



REMEMBERING THE FIRE AT THE OBH IN 2004 A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

developing a collective narrative

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

The story so far.

It has been nineteen years since the fire that engulfed the main building of the Old Bega Hospital Regional Community Cultural Centre (OBH). The fire profoundly impacted the vibrant creative communities that once called the OBH home.

In 2004 the OBH offered spaces where artists, musicians, writers, performers and other community groups worked. The loss of this landmark home brought a profound sense of displacement and grief within the creative community at the time. It left a void that no other individual space could fill. Understandably, displaced individuals and groups moved on and out. Time ticked by. The building remained a ruin. Life continued without the OBH as a Regional Community Cultural Centre. The fire had fractured any sense of a vibrant, connected Regional Community Cultural Centre. Over the years, it became seen as a place with limited rooms to rent. The few remaining outer buildings were let out to groups - the Potters, the Weavers and the Community Radio Station while other spaces were rented out on a daily or short-term basis.

The OBH became overlooked, a hilltop ruin, familiar yet forgotten, a passing curiosity. The ruins remained an absent relic, a reminder of its vibrant past as a Regional Community Cultural Centre

In 2023 the story will change with the restoration.

You can help shape that story.

Share your stories and reflections on the OBH and develop a collective narrative, preserving its cultural significance as a Regional Community Cultural Centre. Rejuvenating our mission to develop a centre for the region's identity, a place where we celebrate our past, nurture our community and dream about our future.

This project aims to collect the stories of those impacted by the Fire at the Old Bega Hospital in 2004. Reflecting on the impact on individuals and groups making the creative landscape in the Bega Valley.

We want to honour the memories and experiences of those impacted by the fire and gain an understanding the fire's effects on the loss of the facility on both individuals and groups within the community. We aim to create an archive of stories using whatever media is

available and in whatever form individuals feel comfortable using. The archive can be used as a base for future projects about the OBH, including publications, multi-media projects and exhibitions.

Thinking forward, how do you think the cultural landscape in the Bega Valley has developed since the fire in 2004? How could the restored OBH Regional Community Cultural Centre complement the existing cultural assets in the region? Can you imagine what a Regional Community Cultural Hub could be?

HELP MAKE THIS STORY



THE FIRE AT THE OBH IN 2004

THE MEMORIES - THE RECOLLECTIONS - THE RETELLING

You can help create a vivid tapestry of stories and shape the way we remember the OBH.

It is our heritage landmark. Share your memories - become part of our creative journey.

Share Your Memories:

Photo and Artefact Collection: Do you or anyone you know have photos, press clippings, or artefacts related to the 2004 fire? These visual mementos can help preserve the past and offer insights into the significance of the OBH in our lives.

Yarning Circle: Start or join a yarnning circle, where we come together to share memories and stories of the OBH. These informal settings will allow us to connect on a personal level and together enrich our understanding of the community's experiences.

One-on-One Chat: If you prefer a more private conversation, we'd love to chat with you about your recollections of the fire. Your perspective is valuable and will contribute to the collective narrative of the OBH's history.

Write a letter to an Old Friend: Just an idea why not take a moment to reflect on the fire and write a letter to an old friend, reminiscing about the times spent at the OBH and the impact of the fire on you and your community offer insights into your personal connections nineteen years after the fire.

Video Testimonial: If you enjoy being in front of the camera, consider creating a video where you talk about your memories of the OBH and the events surrounding the fire. Your video will become a poignant part of the project, capturing the essence of our shared experiences.

We would love to hear from you with any ideas you have about this project and if you would like to help make it happen.

Use these questions to trigger your response. Start a conversation, use it as a questionnaire or make up your own.

1. How did you hear about the fire in the Main Building of the Old Bega Hospital?
2. What was your immediate reaction?
3. What was your association with the Old Bega Hospital?
4. How did that come about?
5. Can describe the situation you found at the site after the fire?
6. What happened in the immediate aftermath of the fire?
7. What was the general response from different individuals and groups?
8. It has now been nineteen years since the fire. Could you think back and describe the various stages you experienced over that time?
9. What do you think the cultural scene in the Bega Valley would be like if the heart of the OBH had not burnt down nineteen years ago?
10. How do you see or what could you imagine the OBH Community Cultural Centre being used for in the future? (other than a great place to have a party)

These questions can be answered in any way you like, use any media, form, or material, you are comfortable with. We want to read, hear or see your stories about the fire.



Gordon Beattie is the instigator for the project on behalf of the Old Bega Hospital Reserve Land Manager.

Do not hesitate to contact Gordon if you have any questions or ideas:
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