacher in charge. In the 1920s, both girls and boys from the nearby Deaf School in St Kilda Road attended Prahran Tech to learn dressmaking and carpentry respectively.



Scrapbook entry on tour to north-east Victoria by the Junior Girls' section of Prahran Technical School, 1962. PROV, VPRS 9626/P1, Unit 2, 'Our School Story' scrapbook.

Despite constant endeavours to move the Girls' School away from the Boys' and to purchase land for it, the Girls' School at Hornby Street, Windsor, was not built until 1955.

From the late 1920s until the 1950s the school struggled with lack of funding, overcrowding, bad conditions for both staff and students, and all of the hardships faced by institutions reliant on government funding for providing services to the poorer parts of society. A long dark period through the Great Depression of the 1930s until after World War 2 prevented much development in Victoria.

After 1945, however, there was a great resurgence in all strata of Australian society. After almost 30 years of waiting, extended even further by the shortage of building materials after the war, the foundation stone for the Girls' School building in Hornby Street was laid on 6 August 1951 and the new school was completed in February 1955. The girls were finally able to move into their own building, an entirely modern structure. It was a real shot in the arm for the girls' section of the school. The headmistress, Miss KA McKemmish, according to many ex-students, was an intelligent and self-assured woman. The official opening coincided with centenary celebrations for the city of Prahran and the Age carried the following report on April 27:

A three-storied white building, with green sliding doors opening to an inner courtyard, the school is painted inside in pastel colors – different colors in each classroom. These open on to long passages with an unusual color scheme of two shades of blue.

At the moment about 400 girls are pupils there, but this number will be increased even further when all the classrooms are in use. Pupils' ages range from 12 to 15 or 16 years, and their curriculum covers, as well as ordinary academic subjects, some aspects of domestic economy.

The Director of Education (Mr A H Ramsay) who also spoke at the ceremony, told the girls their work in a school of this nature was of vital importance to the community. It was just as important for girls to be skilled in their work as boys, who went to a technical school to learn a skilled trade....[14]

Despite their new building, however, the girls were still at a disadvantage. Subjects that had the same names had a different content for boys and girls, and this tended to discriminate against female students. Among a group of papers held by Public Record Office Victoria, I found a letter from Miss JL Williams of Sunshine Technical School to Miss McKemmish, written in November 1961. It expressed some of the frustration felt by educators of young women at the time. Miss Williams wrote that a group of girls at Sunshine Tech had sat a science exam that was based on the syllabus for boys and had nonetheless obtained excellent marks:

you will no doubt comment mentally perhaps on the emphasis on boys syllabuses, but some of the girls are interested in Applied Science, etc.[15]

There must have been a constant struggle to bring girls' education into line with boys' and to make subjects more accessible to girls.

Another important find at this time was a copy of the only issue of a school magazine, *Alinta*, published at the Girls' School. It gives a vivid picture of an academically and socially confident community with lots of room for creativity and a strong sense of purpose.[16] The word 'alinta', according to the editors of the magazine, Margaret Fairthorne and Anne Worthington, meant 'flame' in an Aboriginal language. Motifs from the 1956 Melbourne Olympics influenced the design of the cover. The literary and visual content veered between 'Girls Own' and very 'moderne' in style.

In 1961 Prahran Tech employed a new Principal, Alan Edwin Warren. (At this time the school as a whole had a Principal while the girls' and boys' sections had a headmistress and headmaster respectively.) Warren took over from EH Duncan, who had been Principal of the school since 1948, on 1 March 1961.[17] Warren had previously been employed by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in the School of Art, where he was responsible for the graphic design course 'which he approached with a distinct formal bent. Art History and theory were not taught, but he did require students to read Roger Fry's *Vision and Design* (1926), a text which emphasised the compositional aspects of art making'.[18] Warren was a committed modernist, an early member of the Contemporary Art Society set up in Melbourne in 1938 to resist the establishment of an Australian Academy of Art which would exclude the modern movement.[19] He was art critic for the *Sun News Pictorial* for twenty years from 1951.[20] His report on the Senior Art School in April 1961 showed his intentions in the area of art education:

The least concern of an art school – to my mind – is to produce artists (by that, I mean oil painters.) Creative designers, craftsmen and draughtsmen, Yes. Artists in a vacuum, No.[21]

By the May Council meeting of 1961, Warren had asserted that:

Classes in art and design were commenced here in 1870. They continued until 1909 when the Education Department decided to recognise the School as a Technical Art School.

Ninety-one years later it is still referred to as a Technical School. I believe that a City like Prahran should have a College – not just a Technical School. Our aim should be to raise the status of this teaching institution.

To achieve this our educational standards must meet the requirements of Diploma work as laid down by the Education Department.[22]



Prahran Technical School fete poster inserted between scrapbook entries for 1962. PROV, VPRS 9626/P1, Unit 2, 'Our School Story' scrapbook.

His views during the 1960s were in happy parallel with the Coldstream Report from Britain which proposed 'an integrated approach where intending artists and designers should be instructed in a range of basic technical skills'. Under this model, some academic disciplines should be incorporated into the curriculum with the result that students would be 'awarded a tertiary level "Diploma of Art & Design" upon successfully completing their studies'.^[23]

Warren pushed on with great haste and energy towards changing the Art School in preparation for its metamorphosis into a technical college. Although he concentrated his efforts in the Art School, he was aware that other parts of the school had to be built up if it were ever to become a proper technical college.

By 1967 his plans for separating the secondary and tertiary parts of the school were forging ahead. The Art Division, as it was called, moved into the first new building of its kind in 1968.

In Warren's introduction to the 1968 handbook, 'New Era', he wrote:

The transfer of the Art Division to the new Diploma building not only removes present limitations, but allows for a more progressive approach to professional design training. With its new building, the first such building erected in Victoria since 1919, the Prahran Technical School becomes a special place. [...] Today no design school worthy of the name would limit the art and design student to 'making coloured marks on a flat surface' or similar narrowly conceived activity.

Electronics, engineering, science, photography, visual and verbal communications mean more to a designer than drawing in a free manner from a nude model.^[24]

Suddenly Prahran could boast of its 'admirable situation for a tertiary educational Institute. Students are drawn from a wide area south of the Yarra, as far as Frankston, and transport and parking facilities are good. Without the disadvantages of a city location, the School has many advantages in being close to the city, and close to Melbourne and Monash Universities; it is conveniently placed to receive, as part-time students, the employees of many city and suburban industrial concerns.'^[25]

However, Warren's ideas were already being challenged. He had employed Lenton Parr as head of Art and Design in 1966. Parr was a well-known and well-liked sculptor in Melbourne's small and close-knit artistic community. He was a graduate of RMIT where he had finished with a Fellowship of Sculpture in 1951 and had worked as an assistant to Henry Moore in Britain between 1955 and 1957. He also spent weekends in Eduardo Paolozzi's cottage in Essex. Unlike many of his contemporaries who, having left Australia, remained overseas where sculpture was well supported, Parr returned to Australia to advance the cause of sculpture through his own work and through teaching. Before heading up Prahran's Art and Design School, he had been Head of Sculpture at RMIT.^[26]

Parr's and Warren's philosophies on art education were quite different, with Parr supporting the idea of art for art's sake and Warren interested in training artists for employment. Warren probably felt his territory was being encroached on, as Parr was held in higher esteem by art staff and students.^[27] In an atmosphere of growing tension, a notice appeared in the *Age* on Saturday 12 October 1968 advertising Parr's position. An assertion was made by someone in the school administration (it is never made clear who this was) that Parr had been employed as Acting Head only. Judging by Parr's later achievements at the Victorian College of the Arts he was a force to be reckoned with.

.....

In an obituary written for the online newsletter of the Producers' and Directors' Guild of Victoria, Parr was described as having a 'gentle exterior and a kind social manner'; however, 'in meetings and in planning the continuity of his extraordinary dream – the Victorian College of the Arts – he was tough – really tough, and could be uncompromising if he felt his ideas were being threatened.' [28]

Parr was reinstated, but left to take up the post at the National Gallery School. The episode had damaged support for Warren. When the secondary school and college were finally divided in 1967, the Victoria Institute of Colleges demanded that the Principal's position be upgraded and advertised. After years of work to establish the college, Warren found himself having to compete with PhD holders for the job. He initially applied but withdrew at the end of 1971 when Head of Business Myer Mirsky took over as Acting Principal until Dr David Armstrong was appointed to the position in late 1972. Under Armstrong's leadership Prahran became one of Australia's leading Colleges of Advanced Education with many innovative programmes. It was the first such organisation to offer modern languages, creative writing, Jewish studies and many other subjects as well as the first college with a Planned Parenthood clinic and childcare facilities on campus.

My formal story of Prahran Tech finishes here. After 1972 the school was divided into tertiary and secondary sections and within those structures many changes occurred until Prahran Tech disappeared altogether in the early 1990s. But a lengthy afterword in my history will cover the period from 1971 to 1991.

Endnotes

- [1] My thanks go to the staff of these institutions for their invaluable help and advice.
- [2] Kevin Sheedy was recruited from Prahran Football Club and played 251 games for Richmond between 1967 and 1979. He has coached the Essendon club since 1981 and is described as a 'legend' by his fans.
- [3] Joan Carden is one of Australia's most distinguished operatic sopranos.
- [4] Sir William Dargie (1912-2003), artist. Winner of the Archibald Prize for portraiture a record eight times.
- [5] J Buckrich, *Lighthouse on the boulevard: a history of the Victorian Institute for the Blind*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne, 2004.
- [6] See discussion on Moss below.
- [7] Aleksandr Sokurov's 2002 film *Russian Ark* (Wellspring Media) was famously filmed in a single take.
- [8] B Malone, 'Introduction', in S Wilde, *The history of Prahran. Volume 2, 1925-1990*, Melbourne University Press, 1993, p. vii.
- [9] JB Cooper, *The History of Prahran 1836-1924*, Modern Printing Company, Melbourne, 1924, p. 43.
- [10] See the PMI website at www.pmi.net.au/01.htm, accessed 24 September 2006.
- [11] JH Furneaux, *Short history of the Prahran Mechanics' Institute: as disclosed by minute books*, the Institute, 1930, pp. 2 & 3.
- [12] LJ Blake (ed.), *Vision and realisation: a centenary history of state education in Victoria*, 3 vols, Education Department of Victoria, Melbourne, 1973, vol. 1, p. 608.
- [13] Prospectus, Prahran Art School and Junior Technical School, 1916, held by the Prahran Mechanics' Institute.
- [14] 'School opened in centenary year', *Age*, 27 April 1955.
- [15] Exam Papers and Course Notes 1948-62. Letter from JL Williams of Sunshine Technical School to Miss McKemmish of Prahran Girls' Technical School dated 20 November 1961. VPRS 9626, Unit 12, Examination papers and course notes, School council correspondence / School administration files.
- [16] *Alinta*, Prahran Tech Girls' School Magazine, 1959. VPRS 9626, Unit 5.
- [17] Letter from Education Department to the President, Prahran Technical School Council, 26 January 1961.
- [18] C Heathcote, 'About Alan Warren' at www.artangel.com.au/alanwarren, accessed 24 September 2006.
- [19] *ibid.*

[20] Letter from Warren to Cr Spencer Harper re permission to engage in private work, 15 March 1961. Deakin University archive, Prahran Technical School 97/017, Council Appointments and Letters 1958-1963.

[21] Minutes of School Council Meeting, 20 April 1961. The motion was adopted. Deakin University archive, Prahran Technical School 97/017, Council Minutes and Agenda Papers 1959-1961.

[22] Minutes of School Council Meeting, 18 May 1961, in *ibid.*

[23] 'About Alan Warren'.

[24] 1968 Handbook, Prahran Technical School. VPRS 9626/P/1, Unit 5.

[25] *ibid.*

[26] Parr left Prahran to become Principal of the National Gallery School (1969-74) and continued as Founding Director of the Victorian College of the Arts when it replaced the Gallery School (1974-84). See Georgia Rouette, 'Lenton Parr 1924-2003' at www.christineabrahamsgallery.com.au, accessed 24 September 2006, and L Parr, *Lenton Parr: vital presences*, introd. G. Edwards, The Beagle Press, Roseville, NSW, 1999.

[27] Author interviews with Bill Kelly, 1 August 2006 and Fred Cress, 4 August 2006.

[28] P Oyston, 'Lenton Parr wise man and artist' at www.pdgv.com.au/news/2003-08-26_07.html, accessed 24 September 2006.