For Immediate Release
MEDIA RELEASE

Historic Mirror restored to former glory

Last year the mystery surrounding a historic grand mirror held in the Phee Broadway back stage was solved, leading to it being restored back to its former glory. The refurbished mirror has now been hung above the marble mantle in the staff room on the first floor of the Castlemaine Town Hall.

The room is traditionally used as the place where debutantes have their professional photos taken, ensuring that the mirror will continue to be utilised by future generations of Debutante Ball participants.

The glamorous mirror, which stands 7ft tall and 6ft wide was created in the 1880s. It was part of the Sir John Higgins Bequest to the Castlemaine Art Gallery in 1942 and placed in storage at the Castlemaine Butter Factory (Les Chapman’s storage) for many years.

In 1959 it was displayed with a number of other items in one of Levy’s buildings in Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine. It was then decided by the Art Gallery Committee at the time, that the grand mirror be donated to the Castlemaine Town Hall for future Debutante Balls under the condition that it was not to be sold.

The mirror resided in the Town Hall female dressing rooms until 1984 when the west wing renovations saw the demolition of the dressing rooms and the creation of the new kitchen. The mirror remained at the Town Hall, back stage for a couple of years until finally coming to rest in the Library Hall (which is now the Phee Broadway Theatre).

After being shuffled around over the years, the mirror was left in a poor condition until this recent restoration.

Thanks to information from Beth Sinclair, the Castlemaine Art Gallery & Historical Museum Director from 1956 – 1975 with the assistance of Phee Broadway and the efforts of Council officer, Barry Palmer this piece of Castlemaine history is now valued at over $5,000 and has been retained to be appreciated for generations to come.

Ends….

Media enquiries:
Aileen Walsh
Communications Officer
Mount Alexander Shire Council
Tel: 5471 1810 or 0407 706769
Email: a.walsh@mountalexander.vic.gov.au