



MOUNT GAMBIER
LIBRARY

LEARN • CONNECT • EXPLORE



WHEN FRIENDS INVITE YOU OVER TO THEIR PLACE, IT'S USUALLY BECAUSE THEY'RE PROUD OF THE SPACES THEY INHABIT AND THE WARMTH AND HOSPITALITY THEY OFFER. WE FEEL THE SAME ABOUT OUR PLACE, WHICH IS THE NEWEST, MOST EXCITING AND INSPIRATIONAL PLACE AROUND WHERE EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO **LEARN, CONNECT AND EXPLORE.**

AT OUR PLACE THERE IS A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING AND EVERYTHING HAS ITS PLACE



Libraries tend to conjure up old-fashioned images, from rows and rows of books to stern librarians overseeing austere quiet rooms. Our place is still about books and we do have quiet spaces. But tradition stops there.

Our place reinvents 'library' as a state-of-the-art multipurpose community space totally relevant to its location. It's a place where practicality takes on fantasy to draw people of all ages to an information-rich gathering place at the heart of our community, adding immeasurably to creative and intellectual life.



OUR PLACE TO LEARN

YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW VERY MUCH TO START WITH IF YOU KNOW YOUR WAY TO YOUR LIBRARY

A delight for the senses, **our place** exists to promote knowledge, inquiry and innovation. This vibrant and dynamic space is for people of all ages, providing free and easy access to quality information in all its forms, helped by friendly and knowledgeable librarians. Inspired by our new light, bright and airy spaces we've simplified the process of finding books. Just as in a bookshop where books are organised according to themes or subjects, at **our place** we've organised our resources into six easily identifiable zones within which there are 'living rooms' that group together related material.



The zones are: Children, Fiction, Youth, Non-Fiction, Movies and Music, Newspapers and Magazines.

In keeping with our easy-to-use philosophy, **our place** incorporates self checkout and automated book returns.



OUR PLACE TO CONNECT

ONLINE AND WITH EACH OTHER

Featuring multimedia resources, information technology training suites and a bank of 40 computers, **our place** has the facilities and opportunities to connect with 21st century digital information resources to create, get and use information in new and exciting ways. Our Café, an array of themed spaces and our local history room encourage people to connect with each other—to play, learn and socialise or to simply sit, read, research and listen to music. Our services, programs and events, including author visits and musical performances, are bold, interactive and entertaining, designed to harness ideas and experiences and build knowledge.



Groups are welcome to book discovery orientation tours and community groups are encouraged to make use of our facilities and spaces.

Our place tips the 'old' concept of a library on its head.





OUR PLACE TO **EXPLORE**

MUM . . . PLEASE CAN WE GO TO THE LIBRARY?



Drawing inspiration from the Ewens and Piccaninnie Ponds, the cave-themed children's area is a wondrous theatrical experience. On crawling through the entry a magical underwater world—a dazzling kaleidoscope of aquamarine—is revealed, creating one of the most unique children's libraries in the world. The space is literally alive with the aquatic flora and fauna of the region, including fish, bats and dragonflies. An outsize rubber latex Southern Bell frog clings to the wall, a diver hangs suspended from the ceiling and a giant frog chair sits ready for storytelling. Specially designed book shelves, a craft and activity area and a computer zone add universal appeal. A fully equipped parenting room is conveniently adjacent.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

From humble beginnings, the library today is a place that sets national benchmarks for design, shape and functionality and challenges perceptions of what a library is and can be.

The public library had its genesis in a literary institute, which was formed and officially opened in September 1862 after visiting Reverend Pitt Cobbett had suggested the need for one.

The Mount Gambier Literary Institute opened with 420 books and a total of 70 subscribers, transferring to a new building on Commercial Street East (The Institute Building) in 1868. This was quite a step up from the home of Mr John McDonald, in which it had been established.

A century later, urgings for a public library led to the construction of the first Mount Gambier

Public Library on Penola Road. It opened on 27 October 1967 and came at a cost of \$23,000. It remained at this location until the advent of the Civic Centre on Watson Terrace, which His Royal Highness Charles Prince of Wales officially opened on 23 April 1981.

The centre was opened to the community on 3 June with 32,000 items transferred from Penola Road, after which the Mount Gambier Literary Institute closed its doors. Many of its local history items were donated to the Public Library and the then South East Cultural Centre Trust/ Country Arts SA (Riddoch Art Gallery).

From its early days as a quiet reflective location for reading, the Mount Gambier Library evolved into a modern, dynamic and active place with a collection of more than 60,000 items, 16,000

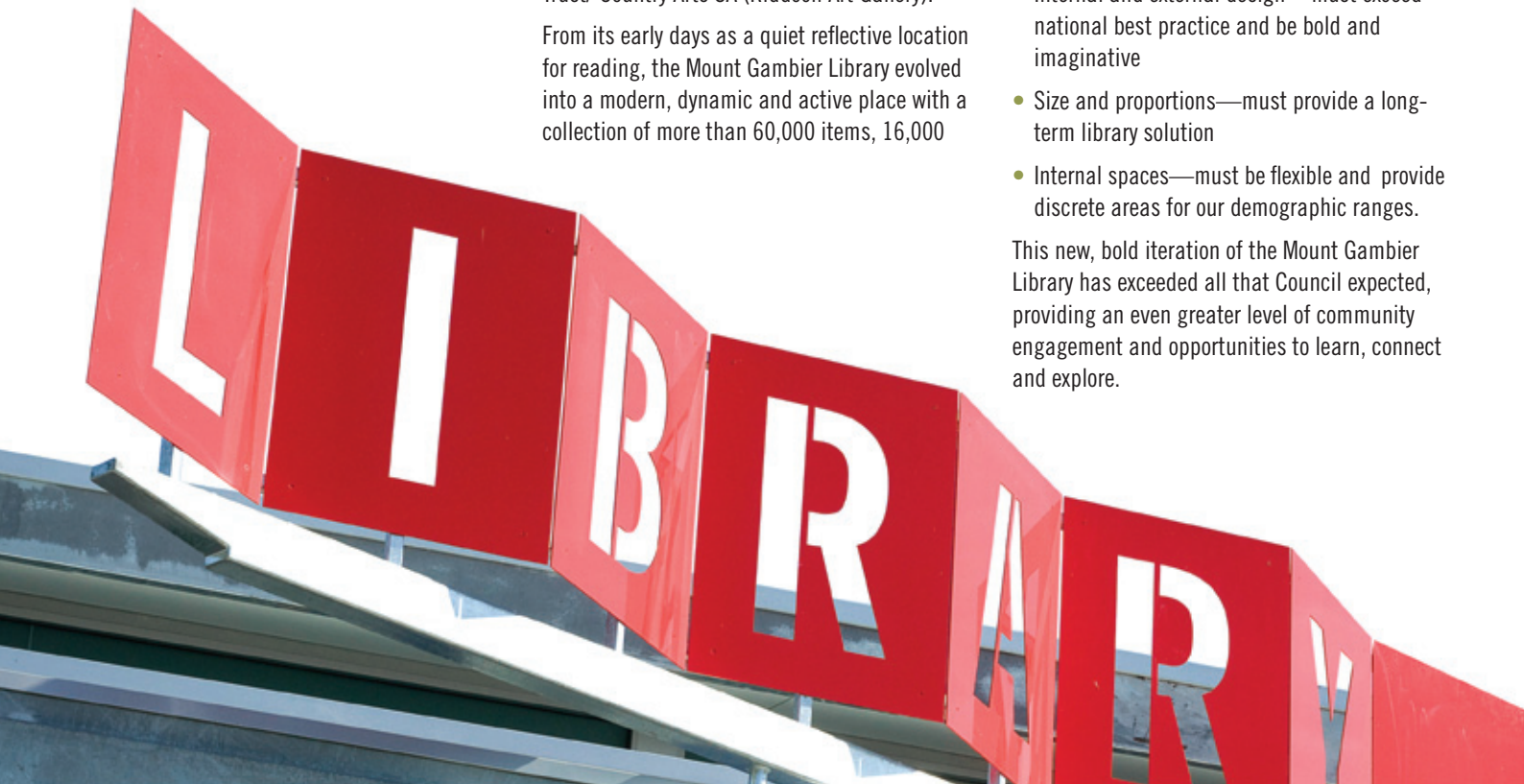
historical photographs and more than 1000 visits a month. From 1981 to 2009, it served our community well.

The decision in 2008 to build a new Library was a clear recognition of the value and worth of the Mount Gambier Library to the quality of life of our citizens.

Elements critical in the decision to both build the new facility and its location were:

- Siting—must enhance the cultural hub of the City Centre (around the Cave Garden)
- Internal and external design—must exceed national best practice and be bold and imaginative
- Size and proportions—must provide a long-term library solution
- Internal spaces—must be flexible and provide discrete areas for our demographic ranges.

This new, bold iteration of the Mount Gambier Library has exceeded all that Council expected, providing an even greater level of community engagement and opportunities to learn, connect and explore.





Mount Gambier Institute Library, Commercial Street 1975



Mount Gambier Public Library, Watson Terrace 2004



Mount Gambier Public Library, Penola Road 1960s



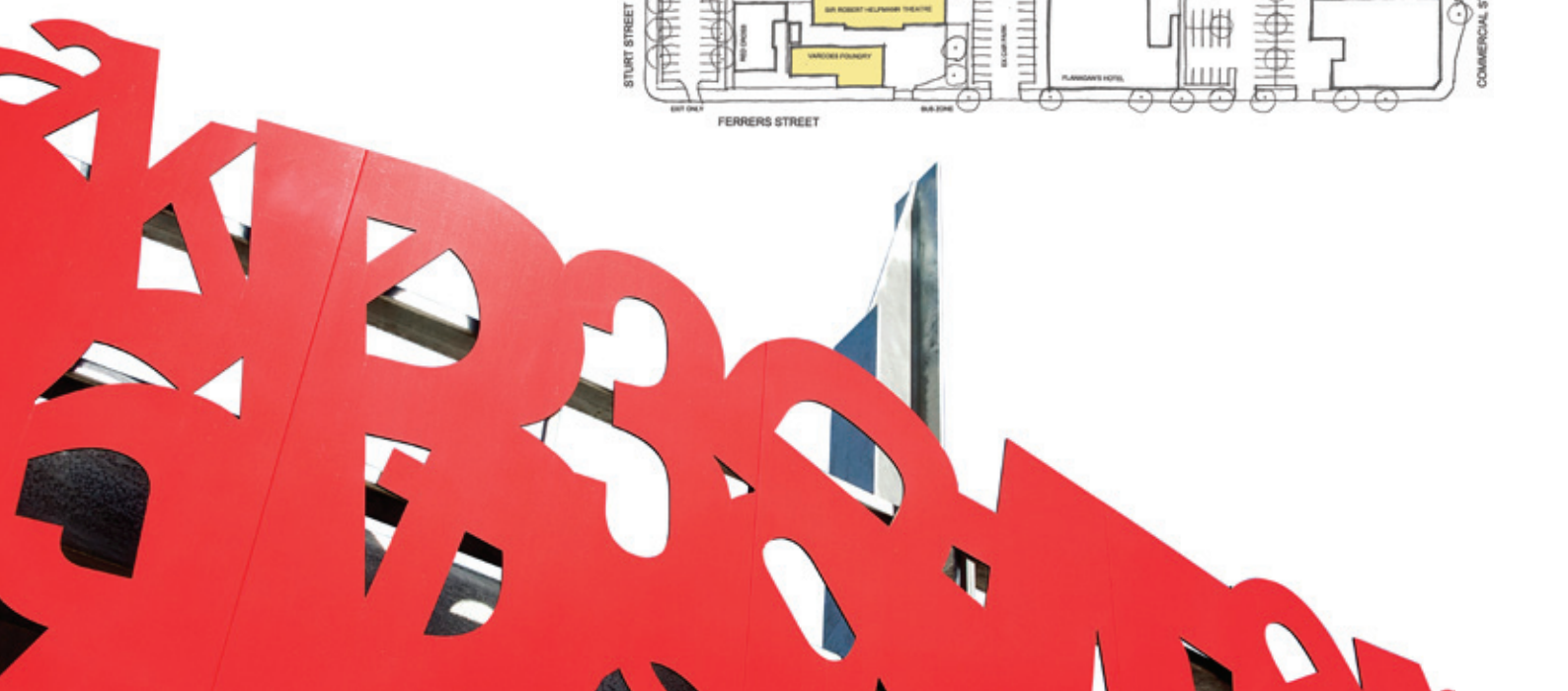
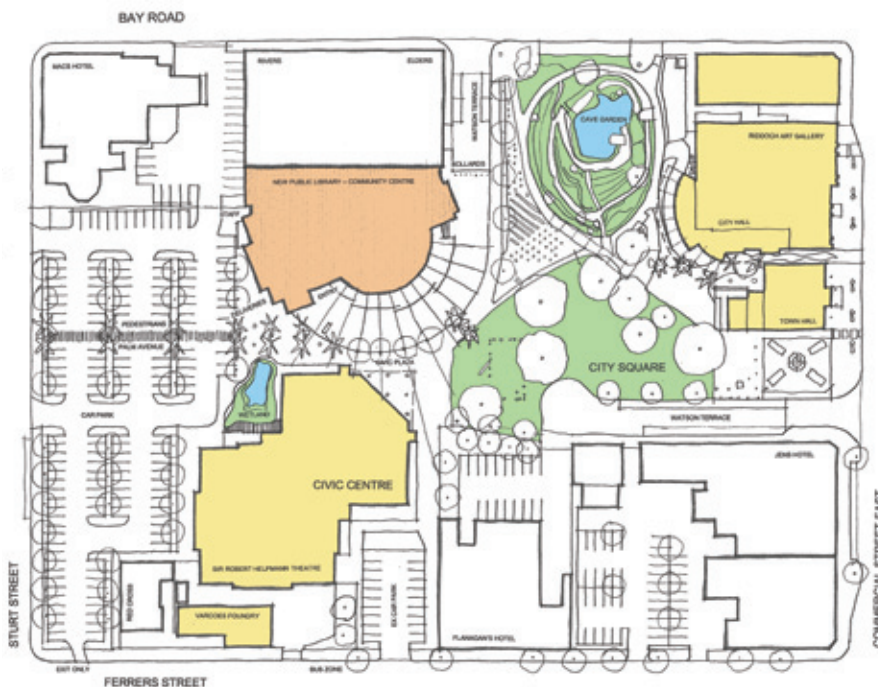
Signing of the library contract 10 November 2008.
Greg Muller CEO, Cathryn Harris, Peter Moeck (back)
John Kennett and Steve Perryman (Mayor) front

THE BUILDING

The library's design, construction and fit out reference the region's unique and ancient landscape of volcanic craters, lakes, limestone and mysterious underground waterways.

The welcoming entry provides the first sighting of the exciting children's library, with visual openness achieved by limiting the height of shelving and using glass and sliding 'walls'.

The library follows a clockwise circulation pattern, with the collections grouped centrally and announced by a clearly defined timber path. The active spaces, including the café from which other functions radiate, are located along the perimeter east wall and accessible for 10 pm closing. Back-of-house functions, which include the capture and preservation of Mount Gambier's cultural and documentary heritage, are clustered.





FEATURES INCLUDE

- A 60-metre 'lattice of letters' metal screen, which follows the curve of the east elevation to the entrance.
- A 15 metre-long internal limestone wall saw-cut to reveal underground geology and carved with silhouettes of a forest.
- Timber surrounds on the 10 columns supporting the skillion roof structure, incorporating poetry and phrases from writers that are relevant to the adjacent room uses.
- A Café, bringing the experience of a modern bookshop into the library space.
- A youth lounge area, complete with PlayStation 3 consoles, magazines, televisions and three specially commissioned 'youth chairs'.
- A relaxing reading area overlooking the Cave Garden—bringing the outside in.
- A local and family history area, which encourages nostalgia through the use of hand-crafted blackwood furniture.
- State-of-the-art technology includes 24-hour wireless internet.
- A generous unenclosed covered terrace to the perimeter of the building for Café, farmers markets, performances and functions.

THE BUILDING





THE ARCHITECTS

Brown Falconer



‘From the outset of the project we recognised that this was a special opportunity. A supportive client and architect relationship provided the foundation to creatively explore innovative solutions. This is the first project I have been involved with that began as a built form design and evolved into a branding strategy.’

Peter Moeck, Director

Brown Falconer is one of the most dynamic and innovative multidisciplinary architectural, interior design and services engineering practices in South Australia, with a broad and diverse base of project experience. The firm has been in continuous operation for 64 years and is structured under three directors.

The success of the practice—founded on a vision: to practice the art of architecture and design with vision, commitment, service, integrity and empathy—is reflected in the number of long-term clients and repeat commissions it carries out. Work includes significant projects in regional areas of South Australia and interstate in Victoria, New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Tasmania and overseas in New Zealand.

‘The Mount Gambier Library project is unique because it integrates expansive and significant commissions by artisans. Our commitment to collaborative design is holistic. This project involved the teaming of multidisciplinary professionals, artists and artisans.

‘The design approach is consistently delivered. Each member of the team has added their voice. The ensemble of works speaks in a visually unified and integrated manner.

‘The vision was achieved: a welcoming place sympathetic to the cultural precinct and a centrepiece of the civic plaza at the heart of Mount Gambier.’

Brownfalconer

THE ARTWORK

Groundplay



‘We looked to inject creativity, innovation and a touch of the light-hearted into the design.’

Greg Healey, Director

Groundplay, an environmental graphics, urban infrastructure and public art company, was commissioned to brand the building to reflect its purpose and location—a key community site, a place of social contact where individual and community learning is seen as having a distinct and valued role in Mount Gambier and its surrounds.

‘The “lattice of letters” effectively answers the question: “What am I?” The jumble of letters represents language and communication in all its forms. The kind that brings people together.’

Groundplay went on to project manage, manufacture and install its design, ensuring it was robust and enduring, for the community to enjoy for generations to come.



THE BUILDER

Kennett



‘This project was exciting because it’s a building with very few right angles. As builders, we’re used to dealing with straight lines.’

Scott Kennett, Director

Established in 1914, Kennett Pty Ltd is a fourth generation commercial and industrial builder with offices in Adelaide and Mount Gambier, where it has undertaken around 70 projects.

The company was responsible for ForestrySA’s building—the first-ever green star building in rural Australia, which picked up the Master Builder’s Association Commercial Builder of the Year for South Australia in 2009. Kennett was the smallest builder to ever take out this award.

The Mount Gambier Library came in on budget and ahead of schedule while at the same time achieving the vision for the project.

‘The building is organic to its environment, which gives it “wow” factor. It both blends in and stands out and you can only do that with an architect and client with a great vision.’



THE ENGINEERS

GHD



'The challenge for engineers is to work with the project team to maintain the vision while ensuring the integrity of the structure. When you view the completed library building, you are excited about what's inside and what it represents for the community, rather than how it's been put together. When you achieve this on a project, you know the design is successful.'

Michael Scott, Office Manager—Mount Gambier

GHD, the largest professional and technical consulting firm on the Limestone Coast, provided the structural and civil engineering solutions for the new Mount Gambier Library.

The Mount Gambier office of GHD worked closely with the architects, builders and the City of Mount Gambier in designing the large steel-framed structure. This close collaboration made this a very enjoyable project to be involved in and contributed to the quality of the completed project.

For GHD, the library is a flagship project. It's another way the firm is contributing to improving the infrastructure and services to the local community for the benefit of future generations.

'GHD was honoured to be part of the project team responsible for delivering a facility that will bring knowledge and enjoyment to all members of the community.'



THE TECHNOLOGY

FE Technologies



'Mount Gambier Library showcases the very latest in radio frequency identification (RFID) technology with a full installation of FE Technologies' Smart Library Service.'

Robert Reed, CEO

FE Technologies is a large and experienced RFID company based in Geelong, Victoria. Recent successes include securing more than 20 library groups in Australia (10 public libraries and 10 educational institutions). These have been underpinned by an innovative approach to developing RFID solutions for libraries that provide efficiency and reliability gains.

The implementation of the Smart Library RFID system will allow the Mount Gambier Library to achieve 100% self-checkout, eliminate item loss through improved security, provide accurate and speedy stock management, and deliver a back office solution that cleverly automates returns. The Smart Library suite of products are modern-looking and complement the new Mount Gambier Library's architecture and layout.

With item self-checkout, the skills of library staff are used for high-value activities, leaving the physically repetitive low value tasks to automated and semi-automated RFID equipment.

Smart Library products include: self loan stations, integrated DVD unlockers, security gates, controlled access external book return chute and smart bin.

'FE Technologies, through its collaboration with the Mount Gambier Library, is thrilled to be involved in one of the most exciting new library projects in South Australia, and looks forward to seeing the fantastic services the library provides to the Mount Gambier community over the years to come.'



THE COLLECTION

Resource Furniture



'We were excited by the challenge of providing a great new look, creating a new generation of shelving for Australian libraries.'

Scott Reed, Director

Commercial furniture and library shelving specialist Resource Furniture developed a range of shelving designed specifically for the Mount Gambier Library. Inspired by the modern European libraries, the shelving was produced using products such as Valchromat and Melamine.

The primary zones of Adult, Children and Youth are all easily identified by the colour and materials used, making navigation of the library easy.

Valchromat, for example, comes in a choice of vibrant colours that stimulate the mind and encourages curiosity in the younger generation. The main collections have been housed in Melamine units with metal shelving that is fully recyclable, which minimises the library's carbon footprint.

All materials selected for the fit-out had to satisfy the stringent criteria of maximising visual impact at minimal expense to give a truly unique experience to the public.

Established in 1978, Resource Furniture is a leading supplier of library shelving and furniture to tertiary, public and school libraries in South Australia.



THE CAVE

ShowTrek



‘In a big adult building, children are given the priority of a special, magic place.’

Stephen Hayter, Designer and Artist

ShowTrek’s contribution—theming the children’s Library—is drawn from a background of more than a quarter of a century in the arts, entertainment and construction industries. Attention to detail and highly skilled staff have translated the architectural concepts and project brief into creative reality.

Stephen Hayter has spent much of his life perfecting illusions combined with sculptural and scenic art to create magical and special effects. His visionary design is a product of his gift to translate, and stylise nature’s forms into an architectural environment.

Stephen’s interactive designs evolve from his innate understanding of people, especially children.

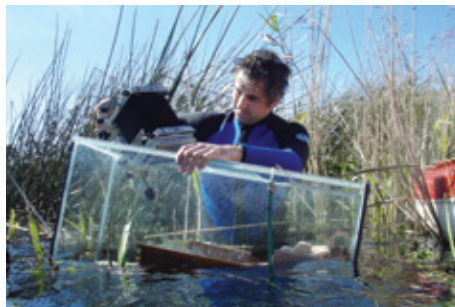
‘Children have a natural affinity for and fascination with animals and landforms. They are enticed into and impressed by secret places and special discoveries.

‘Children will continue to frequent this exciting and informative space and remember it forever as one of the most impressive places in their formative years of educational growth. And “library” will take on a new meaning for not only children, but also the greater community.’



THE PHOTOGRAPHY

Don Brice



‘Being a room for living in—the living room of the city—people would always feature prominently in the photography.’

Don Brice, Photographer

Don Brice is an Adelaide-based photographer who has worked for a wide variety of commercial and corporate clients over a 20-year career. The photography for the library falls into two categories: the wallpaper murals and the banners illustrating some of the non-fiction book collections.

‘People feature, but Mount Gambier is also beautifully situated among some unique scenery and this could not be ignored. The solution was to place local people within their landscape. While the style has been seen before, it was chosen to inspire library users to take pride in their community and their environment.’

The large coloured photographs were made using a large, vintage sheet-film camera during September 2009. The selected images were then digitised for wide format printing on to the wallpaper material.



THE IDENTITY

Orbit Design Group



‘The identity was informed by the concept of language, information and communication. Plus, the opportunity to weave the design into the fabric of the building on a grand scale influenced the outcome.’

Gregg Mitchell, Director

Orbit Design Group is an Adelaide-based design group, which has a large arts-based as well as commercial clientele. It has worked extensively for the State Library of South Australia, the WOMAdelaide Festival and South Australian Museum—on identity and other graphics-related activities from concept through to delivery.

Orbit Design was responsible for design of the library’s identity and internal graphics, including the signage and window graphics.

‘In a town where a blue lake and green forests predominate, we selected—in collaboration with the client—a contrasting rust-red to redress the in-balance in the palette.

The inspiration for the glazing referenced the forests of blue gums in the region, reinforcing position to people both inside and outside the library.

‘We think our work complements and yet makes a strong statement, reinforcing the role of graphic design in the urban built environment.’



THE FURNITURE

JamFactory



‘The pieces all have different characteristics according to their purpose and place.’

Tom Mirams, Creative Director Furniture Studio

Established 30 years ago in Adelaide, JamFactory Contemporary Craft and Design is a unique centre for the design, production, exhibition and sale of work by leading and emerging Australian designer/makers. Many have gained an international reputation for quality and creativity.

A team of five from JamFactory’s Furniture Studio, under the direction of Creative Director Tom Mirams, created one-off cornerstone pieces and fittings for the library, evoking a connection with timber and in turn with a major local industry.

‘The pieces all have different characteristics according to their purpose and place. In the local history area, for example, the cabinets and table are in blackwood; in contrast, the three youth chairs in the Youth area are in energetic strong colours and contemporary forms’, said Tom.

As well as Tom, the team included Andrew Bartlett, Caren Ellis, Mike Garret, John Hallet and Nick Koshade. Among ‘hero’ items are the customer service desk, local history board table, mobile staff desk, Youth area chairs, and various benches throughout, with materials ranging from forest red gum and spotted gum through to vinyl and carbon and glass fibres.



JAM FACTORY
Contemporary Craft and Design

THE SCULPTOR

Ivo Tadic



‘It was important to use local material in the building. This helps to build a regional identity and culture.’

Ivo Tadic, Artist

The wall not only signifies the importance of the forestry industry to the community of Mount Gambier, but also completes the journey from forest to a limestone sinkhole that comes alive in the children’s library.

A sculptor who works and lives in Mount Gambier, Ivo has undertaken numerous public art works in Mount Gambier limestone, ‘because its conducive to doing large- scale works. The stone is a regional material and for that reason it has special relevance, especially in relation to the type of work I have done, which often relates to the nature and history of the stone itself.’

The 15-metre limestone wall in the library is a major artistic feature, with the stone sourced from a local quarry specifically for its quality, texture and carving ability. The large blocks of stone were cut from a 25-tonne piece of stone quarried especially for the project. The blocks were cut with the grain of the stone running in a specific orientation in order to achieve maximum strength and to best show off the subtle sedimentary patterns in the stone.

‘Working with large blocks in a confined space was challenging and delicate because the precise edges of the blocks could be easily damaged. An electric forklift with a special lifting attachment was used to lift the stones into place.’

(Jon Dixon, Peter Hunt and his assistant Simon were also involved in the building process.)

THE GRAPHICS

Iguana Creative



‘The Mount Gambier library is a great example of how art and architecture can compliment each other to provide a stimulating and inspiring environment.’

Jeff Fulford, Director

Iguana Creative was established in 1997 to service niche markets in the event, exhibit, display and signage industries. We specialise in the projects where these industries overlap and use the experience gained over many years to draw from each of the specialised areas to achieve maximum benefit for our clients.

Our challenge was to take what visually looks great on paper or a computer screen and transform it into practical and functional element that not only satisfies the structural needs but is true to the original vision.





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