



FEATURE STORY

Cowra Peace Movement – Building Friendships

By Laura

St Raphael's Catholic School, Cowra, NSW, Australia

The Cowra Civic Square now proudly hosts the peace bell, a replica of the original one that hangs in the United Nations Building in New York. It was given to Cowra due to local efforts to promote peace and international understanding. This holds great significance because it is the only peace bell in Australia.

The idea behind this bell is to keep people informed of the horrors of war and to promote peace throughout the world as well as acting as a constant reminder of the continual need for people to re-dedicate themselves to working for peace.



Cowra Peace Bell located outside Cowra Civic Centre (Cowra Tourism, 2018)

In addition to the bell the pavilion is decorated with pottery tiles to reflect the community's commitment to the World Peace Association, a non-profit organisation that raises money for the promotion of peace throughout the wider community. It works to inform people that in order to achieve world peace we must first achieve peace within our community. This is something often overlooked by many people and so the work of the World Peace Organisation is vital to allowing people to comprehend this simple fact.

The presence of the peace bell in Cowra reflects the impact of World War II on the small rural town, highlighting the history of the POW camp, the military training camp and changes to the town as a result of the war. The people of Cowra value a focus on a peaceful future and maintaining positive relationships with all countries.