

AUSTRALIAN MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION INC.

NEWSLETTER No. 1 - 1996

Issue 4

Editorial :

As noted below, we are fast approaching the date of our second conference. The growth of our organisation has to date been satisfactory but to ensure that the momentum is maintained it will be vital for members to support the event. The committee therefore appeals to members either to submit papers for consideration, or, to register for the conference so as to support the efforts of the AMHA in bringing mining history into the prominence that it deserves. The Australian History Association's bi-ennial conference is without doubt the major event of its kind in Australia and our acceptance as part of the proceedings can enhance our profile as a respectable and serious specialist body if we are properly represented. The quality of mining papers at the James Cook conference in 1995 leaves us in no doubt that this can be done and we hope that, as in 1995, we receive your full support.

Mining Calendar

Ross Mainwaring has written to recommend an excellent illustrated Calendar which is on the market and produced by one of members, Ross Thomas. Called *The Richard Daintree Mine Photograph Collection 1996*. The Calendar contains some high quality 19th century photographs and costs \$20. For copies please contact: Mr. Ross Thomas, Mines Inspector, Department of Minerals & Energy, P.O. Box 704, Charters Towers, Queensland 4820.

Roger Burt's World Wide Web Page

Note a change in the address of the mining pages, to:

<http://www.ex.ac.uk/~RBurt/MinHistNet/>

All our members are now listed on the mining memberships page, but Roger would like to put a little meat on the bones by adding people's main areas of interest. A space will be allocated in the 1997 membership form for such detail, but in the meanwhile if you'd like to inform me I will see that the information is passed immediately on to Roger.

Incidentally, if you have any mining related functions you wish to advertise on the mining page then either contact Roger directly at the above address, or send on to me for re-directing - though a late PS - Roger is currently on a 3 month trip to China, Japan and

the USA & while hoping to receive e.mail information on his laptop which can in turn be transmitted to Exeter, there are no guarantees!

Books & Book Sales

a) My apologies to Robert Fox who asked me a few months ago to advertise his book mail order business. Unfortunately it got lost in filing system only to magically reappear as I was typing up this page. Robert sent me a copy of his current list which is definitely worth obtaining if you are interested in obtaining mining history material. Please send \$1 to cover airmail postage to:

Robert L. Fox, Mining History Books, 1235 N. Westfield Street, Oshkosh WI 54901, USA.

b) Save your pennies! Diane Menghetti's long awaited book on Blair Athol is to be launched on 9th March. Title is *Blair Athol: The Life and Death of a Town*. Published by Blair Athol Coal Project (subsidiary of CRA), the expected price is about \$25. The outlet for sales is currently uncertain, but if deseparate for a copy, contact, Bill Harrison, 36 Francis Street, Clermont 4721. tel. 079-832979.

Committee Members

We are pleased to report that our appeal for a representative from Tasmania has been answered. Welcome to Greg Dickens who is Tenement Management Officer in the Industry Safety & Mines section of the Tasmania Development & Resources department. Greg's address : Greg Dickens, Tenement Management Officer, 30 Gordons Hill Road, Rosny Park, Tasmania 7018. tel. (002) 338374. Fax (002) 338338.

Forthcoming Conferences, etc.

1996 AMHA Conference: This is your chance to shine, as the 2nd Mining History Conference has now been confirmed to take place under the auspices of the Australian Historical Association between **14th - 17th July**, at Melbourne University. Papers are **urgently** called for. If interested in presenting a paper please forward a synopsis not exceeding 100 words to me by **14th April**. Details of registration for the conference are yet to be finalised but should be available shortly. Registration forms can be requested from myself at the University of Western Australia, or, from Dr. David Goodman, Department of History, Melbourne University, Parkville, Victoria 3052.

In conjunction with the conference but depending on numbers showing interest, our Victorian representative, Ray Supple, has kindly volunteered to organise a tour of mining sites. More news on this subject in the next newsletter.

The occasion of the conference will also mark our 2nd Annual General Meeting. Please consider any motions that you might have for discussion at the event and forward them to

me if you want them listed on the agenda (a formal notice will be sent out and this is merely a forewarning).

Australian Medical History Society 1997

Member, Professor Donald Simpson has written to inform that mining history will be a theme of the 1997 meeting of the AMHS. If anyone has an interest in giving a paper on aspects of mining associated with matters medical then Donald who is Secretary of the Society, would, I am sure, be glad to provide you with further details. Please contact him at the following address:

Prof. Donald Simpson, NH & MRC Road Accident Research Unit, The University of Adelaide, GPO Box 498, Adelaide, South Australia 5001. tel. (08) 3035997. E.mail: unit@raru.adelaide.edu.au - or, alternatively look out for updates in our newsletter.

Information Required

1) Does anyone have any information on, or references to Norman Gilbert McConachy (1938 - 1976), a miner based at Mt. Isa? If so, Diane Menghetti would be pleased to hear from you. Contact : Dr. Diane Menghetti, Department of History & Politics, James Cook University, Qld 4811. tel. 077-814244. E.mail: Diane.Menghetti @jcu.edu.au

2) Prof. Donald Simpson, mentioned above in the Forthcoming Conferences section, is currently interested, as a neurosurgeon, a member of the Road Accident Research Unit and as a mining historian, in obtaining any information on head injuries in the mining industry. In relation to this, he has a special interest in information on the early use of hard hats by Cornish and other miners. If you happen to know of any sources, or have any information which you think might prove useful, then please contact him at the previously mentioned address.:

Local News

Northern Territory:

From our Northern Correspondent comes the news that David Carment of the Northern Territory University is in the final stages of editing the third volume of the *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography: Volume Three* which is to be published later this year by NTU Press. The volume contains articles on many of the characters involved in Northern Territory mining.

It might be of interest to some of our members that in 1995, Leith Barter produced a thesis as part of his Graduate Diploma of Arts at the Northern Territory University, entitled 'The First Uranium Boom in the Northern Territory, 1949 - 1964'. This was the period when Australia and the world was convinced that uranium was the answer to all our power needs and problems, so the discoveries at Rum Jungle and the South Alligator River which Leith describes were greeted with a great deal of excitement by people in all

walks of life. I am told that Leith provides a most interesting and valuable analysis of the subject and proceedings.

The two History curators at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Dr. Mick Dewar and Sue Harlow, are currently working on a major travelling exhibition, called 'Sweet and Sour'. This deals with the Chinese in the Northern Territory and devotes some attention to their important role and contribution in the mining sphere. The exhibition gets off the ground on 18th October.

Queensland:

Our Queensland contact writes that several mining historians contributed State mining histories to the "History of Mining in Australia" project of the Australian National Trusts which was undertaken by Donovan & Associates in 1994 - 95. Ruth Kerr wrote the Queensland overview.

Our contact also informs that there are opportunities for historians outside the universities - in the Public Service, for example, where Ruth Kerr has been promoted from a Senior Historian position in the Native Title Group in the Crown Law Department of Justice and Attorney General to an AO7 position of Senior Project Officer (Legislation and Land Use), in the Development Division of the Department of Mines and Energy. Congratulations to Ruth on this promotion.

While on the Kerr family, we must not forget husband John who is delving into the intricacies and mysteries of the Image DB/Text Works database with a view of converting his and Ruth's extensive Queensland mining notes into a convenient text data base. We look forward to its completion and I'm sure that it will prove extremely valuable to researchers when completed.

Gentle Reminder

Have you remembered to renew your membership for the current year?* Also, are you doing your bit to publicise the Association? We don't expect proselytising campaigns, but just a word in a few ears that there is an organisation called the Australian Mining History Association will likely cause an explosion in our membership. Please spread the Good Word! Just in case you have lost your membership application form, another is enclosed. If you've already joined then please pass it on to someone who might be interested in becoming a member.

*Just in case you can't remember whether you are financial or not, I have taken the liberty of marking the top right hand corner of the first page of this newsletter with a small x for those who haven't paid the current year's membership fee.

Australian Mining History Association Inc.



All correspondence to:

Mel Davies,
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NEWSLETTER No. 2 JUNE, 1996

Issue 5

Editorial

The second annual Conference, our major event of the year, will be upon us before we are able to correctly pronounce Llanfairpwllgwyngychgogerychwyndrobwilllantysiliogogoch (as a loquacious Welshman I might have a slight advantage in this department!). As previously informed, we have been allocated a number of sessions at the Australian Historical Association Conference to be held at Melbourne University between Sunday 14th and Thursday 18th July and we will be presenting thirteen 30 minute papers on various facets of mining history which we hope will prove as interesting as the titles suggest. For those worried by the auspicious number 'thirteen' we have also been allocated an additional slot for the Annual General Meeting which takes us out of the realm of dark shadows into a more comforting 'fourteen'. This is the only opportunity when members are likely to meet in any number and our President, Patrick Bertola, and yours truly, hope to be able to say a cheery hello to a large number of you at that venue.

Hopefully, as the Conference will attract hundreds of historians from all fields, we will be able to stimulate even further interest in mining history in general and

in the AMHA in particular. But to add even more spice to the occasion, Ray Supple has kindly made arrangements for up to 40 people to visit the Castlemaine-Maldon area where our distinguished member David Bannear will lead a tour around various heritage goldmining sites. In this, I believe, we will be acting as guinea pigs for David's "The Diggings Heritage Project" on which he has been working for a while. So get on your hard hats, polish those boots and come prepared for a fascinating day at sites which in the summer of 1851-52 sparked Australia's first gold rush and one of the major migrations of the 19th century. Details of the Conference, the AGM and the tour will be found below.

Contacts and Developments

Congratulations to member Gordon Grimwade of Gordon Grimwade & Associates (Heritage Consultants) for jointly winning with their client Murchison United NL, the prestigious National Trust of Queensland, John Herbert Award for their sensitive heritage plan for the Mt. Cuthbert mine and smelting site, north west of Cloncurry. The Mt. Cuthbert Mine was discovered in the late 19th century and opened its first copper smelter in 1917. By the time it closed some three years later, the smelter had treated 123,093 tons of ore valued at £719,834.

Congratulations also to another Queensland member, Adrienne Hicks of Stannary Mining Pty. Ltd., who through hard work (and hopefully some Heritage grants) is busy restoring the Tyrconnell and the General Grant mines on the Hodgkinson gold field near Dimbulah. It is hoped to get much of the plant including a ten head stamp battery, head frame and winding gear back into working order and to open up the 100 year old sites to boost the tourism industry in north Queensland. The discovery of gold on the Hodgkinson field in the late 1800s was the prime reason for the development of Cairns, Port Douglas and other Far Northern centres. Adrienne can be contacted at 321 Lake Street, Cairns, Qld. 4870. A photo of Adrienne alongside the wheel that was part of a steam compressor which operated jack-hammers at the Tyrconnell Mine between from 1870-1940, can be viewed on the back page.

I'm glad to report that we have contact through Carol Bacon, Mineral Resources, Tasmania, with the Geological Society of Australia, Inc. Carol who edits their 'Earth Sciences History Group' Newsletter, has suggested that there might be some advantages in coming together with our body to organise conferences. What do you think of the idea? It's certainly something worth keeping in mind and perhaps we can discuss this along with other suggestions at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Thanks to Robert Spude, we have received past and current copies of the Mining History Association (USA) Newsletter and also copies of their excellent *Mining History Journal*. To join that organisation drop a line to Mining History Association, PO Box 150300, Denver, CO 80215, USA and enclose \$US 25. For that you'll receive a quarterly

newsletter and an illustrated Annual Journal containing articles of interest to suit most tastes.

Books and Articles

Just received, a note from Silvia Pettem, The Book Lode, 721 Francis Street, Longmont, CO 80501, USA, to say that Jeremy Mouat's book *Roaring Days, Rossland's Mines and the History of British Columbia*, UBC Press, 1995, 236p, illustrated, hardback, is available from her at a cost of \$US 39.95 plus postage.

Incidentally Jeremy has also just had published a very interesting article on the flotation process in Australia. Titled "The development of the flotation process: technological change and the genesis of modern mining, 1898-1911", the article can be found in the *Australian Economic History Review*, vol. XXVI, No. 1, March, 1996. That journal has published a number of mining articles in recent editions including one on the Blair Athol coalfield by Diane Menghetti.

Have also received the latest catalogue from Miners Quest, West 3015 Weile, Spokane, WA 99208, USA, in which a number of items of Australian origin are itemised. These include a number of titles by Geoffrey Blainey, including one copy of *The Rise of Broken Hill* signed by Sir Maurice Mawby, Chairman Conzinc Riotinto of Australia; Australian Institute of Mining & Metallurgy, 1961, *Papers Presented to the AIMM Conference at Mount Isa, 1960* (all about Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. operations); some works on Queensland geology; and some out of print works such as Ion L. Idreiss's, *The Silver City*, 1973. Contact me if you would like fuller details.

Just published is a book that complements Geoffrey Blainey's *Mines in the Spinifex* and deals with early technical work at the Mount Isa mine. It links the methods of the 19th century with the more complex and rigorous system of mining development that applies today. Details as follows: Don Berkman, *Making the Mount Isa Mine, 1923-1933* (The Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy). To order ring the Institute at (03) 9662 3166, or fax (03) 9662 3662

Forthcoming Conferences/ Meetings/

South Australia: News from Bernie O'Neil to say that Dr David Palmer, will give a seminar on "The Broken Hill Miners in Interwar Period: Australian "Legend" or Australian "Exception"? The presentation takes place at the School of Cultural Studies, Flinders University of South Australia, on Friday 2 August, between 1.00 - 2.00 p.m. in Room 2.23, Law & Commerce Building. Contact Karen Gordon (08) 201-3200 for further details.

Western Australia : "Chasing the Weight". Wendy Carter, Secretary of the Eastern Goldfields Historical Society announces that the Society will be organising a weekend of activities at Boulder between 14th - 16th June proceeds of which will go towards the establishment of the Australian Prospectors & Miners Hall of Fame. The events coincide

with the 50th anniversary of the Society and opening of the old Boulder Power Station. Wendy promises a weekend to remember. Official events are listed as:

Friday 14th June, 7.30 p.m. - Opening of 'Exhibition of Art & Photography on Prospecting & Mining' at the Boulder Town Hall.

Saturday 15th June, 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. : "Chasing the Weight" concert at the Boulder Town Hall with Bob Rummery & Phil Gray, with songs, poetry & prose of the early mining days.

Saturday - from 7.30 p.m. - Mining Films from around Australia, hosted by the Unreel Film Club at the Apex Dandies Hall, opposite the Cornwall Hotel.

Sunday 16th June, 10.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. - The West Australian Gold Panning Championships.

For further details contact Wendy Carter (Home) 090-932736, or message bank/mobile 015-387-587

Victorian AMHA Conference

Enclosed most of you (afraid I'm a few short) will find a registration form for the AMHA conference in which the AMHA is participating. We don't actually appear in the print as the decision to participate was taken too late to meet the publication deadline. However, we will be heavily involved and we should have our name prominently displayed in the final programme. The Mining History sessions will be held on Monday 15th, Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th July. Presentations will be parcelled into sessions as follows:

2 paper session:

Anne & Robin Bailey, Boom and Bust in a Victorian 1860s Gold Mining Town.

Barry McGowan, A Regional Study of Mining Communities in NSW.

3 paper session:

Ruth Kerr, When Zinc was a problem: the Mount Garnet Mineral Freehold.

Ross Mainwaring, American & Australian Oil Shale Industries 1862 - 1952: Connections and Contrasts.

Graydon Henning, The "Discovery" of Coal in South Australia.

2 paper session

David Bannear, Coarse & Waterworn: Shallow Alluvial Gold Mining in Victoria, 1851 - 1870s.

Michael MacLellan Tracey, 'No Water - No Gold'. Hydrological Technology in nineteenth century gold mining. An archaeological examination.

3 paper session

Raymond Supple The Inventory and Assessment of Victoria's Historic Mining Sites.

Jennifer Lambert Tracey, 'Gold on the Adelong!' : An Historical Archaeological Landscape Study of the Adelong Goldfield 1853 - 1920.

Christopher Carter, Calico Tents, Bark Huts and Shanty Towns - Living in a Mining Field

3 paper session

Ralph W. Birrell, Gold and the Mining Law in Australia - Adoption & Adaptation.

Mel Davies, Claude Albo de Bernales, 'A gentlemanly Capitalist' - the Caine/Hopkins Thesis Revisited.

Marika Vicziany, Ecological Perspectives on the Development of the Piparwar Coal Mine in Bihar, India.

Conference Tour

As mentioned in the editorial, David Bannear has invited us to taste his 'Diggings Heritage Project' in the Castelmaine - Maldon area. We travel by coach from Melbourne University, leaving from opposite the underground carpark, near Gate 10, off Grattin Street, at **8.30 am on Sunday 14th July**. Cost will be between \$20 & \$25 for the coach trip. Meals will be additional. Remember, there are only 40 places and the tour will be on a first-in first-accepted basis, and it will be advertised on the net. So don't delay and contact Ray Supple to make your booking. Address: 55 Victoria Road, Malvern, Vic 3144. tel. (03) 95718348 (H), or e. mail: R.Supple@dce.vic.gov.au

Logo

At last we might soon have our own logo, thanks to Michael MacLellan Tracey who has promised to rustle up a suitable design (or at least his good wife Jennifer promised on his behalf!). Michael should also be welcomed as our latest recruit to the committee as he has kindly taken on the duty as our ACT representative. Among his many accomplishments Michael has a record as a successful international designer having among other things been commissioned by the Royal Australian Mint to design various coins including the famed Australian Koala, and by the Australian Bicentenary Authority to design the 1988

Bicentennial fifty cent coin. So I think we can trust him to come up with a winner of a design for our logo.

Information Wanted

Two of our members from Victoria have a manuscript on Victorian mountain goldmines which they wish to have published. Unfortunately, publishers already approached are only prepared to look at circulation in the thousands and interstate publishers are only interested in local products. So if anyone in Victoria has any suggestions as to a likely publisher, please inform me so that I can pass on the information. Indeed, coming to think of it, perhaps those of you from other States who have local publishers might also like to pass on that information for our records.

Obituary

Members will be sorry to hear that Ian Auhl of Adelaide passed away on 22nd March, aged 81 years. Ian was a keen promoter and supporter of heritage and preservation developments at Burra* and was renowned for his work as an historian on the Burra Burra Mines and some South Australian townships. As a person who other than Ian has probably examined the records of the South Australian Mining Association more closely than most. I cannot do less than say that his Magnus Opus, *The Story of the 'Monster Mine'*** was a scholarly work which has not received the publicity which it deserves for both its breadth and attention to detail. The book dealt with the anatomy and social relationships within the mines, the major township of Koorunga and satellite townships. His other works on mining include (with Denis Marfleet), *Australia's Earliest Mining Era: South Australia 1841-1851* (with paintings by S.T. Gill), and *Burra Sketchbook*..

Ian had a very close attachment to Burra as he was born there in 1914 and became headmaster of the local primary school in 1964. He also had mining in his blood as two of his great-grandparents worked at the Burra mines in the 1860s. One of those hailed from the Harz Mountains in Germany which was famed for its copper mines, and the other was a mine mechanic who came from Tavistock, Devon. Ian was of great help to aspiring historians and was always prepared to give advice and allow access to his records. Philip Payton whom many of you will know of as author of works on the Cornish in Australia is but one who has expressed his indebtedness to Ian for his co-operation in that respect. Ian will be missed but his works will live on to perpetuate his memory. Our sympathy go out to Ian's wife and family.

* The Burra Charter is the code of practice for cultural heritage site management in Australia adopted by Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) and it was at Burra that members of ICOMOS adopted the charter in 1979. So we might assume that Ian was, in part, instrumental in development of this model which bears the imprimatur of the standard of excellence adopted by conservation and heritage groups in this country.

***Ian Auhl, The Story of the 'Monster Mine': The Burra Mine and its Townships 1845-1877 (Burra Burra, 1986).*

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The second Annual general Meeting of the AHA will be held at Melbourne University, Victoria on Wednesday 17 July, 1996, commencing at 11.00 am. Exact venue details will be circulated closer to that date.

As per the Constitution, items 11.2 and 11.3, any suggested alterations to the Constitution must be moved and seconded and forwarded to reach the Secretary at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. It would be appreciated if items for general discussion could also be forwarded for inclusion on the agenda.

Members are invited to write to the Secretary to express their interest in standing for any position on the Executive Committee and **current members are asked to confirm** whether they are prepared to **stand for re-election**. Please note that only paid up members may nominate or be nominated.

Current members elected at the 1995 AGM, or since co-opted are:

President : Patrick Bertola (WA)

Secretary : Mel Davies (WA)

Treasurer : Lenore Layman (WA)

Committee Members:

ACT Michael MacLellan Tracey

NSW Ross Mainwaring

NT David Carment, Peter Forrest

Qld Ruth Kerr, Diane Menghetti,

Jan Wegner

SA Peter Bell, Bernie O'Neil

Tas Greg Dickens

Vic Ray Supple, James Whitehead

WA Charlie Fox

Mel Davies, Secretary AMHA,

Department of Economics, University of Western Australia,

Nedlands 6009, WA

tel. (09) 295-3265. Fax - (09) 380-1016. Email: mdavies@ecel.uwa.edu.au

Australian Mining History Association Inc.



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NEWSLETTER No. 3 SEPTEMBER, **1996**

Issue 6

Editorial

The July Melbourne conference proved a great success if comments from those who attended are a true reflection of thoughts on the event. There was a very respectable turn out to the various sessions and all proved interesting and stimulating. Obvious to everyone were the diverse ways in which mining history can be interpreted, and perhaps one of the benefits from mixing archaeologists, social and economic mining historians and people with practical experience in the field can be seen in the cross-fertilisation of ideas that took place. The enthusiasm of those who attended was reflected at the AGM when it was unanimously agreed that we should repeat the exercise in 1997 by holding a conference at Newcastle, NSW. As with the 1995 conference, this will be held in conjunction with the regional Australian Historical Association's event. The decision to again join with a larger organisation rather than to conduct an event on our own was based on two premises: a) the cost factor, with the cost of hiring venues being a major consideration as

witnessed by the horrendous registration fees charged by some organisations these days to cover their costs;

b) the fact that many of our members also have interests that lie outside mining history that can be satisfied in a wider conference milieu. Performing in the wider forum gives us the opportunity not only to attract new members but through exposure, to raise our status. In the practical sense too, with a membership of 70 or so at the moment, we are not yet large enough to go off on our own. Down the road a few years when we have perhaps trebled our membership then we might be sufficiently confident to do something on our own. But for the moment, and after the experience of two very successful conferences, we have decided to continue with the formula of fitting in with a larger organising body.

However, as an indication that we are not prepared to stand still, it was decided that we should float a journal. In the first place it has been decided to publish papers presented at the

conference. There are still some financing and publishing problems to be resolved but hopefully before the end of the year the result will appear in your mailbox. Ruth Kerr and Michael Tracey, as members of an editorial board, have been given the task of getting things moving and ensuring that papers are of respectable standard so that we have a quality product. For those who might care to gear up for a submission, the only guideline to date is that articles should not exceed 5,000 words.

Further matters arising from the AGM, such as election of officers will be detailed below.

Logo

Thanks to the skills and artistic talent of Michael Turner we have our own logo at last. Unfortunately a slight technical hitch with the copy has meant that the exposure of same will have to be left to the next newsletter. However, we can assure you all that everyone at the AGM approved of the design wholeheartedly.

Election of Officers

Most of the old and a few new names appear among our list of officers for 1996/97. As you might like to contact your local representative, full details are provided herewith:

President: Dr. Patrick Bertola, School of Social Sciences, Curtin University, GPO Box U 1987, Perth, WA 6001. tel. (09)3517195, Fax 09-3513166.

e.mail - bertola@spectrum.curtin.edu.au

Treasurer: Dr. Lenore Layman, School of Social Sciences, Murdoch University, Murdoch, WA 6150, tel. 09- 3602394.

e.mail Layman@central.murdoch.edu.au

Secretary: Mr. Mel Davies, Economics Dept., Univ. of WA, Nedlands 6009, WA.

e.mail - mdavies@ecel.uwa.edu.au

Committee

Dr. Peter Bell, 17 Sherwood terrace, Beaumont, SA 5066, 08-3382460
e. mail - pbell@mail.adelaide.on.net

Assoc. Prof. David Carment, PO Box 41813, Causarina, NT 0811, tel. 089-466744.

e.mail: dcarment@banks.ntu.edu.au

Dr. Charles Fox, Department of History, Univ. of W.A., Nedlands, WA 6009, tel. 09-3802175

Dr. Ruth Kerr, 105 Highland Terrace, St. Lucia, Qld 4812, tel. 07-8709588.

e.mail - jkerr@iccu6.ipswich.gil.com.au

Mr. Ross Mainwaring, 5 Sheather Avenue, St. Ives, NSW 2075, tel. 02-4492738

Dr. Diane Menghetti, Dept. of History & Politics, James Cook Univ, Townsville, Qld 4811, tel. 077-814244

e.mail: Diane.Menghetti@jcu.edu.au

Mr. Barry McGowan, 28 Haines Street, Curtin, ACT 2605, tel. 06-2816786

Mr. Bernie O'Neil, 36 Yallack Street, Windsor Gardens, SA 5087, tel. 08-2610077

Mr. Ray Supple, 55 Victoria Road, Malvern, Vic 3144, tel. 039-5718348 e.mail

- r.supple@dce.vic.gov.au

Mr Michael Tracey, Dept. of Archaeology & Anthropology, ANU, Canberra, ACT 0200.

e. mail - Michael.tracey@ANU.edu.au

Dr. Jan Wegner, James Cook University (Cairns Campus), PO Box 6811, tel. 070-421100

Mr. James Whitehead, Australian Institute of Mining & Metallurgy,

31 Pelham Street, Carlton, Vic 3052,

tel. 03-6623166

Mr. Graham Wilson, History Dept, Univ of New England, Armidale, NSW 2351.

tel. 067-727586

Conference Mining Tour

Thanks to Ray Supple and David Bannear and with the help of Bill Moser, for a very successful visit to the Victorian goldfields, bringing to life those magic names such as Forest Creek and Castlemaine which most of us attending the tour had previously only seen in books and journal articles. We were all impressed with David Bannear's knowledge and enthusiasm and those of us usually immersed in matters pertaining to capital and mining laws were exposed to the fascinating arena of industrial archaeology and preservation and greater insight into what really went on in the mining sphere.

Forthcoming Conferences & Other Events

Klondike Rush On Again!

The University of Edinburgh will host an international conference on the Klondike Gold Rush between 2 - 4 May 1997. Proposals of papers are invited from all disciplinary backgrounds on the theme of the Klondike Gold Rush. Presentations on topics which relate broadly to the theme are also strongly encouraged: for instance, the Canadian North in literature and in history, aboriginal peoples in the North, the challenges of "boom and bust" economies, comparative studies of other Gold Rushes, etc..

Proposals in English or French should be submitted by Monday 4 November 1996 (on a single sheet of paper, accompanied by a one-page curriculum vitae) to: KLONDIKE, Centre of Canadian Studies, 21 George Square, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH8 9LD.

Klondike Again

From the US Mining History Association Newsletter we learn that the centennial of the Klondike is upon us, as George Carmack hit paydirt on 17 August, 1896. In conjunction with 'Festival Fairbanks' held in commemoration of the Alaska/Yukon Gold Rush, there will be an international meeting on the history of mining. This will be held between 9-14 September 1997 at Fairbanks, Alaska. Papers are called for on aspects of the gold rush and legacy - impacts of mining on literature, politics, and art; archaeology of mining; history of technology; and the modern industry and its future. Persons interested in serving on panels or giving formal presentations should send a 300 word abstract along with brief personal details, including a short C.V. to: Dr.

William R. Wood, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, P.O. Box 74086, Fairbanks, AK 99707.

For a packet of material about the Festival, Fairbanks and other events and celebrations in the Far North, write to Alaska Gold Rush Centennial, Division of Tourism, P.O. Box 110801, Juneau, AK 99811-0806.

Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology

The above organisation will be holding its conference at the ANU, in early November. The theme of the conference will be '*Musing amidst the Ruins*', and the organisers are calling for papers. Contact Michael Tracey, The Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, The Faculties, ANU, Canberra, ACT 0200.

Mining Museums

Has anyone out there a list of Australian Mining Museums, heritage sites, conducted mining tours, etc.? If so would you mind forwarding for use on the world mining web site which Roger Burt has installed. Incidentally, we are hoping to start our own Home page in the near future. As a reminder, the mining history web site is currently <http://www.ex.ac.uk/~RBurt/MinHistNet/>

Publications

David Carment reports:

David Hugo's thesis on 'Mica Mining at Harts Range, Central Australia, 1880s-1960: A Study of Ethnicity and the Impact of Isolation' has been accepted for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy degree at the Northern Territory University. Dr Hugo is Director of Research and Executive Officer at the Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs.

The Harts Range is about two hundred kilometres north-east of Alice Springs. The area was known to be rich in

minerals from the time of the first explorers. From the 1880s until the close of the industry in 1960, almost all Australian mica came from this area. Most miners were Italians without a mining background and who began arriving at Harts Range in the years following the First World War. During this period they were sponsored by their countrymen already in Central Australia. After 1945 increased numbers came to the mining field, escaping post-war Italy and encouraged by Australia's immigration policies. Many brought their families with them. The thesis contends, on the basis of extensive interviews, that many Italian women worked alongside men at Harts Range and they played a pivotal role there.

The thesis also argues that the relationship between the miners and local Aboriginal groups was atypical in the history of Central Australia. The miners used both Aboriginal knowledge and labour.

Mining activity and settlement was concentrated in the Central Harts Range District. The thesis includes detailed surveys, including photographs and site plans, of the remaining physical evidence of mining there. Such evidence is distinctive for the ways it reveals the responses of miners to extreme isolation and economic deprivation.

The thesis concludes that mica mining at Harts Range sustained an interest in Central Australia from the early years of this century until 1960. Developments in transport services, such as the Plenty Highway, and the present-day Italian community in Alice Springs are a direct result of this activity.

Gold! Gold! Gold!

Not the auriferous kind but that associated with the recent Atlanta Olympics, for one of our members has just excelled for the third time in the 'Balzano Barrow Race' held at Kanowna, WA. Wendy Carter triumphed in the '1893' division - i.e., the division which pushes authentic long wooden handled/metal wheeled barrows while wearing 1893 clothing, and this year she took out the Ladies Division. Her greatest triumph in face of adversity occurred in 1994 when she drove hundreds of miles to the event with a broken arm and then went on to win the race. The races celebrate the activities during the Kalgoorlie goldrush days in the 1890s of Kanowna's Barrowman, Italian, James Balzano, who's prowess with the barrow was legendary. On one occasion it is recorded, he barrowed his contraption made partly out of whisky cases, a distance of 400 km from Kanowna to Esperance just to view the sea, and then barrowed back again. Miners these days aren't what they used to be are they!

For anyone interested in competing in this prestigious event and who wants to join in the accompanying fun, there will be a repeat in 1997. Drop me a line if you'd like an entry form (do they have qualifying times?). Funds generated at the event go to the State Emergency Service and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. For those who are intrigued with Bolzano's activities, you can read more about him in the book edited from his diaries, by George Compton & Ron Manners, entitled, *Kanowna's Barrowman - James Balzano - The Early History of Kalgoorlie's Goldrushes*

1997 AMHA Conference

Hot off the press is that the conference is definitely on. Organiser is Dr. Nancy Cushing of Newcastle University who after joining in the Mining Tour which was held at the recent conference is more than happy to accommodate us for the event. It is also hoped to organise a mining tour during the visit and the arrangements for that are in the hands of Ross Mainwaring and Graham Wilson. More details will possibly be available in the next newsletter.

Book Review

Ian Phimister, *Wangikolia. Coal, Capital and Labour in Colonial Zimbabwe 1894-1954*. (Baobab Books, Harare, 1994). ISBN 0-908311-69-9 ISBN 1 86814279 5 (South Africa)

Back in 1989, I remember at the Bochum International Mining History Conference listening enthralled but horrified as Ian Phimister recounted the story of the appalling working and safety conditions endured by black miners in many South African Mines. That feeling of almost disbelief in man's inhumanity to man came back to me in the story that Ian records on the history of the 'Wankie' Colliery. The account examines the development of the mine from its early days when it fell under control of the London based British South Africa Company (BSA Co.) directed by Sir Edmund Davis, and up to 1954 after it had been taken over by the South African owned Anglo American Corporation of South Africa.

When Margaret Thatcher talked of the 'evil face of capitalism' she could well with justification, have used Wankie as her model, for in the drive for profits the mineowners were prepared to sacrifice the health and even lives of black workers to attain their goals. In their quest the owners were

undoubtedly in league with the local government (the British South Africa Company up to 1923 and the settler government of Southern Rhodesia thereafter) authorities whose sympathetic attitude to the overseas capitalists went as far as to provide a vast area of coal bearing land and monopoly rights to the Wankie owners. Surprisingly, even in the late 1940s when the British based Powell Duffryn Corporation took over control, the local government was prepared to give in to outrageous demands in order to keep the owners happy while penalising the local economy through agreeing to abnormally high monopolistic coal prices, despite disquiet among local customers.

The story also reveals the manipulation that took place with respect to share issues in order to periodically raise capital but also to try to hoodwink the public into believing that returns to capital were minimal. Ironically, in the 1940s that strategy backfired when the publicised minimal dividend payments record was seen as a barrier to the attraction of investment at a time when the company was desperate for new development capital.

It is, however, the strategy of dealing with black labour that really makes this story stand out from other histories of mining. Rather than capitalise the mine to raise production and profits, time and time again the owners adopted the strategy of forcing down costs through squeezing labour. When labour was in short supply the pressures to cut costs were even greater. A common strategy was to cut rations and when this led to scurvy and debility the miners were accused of malingering and beaten with the sjambok. That this was not merely the action of local management is witnessed, for example, by support of

Wilson Fox, London manager of the BSA who in 1906 stated in writing that flogging was essential to “get the coals out”.

Worker resistance to such treatment was to run away, though this was often difficult because of careful policing at the colliery compound and by the local authorities who were sympathetic to the owners cause.

Safety was another casualty of the policy and in 1952 under Powell Duffryn, conditions deteriorated to the point where over 34 per cent of all workers employed (and much higher if only underground workers are counted) were accident victims. That particular problem was associated with lack of training for new short contract workers, a dearth of experienced miners who left the mine when alternative, better paying and more attractive employments appeared, and because having exhausted its capital the company cut down on maintenance and lighting in the mines.

It was at this juncture and when productivity had plummeted that Anglo American took control, though quite amazingly considering previous conditions, this was accompanied by a deterioration of welfare for the black workers who up to that time had been relatively docile in their protest over conditions. While concentrating on mechanising a new No. 3 shaft and colliery, No's 1 and 2 were worked more intensively with labour. To raise productivity to Transvaal levels, mine supervision was tightened, with hardened and brutal white miners being brought in to take charge. Even black ‘boss boys’ were now overseered into more intensive labour. The straw that broke the camel’s back was the introduction of new tubs that carried more coal but for which miners were paid less to fill. On 20th November

1953 the miners came out on strike but with government support the management forced the miners to capitulate in early December. A further tightening of working conditions and cutting of bonuses caused the miners to come out *en masse*, despite strikes being illegal under the Masters & Servants Ordinance. Highlighted were not only pay issues but also poor safety and hygiene conditions underground, appalling living conditions, lack of welfare provisions and the need to have full payment in cash instead of rations. The total support, not only from miners but from shop assistants and domestic workers took the management by surprise. Forced back to work through hunger and deployment of the defence forces and police, the workers this time were able to gain concessions through a go-slow campaign and good fortune associated with geological problems at No. 2 colliery which reduced production at a time of increasing demand. On this occasion too, a government commission tended to be generally sympathetic to the miners’ cause and placed some pressure on Anglo American to improve conditions and wages. The story of later proceedings unfortunately stops at this juncture for the author was denied access to records by Anglo American. The sequel of a shameful episode of mining history is still therefore to be written.

What is perhaps surprising in this history is the tardy approach to mechanisation, especially when considered that all companies that became involved in the Wankie mines were at the forefront of technology in other of their international mining activities. Cheap labour is not a good enough explanation when noted that there were periods of labour shortage and anxiety by the owners to increase production. However, perhaps cheap

labour and the often domineering relationship between imperial capital and the compliant if sometimes ambivalent local authorities who invariably bent to their demands when it came to mining and labour relations is sufficient explanation.

For those who are interested in financial capital and government, this is a book well worth having on the shelf. It is well researched and written, and as a bonus there is a panoramic view of Wankie Colliery at the end of the book fit to grace any mining enthusiast's wall.

Mel Davies, Univ. of Western Australia

Memory Lane

Reproduced below is a photograph taken at the Victorian mining tour. The motley crew depicted were standing near the site of the Garfield Wheel. Thanks to Bill Moser for his efforts as guide and photographer.

Note: All were quite sober!

MJD/



“The Garfield Wheel”

Right to left:

Wendy Carter; a Tree; Ray Supple; another Tree; Warwick Frost; Ross Mainwaring;
Nancy Cushing; Leanne Blackley; Barbara James; Graham Wilson; Tess Thompson;
Mel Davies



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ASSOCIATION**

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Newsletter No. 4,

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Issue 7

Editorial

As you can see above, we have obtained, through the kind efforts and skill of Michael Tracey, a very appropriate and imaginative insignia. Amazing what an artistic mind and hands can do with a smokestack. We agreed to adopt the logo at the AGM and I'm sure that you'll all join me in thanking Michael for his effort in providing us with this fine design.

On the Move

Ruth Kerr has informed us that Dianne Menghetti who is Senior Lecturer in History & Politics at James Cook University, has been seconded for a year to Estvos Lorand University, Budapest in order to develop Australian Studies. She will be working on Australian race relations, immigration, social history, and environment & heritage. We wish Diane all the best in her endeavours and hope that she will be including some of her material on coal mining in her indoctrination of the Hungarians!

Light Railways

As our readers will appreciate, transport developments, from the early 19th century in particular, have been part-and-parcel of the story behind mining development and expansion. We have recently been approached by Phil

Rickard, secretary of the Light Railway Research Society of Australia, who has pointed out that many of his members have expressed an interest in our society, as much of their research coincides with that of our association. One of their leading members is Ross Mainwaring who is a serving member of our committee. So to reciprocate, we would like to inform you that the Light Railway Society welcomes new members. Anyone joining can be assured each year of obtaining six newsletters plus four journal publications

containing articles of an historical nature. For details re. activities, membership fees, etc., contact, Mr. Phil Rickard, Hon. Secretary, L.R.R.S.A., P.O Box 21,

Surrey Hills, Victoria 3127.

New Books

1) Mildred Allen Beik, The Miners of Windber, *The Struggle of New Immigrants for Unionization, 1890s-1930s*, Penn State Press, 1996. 408 pages, \$US60 cloth, \$US22.95 paper. add \$4 for 1st book and \$1 for each additional. Available Penn State Press, 820 North University Drive, University Park, PA 16802, USA.

The flyer states that the book chronicles the coming of unionisation to Windber, a coal mining town in Pennsylvania, where thousands of immigrants of all nationalities came in the 1890s. The story tells of the struggles of the miners and families against the repressive policies of the mining company and of how ethnic fragmentation was overcome to unionise the mines.

2) David Carment & Helen J Wilson (eds), *Northern Territory Dictionary*

of Biography: Volume Three, NTU Press, Darwin, 1996, ISBN 0-949070-

92-0, 390 pages. Includes many articles on mining personalities.

Copies can be ordered at \$35.00 each (includes postage) from Elizabeth Kriz, NTU Press, Faculty of Arts, Northern Territory University, DARWIN NT 0909. Cheques to 'NTU Press'.

Exhibition

Sweet & Sour

A recently opened exhibition at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 'Sweet and Sour: Chinese Families in the Northern Territory', deals quite extensively with the role of Chinese people in gold mining in the Northern Territory's 'Top End'.

AMHA Conference

A date has now been fixed for our 1997 conference which will be held in conjunction with the Australian Historical; Association Regional Conference, at Newcastle, NSW. The date: **28 - 30 September**.

1997 will herald the bicentenary of the discovery of the Hunter River and its coal by Europeans and the AHA have adopted *'The River'* as the conference theme. However, as

a conference within a conference, we will not be bound by that and as in 1996, we will be looking for papers on any aspect of mining (especially with an Australasian flavour).

In accord with the AHA organisers, it would be appreciated if those wishing to present papers would submit a **300** word

abstract to reach me by **31 March** 1997.

If you intend to present a paper, or if you will be attending as an observer or in any other capacity, it would be appreciated if you would contact Dr. Nancy Cushing, Department of History, University of Newcastle, Callaghan, NSW 2308; e.mail hinec@cc.newcastle.edu.au Fax +61 049-21 6940, requesting that you be put on the mailing list. Please indicate if you will be attending mining history sessions in order that we can have some idea of numbers for the booking of venues.

Bibliography & Home Page

Thanks to the kind permission of the Australian Heritage Commission we have been able to access the bibliographies contained in Peter Donovan & Associates, *A Mining History of Australia, Part 1 of the National Mining Heritage Research Project*, (1995). The lists, made out by State, will be used as a core for a comprehensive bibliography of Australian mining and will soon be attached to Roger Burt's Exeter www pages.

It is also intended to open a Home Page of our own where the details will also be published (hopefully this will be done before the next newsletter gets out).

Could I request that members peruse the lists for gaps and inform me, so that the bibliographies can be updated. A brief survey has already revealed some omissions and I'm sure that with your help the list can be made more complete. Please look out for dissertations as well as books and journal articles and other *published* items.

Publishing of names

Should you object to having your name and details published on our membership list which appears on the Exeter www (and will appear when our own page is constructed), please indicate this on the renewal membership form, or contact the secretary with your objection. We made a similar appeal last year and on that

occasion there were no objections.

Conferences

International Mining History Conference 1998

And now for the disappointing news. Because of organisational problems, the International Mining History Conference scheduled to take place in *Chile* during 1998

has been cancelled. At the moment of writing, efforts are being made to see whether organisers in other countries might be prepared to take on the task of running the conference. At the last conference in Golden, Colorado, it was agreed that South Africa would be a second choice, and Queensland a third. Rest assured that if S. Africa cannot see their way on this occasion, that the event will go on, for Kett Kennedy and Dianne Menghetti have stated that James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland will be prepared and happy to organise the event.

The Study of Labour History Conference, Perth 1997

Members might be interested in attending or submitting papers to the Fifth National Labour History Conference to be held at the Perth Cultural Centre on 24th October, 1997. The theme of the conference is "Frontiers of Labour" and interested parties are invited to contact: Dr. Patrick Bertola, School of Social Sciences & Asian Languages, Curtin University, GPO Box U 1987, Perth , WA 6001. tel. 09-3517195. e mail - bertola@spectrum.curtin.edu.au

or, Dr. Janis Bailey, Faculty of Business, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, WA 6027. tel. 09-4005694. e mail - j.bailey@cowan.edu.au

Mining Study Tours

Ruth Kerr has recently sent me a very attractive looking brochure put out by Atalaya Tours Ltd., Aberystwyth, UK which is devoted to their 1997 Mining Tour programme. The tours emphasise small group travel (ranging from 7 - 15 persons) and encompass some exotic sites in Spain, Britain, Mexico and India. The tours are led by guides who have an in-depth knowledge of mining and tours to particular sites are often joined by local mine company staff and archaeologists. To quote from the blurb, "The tour areas are chosen for their importance in the international history of mining, and for the quality of visible remains. Most are set in remarkable landscapes and countryside, in areas that can be described as off the beaten tourist track. We also make the most of the opportunity to visit cities, towns, and other sites of interest with free time in the tour areas.

Our present tour programme, for example, gives you the chance to spend some time on the Mediterranean coast of Murcia, to stay in the centre of the important Arabic cities of Granada and Cordoba, to visit the medieval castles of north Wales, the cliffs of Cornwall, or to travel the deserts of Mexico or Rajasthan and the tropical south of India."

For further information, contact, Atalaya Tours Ltd., Ceinionfa, Capel Dewi, Aberystwyth SY23 3HR, UK. Tel & Fax +44(0)1970 828989

Australian Prospectors & Miners Hall of Fame

The launch of the appeal for funds to float the Hall of Fame was conducted at the Perth Mint on 28th November, and since then similar ceremonies have been carried out around the country. The site of the Hall will be at the Hannans North Mining Heritage Precinct,

Kalgoorlie and a national architectural competition will soon be announced to provide a complex that truly reflects the mining sphere. The centre hopes to “accurately represent the history of prospecting and mining in Australia as well as the scientific and technological future of the industry [and] through interactive and innovative exhibits will guide us to a better understanding of this industry... It will serve as a tangible reminder of those who were instrumental in Australia's early development, extending from the Aborigines who first introduced European prospectors to the sources of natural wealth, to the explorers who settled new territories and established essential infrastructure”. Completion is projected in time for the Federation Centenary Year 2001. The initial estimated cost is \$12 million which it is hoped will be raised through grants, corporate and public donations and

membership subscriptions (note all donations and memberships are tax deductible). For method of payment and further information, contact, The Australian Prospectors & Miners Hall of Fame Ltd., PBKB 2001, Kalgoorlie, WA 6430.

1997 Memberships

It's that time of year again when memberships should be renewed. As you will note, the fees are the same as in 1996 and I would ask you to please renew as soon as possible.

Would you also be sure to add your areas of mining interest in the appropriate section of the enclosed form, as this information has been requested by Roger Burt to be added to your personal details on his web page.

Seasons Greetings

On behalf of the President and committee may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and may 1997 see you delve in nooks and crannies to unearth historical bounties to add to our mining, heritage and archaeological knowledge!!