

\$2m centre is pride of Moranbah

The \$2 million extensions and upgrading of the Moranbah Community Centre were officially opened by the BHP Chairman of Directors, Sir James Balderstone.

The funding for the improvements was raised as a loan by the Belyando Shire Council, but the loan repayment will not be met by the ratepayers. It will be repaid from the Separate Rate — additional rates paid by BHP-Utah Coal and TDM for town benefits.

The Civic Centre upgrading

was the major Bicentennial Year project, and in keeping with the coal emphasis of the town and the region, the foyer features bronze reliefs of explorer Ludwig Leichhardt, who first discovered coal in the district.

The new extensions have been integrated into the existing community centre building by linking the supper room in the original building and the foyer of the new hall with a courtyard.

The floor area of the new hall is 27 metres by 18 metres and the stage measures 18 metres by 9.5 metres. There is a seating capacity of 600, but this can be increased by opening the rear wall and extending into the foyer. The whole complex has been air conditioned.

About two hundred people, including a party of schoolchildren attended the opening ceremony.

The Moranbah Community Centre served originally as a meeting place and ecumenical church. Anglican, Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches subscribed \$15,000 towards the construction.

The original centre was opened in November 1973 by the then Governor of Queensland, Air Marshall Sir Colin Hannah at a cost of \$260,000.

With the \$2 million extension, the centre will now be able to stage a wide range of entertainments, ranging from rock concerts through to symphony orchestra performances.



Sir James (right), unveils the opening plaque, watched by Belyando Shire Chairman Cr Ted Rolfe.