



# AUSTRALIAN MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

All correspondence to: Mel Davies  
Business School, Economics  
MBDP M251  
University of Western Australia  
35 Stirling Highway,  
Crawley 6009, W. Australia  
Tel. (08) 64882939  
Fax (08) 64881016  
E.mail: mdavies@biz.uwa.edu.au

## Newsletter No. 1 MARCH 2005

Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC

ABN 96 220 329 754

Web page: <http://www.econs.ecel.uwa.edu.au/AMHA/amhamain.htm>

**ISSUE 40**

### Editorial

Due to lack of imagination and space, this quarter's editorial comment has been cancelled!! Anyone wishing to edify the masses in the June newsletter is welcome to submit their thoughts - leaving me forever grateful.

### Journal

Articles are now being **urgently** solicited for the third volume of our *Journal of Australasian Mining History*. Contributors may prepare articles for the refereed or un-refereed sections and instructions as to layout, etc., can be seen at our website, or by requesting a copy from the AMHA Secretary. Incidentally, if you want copies of the first two volumes they can be purchased for a mere \$20 (see membership form for postage if you live outside Australia).

### Forthcoming Conferences

#### *AMHA Conference Bendigo 11- 14 July 2005*

For those yet to register for the conference (and please make it sooner rather than later!), note that the Bendigo cottage tour on Thursday 14 July has had to be **cancelled** because the tour guide will be unavailable. Refunds for those who have already paid their \$5 will be made at the conference.

Note too, that that activities during the evening of Sunday 10 July will take place in the opulent surroundings of the Bendigo Town Hall. When registering, please don't forget to tick the notification space if you intend to come to the function as we have to forward numbers for the purpose of catering.

Similarly, please tick the spot where it asks if you want to use the shuttle bus.

### *Conference Papers*

In our December newsletter we set a deadline of 31 March for receipt of titles and abstracts and warned that because of an expected rush by would be presenters, then late applications might have to be turned down. I'm afraid that this happy/sad situation has now been reached and despite planning to extend the sessions, we cannot accept any more papers. If disappointed, remember that in little over a twelvemonth we will be holding our next conference, and that being an historical topic your paper should keep and still be topical at that time.

***Bendigo accommodation!***

Most people will have received an e.mail to point out that there might be difficulties in booking accommodation at Bendigo on Saturday 9th July, which is the day before the pre-conference tour, and when registration takes place. Unfortunately for us, a religious organization is holding a conference in Bendigo on that day. However, if you can't find anything for that night then please contact Sandra Kippen at [s.kippen@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:s.kippen@latrobe.edu.au)

### ***Bendigo Conference Tour***

Arrangements have now been finalized for the post conference tour. David White has drawn up the following interesting itinerary and has assured me that it is tailored to suit the tastes of even the most discerning of our mining historian members.

Day 1, Thursday 14 July: Bendigo - to Friars Town - The Duke of Cornwall Cornish Pump Tower - the Wattle Gully Mine - the Manchester Reef Workings - the Garfield Water Wheel - the Quartz Hill Mine (includes sites of Gill's paintings) - accommodation in Castlemaine.

Day 2, Friday 15th July: Castlemaine - Moolort Plains and Carisbrook-Lodden Deep Lead System (follow the footsteps of Hoover and Lindgren) - Gibraltar Diggings and Majorca & Talbot Ghost Towns - accommodation in Clunes.

Day 3, Saturday 16th July: Clunes - Port Philip Mine - Mine Sites in the Berry Lead System - Daylesford - Malmesbury (the main place of recruitment for Mt. Lyall) - returning to Bendigo in late afternoon via Taradale.

Cost with **double** accommodation is **\$265**. **Single** accommodation is **\$280** (included is a cut lunch 1st day, breakfasts and evening meal at Keebles in Clunes on 2nd day).

Please make out cheques to the AMHA and submit asap.

### ***Gold Dredging Heritage Conference***

Inspired no doubt by Gandalf and his Hobbit friends, Brian and Nola Hill recently survived a arduous 4-day trek along New Zealand's

Milford Sound, but they still had the energy to submit the following notice:

'The possibility of staging a gold dredging heritage conference is being assessed by New Zealand geologist, mining historian and author Dr John Barry. Dr Barry hopes to hold the conference in Alexandra in New Zealand's South Island, which was the cradle of the world's gold dredging industry, in April 2006. He is seeking potential speakers, and has already assembled an impressive array of papers to be presented by experts in this field.

Anyone interested in participating in the conference should contact Dr John Barry, 99 Malling Road, Richmond R. D. 1, New Zealand.'

**N.B.** Dr Barry, who is the author of *The History and Mineral Resources of the Reefton Goldfield. Resource Information Report 15*, Wellington 1993, is an historian of the New Zealand gold dredging industry. He has researched the life and activities of Robert Postlethwaite in New Zealand and USA: Postlethwaite was the dredge engineer who introduced New Zealand dredging techniques to America nearly a century ago.

### ***Mining Culture: The Past, Present and Future of Mining Communities and Their Culture, June 10-11, 2005***

Mining Culture is a symposium meant to explore how mining communities (particularly coal mining communities) survive and endure, both in the presence and absence of the activity that cultivated them in the first place - mining.

The symposium will take place in one of Canada's most historic coal-mining regions - Cape Breton Island

- consistently ranked one of the world's most beautiful islands.

Papers are invited on all topics related to the above, but more specifically the following broad areas:

- The future of coal mining communities amid the fluctuations of demand for the resource
- The culture of coal miners: songs, stories, visual art etc.
- The history of mining and its communities
- The regenerative potential of culture on mining communities: e.g. how artists (e.g. musicians, filmmakers, painters, writers) and heritage conservators have drawn meaning, educational opportunities, and cultural and economic regeneration from the world of the mine.
- Social cohesion and social capital among mining communities and their neighbours.

The symposium will overlap with William Davis Day, the annual commemoration of the killing of a Cape Breton coal miner by company police in the strike of 1925.

**Where:** University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, Nova Scotia (and other venues in the vicinity)

Proposals for individual papers, sessions, workshops and presentations should be no longer than one single-spaced page and should be accompanied by a very short *curriculum vitae* for each presenter. Proposals may be submitted in English or French. The deadline for submissions is March 15, 2005.

For more information on tourism and accommodation in Nova Scotia, please check out <http://www.novascotia.com/>

Contact: Larry Haiven, Dept. of Management, Saint Mary's University, Halifax NS, Canada  
Tel: (902) 420-5082, Fax: (902) 420-5119;  
Email: [larry.haiven@smu.ca](mailto:larry.haiven@smu.ca)

### ***International Mining History Congress, Belgium 10-15 October 2006***

For details see the Web pages that were recently set up at:

<http://www.miningheritage.org>

### **Bits-and Pieces**

*WA Sweetener*

Two announcements regarding the Eastern Goldfields in WA: First the WA government has provided \$50,000 to the Miners' Memorial planned for Loopline Park in Boulder. The memorial is a curved wall engraved with the names of 1,268 gold miners killed in work related accidents and is scheduled to be completed by St Barbara's day this year.

The second relates to a grant of \$500,000 to the Coolgardie Shire to help restore that town's magnificent heritage buildings, public buildings, former shops, hotels, houses and sites such as the town cemetery.

That the announcements were made just before the State election is purely coincidental!!

### ***Web Site of Oldest Mining Institute***

The North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers claims to be the oldest mining institute in the world. Established in Newcastle upon Tyne, it was formed in the 1850s, began its library in 1872, and today, housed in the original building can be found the largest mining library in Britain. For further information, see:

[www.mininginstitute.org.uk](http://www.mininginstitute.org.uk)

### **Seeking Information**

***Nefarious activities!***

Can anyone furnish information to John Braun on his forefathers? John is under no illusions as to the nefarious activities of his relations

and any information that would expand his knowledge is welcomed. The editor has furnished information on three publications that might cast some light but there's probably a great deal of information that some of our members in the West could contribute. John says:

'I am currently researching my family history and am desperate for information about my great grandfather and his brothers all of whom appear to have been miners, gold stealers and rogues, who appeared to inhabit the WA Goldfields in the early to mid 1900's. The only information I have is as follows:

James Patrick Egan: Worked at the 'Frasers Mine' Southern Cross, early 1900.

Daniel Egan: Killed in an accident at the 'Corinthian Mine' in 1914.

Bernard Egan: Worked along side Daniel when he was killed.

Charles Egan: Worked in many mines in Southern Cross, Westonia, Yellowdine and Kalgoorlie between 1900-1930. Later blackballed because of union involvement, turned to goldstealing and later questioned regarding the Pittman-Walsh murders and North Hannans Mine gold robbery.

Thomas Francis Egan: Prospector involved in the 'Palmers Find' gold strike in 1934, also leased 'Pretty Beryl' adjacent to 'Palmers Find'. Involved in the illicit gold trade with his brother Charles.

John Braun can be contacted at:

[jb Braun60@yahoo.com.au](mailto:jb Braun60@yahoo.com.au)

### **History Grants**

The Northern Territory Government is offering grants between \$500 to \$7,000 to support the work of researchers recording and writing about Northern Territory history, with preference being given to applicants covering topics that have not previously been researched. Individuals, societies, and community organizations are eligible to apply and the grants will assist with expenses

incurred in the research and writing up of materials.

The closing date for applications is 6 May 2005. Forms can be downloaded from the website at:

[http://www.nt.gov.au/dcis/nta/7\\_history/7-1\\_aboutthis.htm](http://www.nt.gov.au/dcis/nta/7_history/7-1_aboutthis.htm) and must be sent to:

The Executive Officer, Northern Territory History Grants Committee, Northern Territory Archives Service, 25 Cavanagh Street, Darwin NT 0800 – or, GPO Box 874 Darwin, NT 0801. tel. 08-89247677; fax: 08-89247660.

E.mail: [nt.archives@nt.gov.au](mailto:nt.archives@nt.gov.au)

### **E. Mail Addresses**

On a recent mail out regarding accommodation at Bendigo, a substantial number of messages bounced. If you change your address during the year would you please inform the Secretary so that the record can be updated?

### **Membership Fees**

There are still some outstanding fees to be paid (don't feel guilty, I only paid mine today!). If you intend to renew, then please send sooner than later. This will not only save you the torture of feeling guilty but will also help me to cut down on the paperwork involved in sending out reminders. Many thanks.

### **Address Details**

Please note that the Secretary's telephone number and e.mail address has changed. Still the same place, doing the same work (apart from being disturbed by restructuring and form filling) but some slight amendments to the contact details. Since the middle of March the old telephone number hasn't worked.

MJD/March'05



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35 Stirling Highway,  
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Tel. (08) 64882939  
Fax (08) 64881016  
E.mail: [mdavies@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:mdavies@biz.uwa.edu.au)

## Newsletter No. 2 JUNE 2005

**Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC**

ABN 96 220 329 754

Web page: [http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian\\_mining\\_history\\_association](http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian_mining_history_association)

**ISSUE 41**

### **Editorial**

Our 11<sup>th</sup> annual conference and our second stand-alone (unless you count the Kalgoorlie Conference where we hosted other organizations as well as running our own) has again been well supported in terms of papers, with 27 contributions being received. This includes the keynote address by Eleanor Swent from our North American counterpart organization, who will be comparing the experiences of 'Aussie & Yankie' mining engineers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It will be interesting to see whether their social baggage had effect on their views, or whether their common background as engineers overrode their national identities.

For the first time in the conference experience of the AMHA, we wander off the more usual paths to look at the development of uranium mining, in papers given by Gavin Mudd and Keith Johns. Uranium mining and its expansion is a matter that is being hotly debated at this moment in South Australia as noted in an article recently sent to the editor by Ruth Kerr, and where pointed out that South Australia's State Treasurer, Kevin Foley, has forceful views as to the benefits of abandoning Labor's Three Mines Policy. This is a subject on which Keith Johns has decided views – so expect some controversial discussion in this section of the proceedings.

Altogether it looks as if we have a fine smorgasbord of offerings and there will be something on offer to suit most palates. Hopefully our members will come in numbers to sample the fare and perhaps be tempted to sign on the dotted line after looking at what is being offered on the menu to be found at the end of this newsletter.

The organizing committee of Sandra Kippen, Ralph Birrell and James Lerk promise everyone a warm welcome, an entertaining social programme, and it goes without saying – a chance to catch up with old friends and acquaintances to discuss matters mining. Hope to see you there!

### **Seeking Information**

#### ***That Kiwi again!***

Our resident NZ committee member Philip Hart would appreciate information you might have come across in relation to John Watson Walker, a goldminer in Victoria and New South Wales in the 1850s and 1860s. Any details gratefully received and acknowledged. Contact [prhart@mailserv.waikato.ac.nz](mailto:prhart@mailserv.waikato.ac.nz)

## Annual General Meeting

Please note that the Annual General Meeting will be held at the Ironbark Centre, LaTrobe University, Bendigo on Tuesday 12 July, commencing at 4.40pm. Motions for discussion, or for alterations to the Constitution should be sent so as to reach the Secretary by Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

## Forthcoming Conferences

***AMHA Conference Bendigo 11- 14 July 2005***

### ***Tourist Office telephone Number***

Please note that the telephone number for the Bendigo Visitor Information centre is now 1800-813-153 and not as detailed on the registration form. As there is another conference, book early for Fri. 8<sup>th</sup> & Sat. 9<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Bendigo Conference – Sunday Tour/Maps***

For those who intend to participate in the pre-conference tour, please note that the bus will leave at 10 o'clock sharp from beside the Tourist/Visitor Information centre (the Old Post Office) 51-67 Pall Mall. For location of the sessions see the Ironbark Centre on the 1<sup>st</sup> web map listed below. Use carpark 2 as this is close to the location. IMPORTANT – get a **parking permit** when you register or face financial penalties from the sombre men in grey! See the 3<sup>rd</sup> listed map to find the Town Hall for the Sunday evening reception and the Visitors Centre (the Old Post Office) where we meet for the Sunday tour.

[http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bg/drawings/bendigo\\_loc.pdf](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bg/drawings/bendigo_loc.pdf)  
[http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bg/drawings/bendigo\\_site.pdf](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bg/drawings/bendigo_site.pdf)  
<http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/Files/cbdmap.pdf>

### ***Publication Displays***

If you have any publications for display or sale then the organizers will be happy to provide a location during the conference.

### ***Bendigo Post-Conference Tour***

Arrangements have now been finalized for the post conference tour. David White has drawn up the following interesting itinerary and has assured me that it is tailored to suit the tastes of even the most discerning of mining historians.

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Cost - **double accommodation \$265 per person. Single accommodation \$280** (cut lunch 1st day, breakfasts and evening meal at Keebles in Clunes on 2nd day included). Cheques to the AMHA and please **submit to the Secretary by 31<sup>st</sup> June at the latest.** If you have them, bring along a hard hat & a torch and binoculars.

## Bits-and Pieces

*Psst! Wanna buy some property?*

Our President Peter Bell sends the following piece of good news to those members with a few spare coins in their pockets! 'Enthusiasts of Broken Hill history, and particularly those who heard Maja Sainisch-Plimer's show-stopping paper on Charles Rasp at the Broken Hill conference, may be interested in putting in a bid to buy his former house, *Willyama* at Medindie in Adelaide, that has recently come onto the market'.

**‘Willyama’, 12 The Avenue, Medindie - One of Australia’s finest estates**

*Gracious bluestone mansion of some 14 main rooms including breathtaking ballroom – Extensive limestone stables plus coach house Set on botanical grounds of some 9160 sqm approx. with North-South lawn tennis court and swimming pool. Magnificent ‘Willyama’ is steeped in history and mystique and offers a rare and outstanding opportunity. The mansion and outbuildings are unsurpassed in elegance and grandeur with exquisite decorative and architectural detail throughout. The original stable, horse stalls and hay loft together with the attached cottage provide substantial accommodation of great character and charm.*

**PS** – Sounds a great venue for one of our future conferences! **PSS** – Peter Bell reports that the property was sold by tender for \$6.7 million. No purchaser's name was mentioned, but he hopes it went to one of our members.

***In with the New – Out with the Old!***

For Kalgoorlie watchers the following excerpts from Tim Treadgold will get them crying in their schooners or middies (or whatever) [acknowledgement to *Mining News* at <MiningNews.net>]

‘THE influence of mining industry globalisation is starting to show on the streets of Kalgoorlie, where the latest boom has produced a transformation. Kalgoorlie (shock, horror) is developing a coffee culture. So what, is the response from anyone living in Sydney or Melbourne; that's the direction Australia has been heading for the past 20 years. But, for anyone who knows Kalgoorlie, and the greater Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia, this is radical stuff – and a pointer to the maturing of a region where beer once ruled.

No-one has conducted an official count, but a stroll down Hannan Street quickly shows that there are almost as many tea and coffee shops as pubs, a situation which begs the question: what does it really mean? The answer is that Kalgoorlie has fallen under the influence of

global mining, and is fast adopting big-company habits. People working for Placer Dome, Barrick Gold, Gold Fields, Newmont, WMC, or its potential new owner, BHP Billiton, are not only expected to maintain high standards, but to do otherwise might cost them their job.

Sobriety does not mean that the Eastern Goldfields is losing its boom-time pulse. The region is as hot today as during any of the great mineral booms of the 20th century. High metal prices guarantee that people still flock to the area in pursuit of their fortune – and that they continue to find it in all walks of life, as shown by:

- Houses selling for more than their asking price
- An acute shortage of all skills which is pushing labour costs through the roof
- Major new retail outlets opening ...
- Kambalda emerging as the hottest of hot spots after a near-death experience
- Assay laboratories and drilling companies working flat out
- The work of companies like Strange Drilling which is developing and building high-tech drilling rigs
- Election of the local member of Parliament, Matt Birney, as Leader of the Opposition ... and the appointment of the other local member, John Bowler, to State Cabinet
- And that favourite activity measure of *Australia's Mining Monthly*, Toyota four-wheel drives which keep walking out the door.

...‘Demand is coming from all over. A lot of the drilling companies are looking for vehicles, and the

exploration companies continue to gear up.'...the mood in Kalgoorlie is beyond buoyant. It really is booming, despite the occasional painful experience such as the collapse of Sons of Gwalia and mining contractor Henry Walker Eltin, and the crisis which gripped Croesus Mining with its gold stealing ring. 'They were bad experiences,' said Hugh Gallagher, chief executive of the Kalgoorlie Boulder Chamber of Commerce and Industry. 'They were wake up calls that even in the best of times a business can get into trouble if not carefully managed. 'But, the fact that we sailed through two pretty big failures is a sign of the underlying strength in the region, and the fact that this boom looks like continuing for some time.' Gallagher, and other close observers of the Goldfields economy, see more damage being done from the skills shortage than from corporate failures. 'We are starting to be held back by the shortage of every imaginable type of skill,' Gallagher said. 'It's even causing some contractors to decline work because they simply cannot get the staff to do the job.'

Another measure of the boom comes from ... real estate ...where demand for property was matching that seen in the last period of rapid Goldfields growth in the mid-1990s when the region was being driven by the rush to develop laterite nickel projects at Cawse, Bulong and Murrin Murrin....

The impetus behind this latest boom in the Goldfields is easy to understand. As with all previous booms it is totally driven by metal prices, especially gold and nickel. Variations on this twin-theme are seen in each boom, but this time around the differences are especially interesting because this boom has the potential to last a lot longer than others. Critical factors at work include:

- The revival of Kambalda after the exit of WMC from its small mines, and the new-life generated by small new operators.
- The conversion of Kalgoorlie from a region driven by small explorer/miners to the status of a big-company city.

- The long-life nature of this switch simply because big companies are not interested in short-life mines.
- The China factor which is underpinning demand for base metals, another of the potential long-life factors.
- Technology change and improvement which has attracted BHP Billiton to the laterite nickel game, and elevated Lion Ore International to the status of laterite-nickel consolidator.
- The usual flood of small new floats seen in any boom, most of which will disappear without trace after a short and inglorious career.
- The 'take-it-in-your-stride' attitude about the collapse of HWE and Sons of Gwalia, and the 'not-a-tear-being-shed' for the imminent demise of WMC.

## Web Pages

For an interesting webpage with a multitude of useful links on all aspects of mining see the Camborne Virtual Museum pages at <http://www.ex.ac.uk/Projects/geomincentre/intro.htm>

## Address Details

In the last newsletter it was reported that the Secretary's telephone number and e.mail address had changed. Unfortunately he forgot to change the e.mail correction in the newsletter heading! However, that has now been rectified. Please also note a change in the web page to:

[http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian\\_mining\\_history\\_association](http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian_mining_history_association)

Not the underscore \_ in the gaps. Just click on our mining page for results.

MJD/June'05



## AMHA Bendigo Conference Timetable – 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> July 2005

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July** – Pre conference tour. 10.00am sharp from Visitors Centre (Old Post Office), Bendigo.  
3.00 - 5.00pm – registration at Bendigo Town Hall.  
5.00 - 7.00pm Civic reception at Bendigo Town Hall.

### **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

**9.00 - 9.15am** Aboriginal Acknowledgement. Welcome to LaTrobe University  
**9.15 - 10.15am** Keynote Address – Doug Buerger, Managing Director, Bendigo Mining  
**10.15 - 10.45am** Red Ribbon Repertory

#### **11.15am – 12.55am – Session 1 - ‘Mining Personalities’ (Chair: Peter Bell)**

**Nic Haygarth** – *Mug or martyr? George Renison Bell and the rewarding of ‘successful’ 19<sup>th</sup>-century Tasmanian mineral prospectors*

**David Branagan** - *Captain Eugene de Hautpick – A Russian ghost in Australian mining and geological history*

**Brian Hill** - *Reefton's forgotten War hero mine manager, Alfred Winter Evans*

**Barry McGowan** - *Earle's cave of gold: fact or fiction*

#### **1.55 – 3.10 – Session 2 – ‘Protected Resources’ (Chair: Ross Both)**

**Keith Johns** - *Uranium in South Australia – politics and reality*

**Gavin Mudd** - *From Radium to Uranium: The Importance of Australia's Radium Mining Efforts to the Cold War Uranium Industry*

**Richard Hartley** - *The forgotten reason why the iron ore export embargo was lifted in 1960: Griffin Coal Mining Company and the Scott River sponge iron project*

**1.45 – 4.00pm** – Accompanying Persons visit to Bendigo Art Gallery

**4.00 – 6.00pm** – Tram and Chinese Joss House Tour

### **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

**9.00 – 10.00am – Keynote Address – Eleanor Swent – (Chair: David Branagan)**

*Yanks and Aussies, a symbiosis: A look at some illustrative careers*

#### **10.30 – 12.10 Session 3 – ‘Social Heritage’ (Chair: Barry McGowan)**

**Brian French** - *Hard Times - schoolteachers in early copper mining communities*

**Ross Both/Greg Drew** – *The Glen Osmond silver-lead mines: Australia's first metalliferous mines*

**John Watts** - *Infrastructure Maintenance at the Central Deborah Mine*

**Greg Drew** - *The Cornish fire whim and its application at the Burra Mine, 1849-1877*

**1.00 - 4.30pm** – Accompanying persons visit to Bendigo Pottery

#### **1.10 – 2.50 pm Session 4 - Technology/Forecasting/Sources (Chair: Patrick Bertola)**

**Kenneth McQueen** - *The Mount Boppy Gold Mine, NSW: A leader in its day and more to come*

**Gregg Muller** - *The potential for lichenometric dating of mining sites in Central Victoria*

**Peta Chappell** - *Tales of Merton's Reward: the gold that Fred won*

**Robert Ashley** - *Mining the Victoria Government's Gazette*

#### **3.20 – 4.35pm Session 5 – ‘The Two Es: Engineers and Entertainers!’ (Chair: Nic Haygarth)**

**Ruth Kerr** - *McIlwraith: builder of the Melbourne to Bendigo Railway, Mining Investor and Queensland Premier*

**James Lerk** - *Robert Gray Ford – A man before his time!*

**Anne Both** - *A Goldfields Entertainer*

**4.40 – 6.00am** – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**7.00 for 7.30pm** – Conference Dinner

### **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July -**

**8.30-9.30am** – City Walking Tour

#### **10.00-11.15am Session 6 – ‘Health & Safety’ (Chair: Ken McQueen)**

**Patrick Bertola** – *Dust for Dust: Aluminium Therapy in WA Gold Mines*

**Criena Fitzgerald** - *The Mine Workers Relief Fund 1915-1932: compromise, coercion and surveillance*

**Adrian Hutton & Leonie Knapman** - *Safety in Oil Shale Mines – Joadja Creek and Glen Davies*

#### **11.45am – 1.00pm Session 7 – ‘Workers, and Capital’ (Chair: Brian Hill)**

**Jim Enever** - *Victoria's other Eureka: The clash between British capital and the diggers on the Mt Alexander Goldfield*

**Philip Hart** - *The Thames Miners' Union: Defending Miners and the Mining Industry*

**Gilbert Ralph** - *‘We did our dough, in Bendigo’*

#### **2.00 – 2.55pm Session 8 – Pictorial Presentations (Chair: Ruth Kerr)**

**Ross Mainwaring** - *Gold Mining on the Witwatersrand – a photographic essay above and below ground*

**Nichola Williams** - *Continuing the Quest: Still ‘Oertling’ along’*

**2.55 - 3.15pm** - Conference Closing (including pictorial presentation for the 2006 conference)

**3.45pm** – Tour of Central Deborah Mine & afternoon tea

### **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July**

**9.00am** Post-Conference Tour leaves from Visitors Centre (Old Post Office), Bendigo

**9.30am-12.00** – Cemetery Tour. Meet at Visitors Centre (Old Post Office), Bendigo 9.10am

## AMHA 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Bendigo 11-14 July 2005

### ABSTRACTS

#### **Robert W.P. Ashley**

##### *Mining the Victoria Government's Gazette*

If anyone wanted an old gold mine, they would not expect to look in the inner Melbourne suburb of Collingwood, but that is exactly where the Collingwood Gold Mining Company set about mining for gold. The names of the shareholders, the legal manager and the initial capital of this mine are but a part of the history of Victoria and of the gold mania of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

After years researching, the idea developed, of producing a database, listing all the mining companies that applied to be registered in Victoria as Limited Liability Companies. Encouragement was given to the idea, and to also include the names of shareholders, legal managers and witnesses as published in the *Victoria Government Gazette*. It was decided to list all those companies that applied to be registered in Victoria from 1851 to 1958. So far, 15,963 companies have been recorded although some are for the same company under corrections, revised capital arrangements and other causes. To enable the project to be carried out satisfactorily it was divided into the main four periods of official registration as found in the *Victoria Government Gazette*. 1851 to 1860; 1860 to 1864; 1884 to 1871 and 1871 to 1958. The first period completed is 1860 to 1864 corresponding with the Vincent Pyke Act of 1860. Some 18,000 records are listed for shareholders. The list gives a picture of naming practices of mines and the place of operations. By analysis it shows the origin of capital and the participation by the working miners in their own areas of concern. The list of shareholders is a fascinating compilation containing the names of many that for a lifetime supported the mining industry and its development.

#### **Patrick Bertola** (Curtin University of Technology)

##### *Dust for Dust: Aluminium Therapy in WA Gold Mines*

Silicosis is a non-reversible outcome of exposure to silica dust, most often arising from hard rock mining activity. The only effective means of combating this occupational disease are prevention in the form of physical separation or effective extractive ventilation. In the 1950s one measure that was reactive to the presence of dust and that was adopted in WA mines was the so-called McIntyre Aluminium Therapy. In the 1930s Canadian research funded by mining companies and the Ontario Mining Association suggested that inhalation of aluminium dust could prevent the development of silicosis, albeit at the point of the miners' bronchial systems. Further, it was believed that the dust had a prophylactic effect. From 1943 the procedure was widely adopted by mines that were members of the OMA and, despite objections, the treatment remained in place until union action forced companies to abandon it in 1979. In Western Australia state bodies worked actively to promote introduction of the 'therapy' and from the early 1950s the process was used in the major gold mines of WA. However, by the early 1960s it had largely been abandoned.

This paper examines the circumstances surrounding the introduction of the Aluminium Therapy in WA and proposes some reasons why the measure fell into disfavour and was abandoned so much earlier than in Canada.

#### **Anne L. Both**

##### *A Goldfields Entertainer*

Winners of gold wanted to enjoy the fruits of their labour. For the successful, enjoyment of newfound wealth was paramount. Enjoyment came in varied forms - indulgence in sporting activities such as horse riding, boxing, foot racing, football and cricket games. These activities were accompanied by gambling and drinking '*the most expensive wines just because they were expensive*' and the company of women '*of doubtful respectability*', as observed by one John Sherer himself a seeker after gold. The miners also entertained themselves by making their own music, but with success in their search for gold they began to demand the 'professional' entertainment offered by paid performers. Numerous singers, dancers and actors visited the goldfields in the expectation that they also might reap some of the rewards. Among these entertainers was the notorious Lola Montez. After a career in Europe where her many alliances with prominent citizens of the countries that she visited and the somewhat risqué nature of her performances brought her to the attention of American newspapermen, she saw opportunity to further her performing career by going to North America. She performed not only in its principal cities but also on the Californian goldfields where her provocative dance and somewhat outlandish behaviour attracted much attention. Her final performing days were spent on the Victorian goldfields where she appeared in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Castlemaine. She returned to North America after her Australian tour where her remaining years were spent on lecture tours and philanthropy. The presentation will briefly consider her biography and then examine the impact she made during the time she spent on the Californian Goldfields.

**Ross A. Both** (University of Adelaide) and **Greg J. Drew**

*The Glen Osmond silver-lead mines: Australia's first metalliferous mines*

This paper examines the history of the silver-lead mines at Glen Osmond in the Adelaide foothills, which represent the birthplace of Australia's metalliferous mining industry. Mining commenced at Wheal Gawler in 1841 and was followed by the Glen Osmond mine (1842) and Wheal Watkins (1843). The mines closed in 1850-1851 when the miners left for the Victorian goldfields. Some further production took place in the late 1880s. Although the Glen Osmond mines proved to be small, historically they are of national significance. Their discovery came at a time of economic difficulty in South Australia and was the first indication of the important role mining would play in the State's economy.

Because of the spectacular views of Adelaide, the land in the vicinity of the Glen Osmond mines has been subdivided and most of the workings are now located on residential properties. Fortunately, two adits of Wheal Watkins were preserved on a local Council Reserve. In 1986 a South Australian Sesquicentenary grant to the Burnside Council enabled restoration work to be carried out, so that these two adits could be made accessible for guided underground public tours. The Burnside Historical Society has provided volunteer guides for these tours since their commencement in October 1986.

**David Branagan** (University of Sydney)

*Captain Eugene de Hautpick – A Russian ghost in Australian mining and geological history*

Captain de Hautpick is not a well-known figure in the Australian geological scene, and most present day geologists and mining experts have never heard of him. However, his presence in Australia during the 1920s caused a few ripples. He was born in Russia around 1880, had some mining/geological training and military experience and wrote on Russian mining, particularly oil, as the Russian correspondent for the British *Mining Journal* up to 1921. Journalist A.J. Wilson claims that 'in the early 1920s the long arm of the Bolsheviks reached out to him in Australia and he was eliminated. There cannot be many cases of leading mining men suffering political assassination'. De Hautpick was not assassinated in the early 1920s, although some mining investors might have felt like doing the deed. Was he an expert or a charlatan? Probably somewhere in between.

He was first in Australia between 1922 and 1924, plunging into the controversy about oil possibilities in the Coorong (South Australia) and got his (and others) fingers burned in seeking oil for the Mersey Valley Co., in Tasmania, among other activities.

In December 1927 he returned to Australia with geophysical 'inventions', seeking sources of radium, and still hopeful of oil discoveries using geophysical techniques. From his base in Adelaide he published interesting pamphlets on his chosen topics: radium; geophysics in mining; oil prospects in Australia. Thereafter all is, so far, silence. Did he leave Australia, did he die, or was he assassinated?

**Peta Chappell** (Murdoch University)

*Tales of Merton's Reward: the gold that Fred won*

In March 1899 about 35 km NE of Leonora in Western Australia, Beechworth-born prospector Fred Merton discovered the gold deposit which became the fabulous Merton's Reward gold mine. He took the highly unusual step, for a prospector, of erecting a battery and developing the mine himself, acting as his own mine manager, engineer, metallurgist, assayer – even as gold escort! In so doing, he earned himself a special place in the mythology of gold in WA. Not surprisingly, much interest has centred on the performance of Merton's battery and the gold that Merton won from it. Comparison with other contemporaneous mines in the Mt Margaret goldfield reveals outstanding early results. The erratic production recorded subsequently was due to lack of water rather than mechanical failure. Using detailed analysis of the production records for Merton's Reward, this paper assesses the efficiency of the battery and its proprietor and also explores some of the more scurrilous tales told of Fred Merton and his gold.

**Greg Drew**

*The Cornish fire whim and its application at the Burra Mine, 1849-1877*

*Fire whim* was an early Cornish term for engines used for mine haulage to distinguish them from horse whims. These engines were similar to Cornish beam pumping engines but were generally smaller with the outdoors end of the beam connected to a crank producing rotary motion – hence they are known as beam rotative engines. The rotary motion produced by these engines could be put to various uses; it could turn a winding drum (winding or hauling engine), power crushing and dressing machinery, and even operate pumps in distant shafts via horizontal flat rods. After 1850, the horizontal engine began to replace the beam rotative engine, which had virtually disappeared by the 1880s. The beam engine could never have matched the speed of the horizontal engine as the inertia of the moving beam and other parts retarded rapid acceleration.

Ten beam rotative engines imported from Cornwall, were installed at South Australian copper mines between 1848 and 1874. Three of these classic engines were erected at the Burra Mine between 1851 and 1861, during the early Cornish-style development of the mine. These engines were Crusher Engine (1851), Peacocks Engine (1858) and Morphetts Winding Engine (1861). The paper will illustrate how these engines were used for winding and crushing operations during the pre open cut period at the mine. When the mine changed to an open cut operation in 1867, the two remaining engines were modified to power a mechanised treatment plant and an endless chain haulage system to remove low-grade ore from the open cut. This interesting application of their power continued until closure of the mine in 1877.

### **Jim Enever**

*Victoria's other Eureka: The clash between British capital and the diggers on the Mt Alexander Goldfield*

Two years before the dispute between the colonial authorities and the diggers over license fees came to a head at Eureka in December 1854, another issue came to the fore among the local mining population. Following news of the 1851 gold discoveries, mining companies were formed in Britain to take up what British capitalists saw as their rightful predominant place in the systematic extraction of the colonial riches. The Port Phillip and Colonial Gold Mining Company which eventually emerged as the most significant British capital company to feature in the early development of a sustainable gold mining industry in Victoria was one of these. In its early days, however, the Company found itself embroiled in conflict with the colonial authorities and the notoriously independent diggers over the issue of the granting of leases to mining companies. The diggers feared that such a system could potentially jeopardise the small claims that provided the livelihood for the mainly transient diggers. As the authorities attempted to come up with a formula for the most effective longer-term development of the goldfields, the diggers became progressively more apprehensive. The situation came to a head in October 1853, when the authorities attempted to exclude up to 1,500 diggers from their claims near Fryerstown on the Mt Alexander goldfield, in favour of a lease promised to the Port Phillip Co. Although there is no contemporary evidence of violence, the moment was charged with the possibility. In the event, the authorities on this occasion backed down, renegeing on their arrangement with the Company and deferring the eventual introduction of a leasing system until a point in time when the mutual interests of capital and labour converged as mining activities became deeper.

### **Criena Fitzgerald** (University of Western Australia)

*Mine Workers Relief Fund 1915-1932: compromise, coercion and surveillance*

In 1906 delegates to the first annual conference of the Westralian Federated Miners' Union called for the establishment of a 'Worn-out Miners Fund' to assist miners suffering from the effects of their occupation, and in 1908 called for miners' complaint to be classed, like accidents, as compensable. After the 1912 Royal Commission into the health of miners a voluntary fund called the Mine Workers' Relief Fund was established and in February 1915, at a conference of representatives from mining companies, miners and the state government each group agreed to contribute equally to the fund.

The Fund was managed by representatives from the contributors and a secretary whose job it was to ensure the funds were paid on time. Miners who applied for relief were assessed by the Board, and if their application was successful, were granted a weekly allowance, which prevented '...the improvident beneficiary from squandering at one time the whole relief granted'. Establishing the fund was a clear indication that the government and the industry recognised the economic cost of chronic illness and its effect on miners in particular. The fund was a compromise. It did not provide compensation or assist with medical expenses or the early treatment of illness; it provided 'relief' after the men became unable to work due to their illness.

The demands on the Fund were such that by the 1920s there were insufficient contributions to meet the requirements of sick miners and their families. It was not until 1932 when the MWRF Act that the Fund became a statutory authority and contributions to the fund compulsory for miners and mine owners in all goldfields in the State. Using case studies of applicants for the Fund, this paper examines the voluntary Fund in Western Australia, and explores the benefits and disadvantages of receiving 'relief'.

### **Brian A. French**

*Hard Times - schoolteachers in early copper mining communities*

The establishment of a school following a petition by copper miners can be used to illustrate the relative importance of mines. High ore yields and its resultant population explosion created communities, often short lived when resources were exhausted. This paper will examine the fluctuating welfare of both miners' children and their schoolteachers in 19th century mining villages. It will also illustrate the relationship of the schoolmasters with the Board of Education and with the community in which they lived. Cadia and Icely will be used to demonstrate how diversification could enable a school to survive when mines were temporarily shut down when the price of copper fell.

**Philip Hart** (University of Waikato)

*The Thames Miners' Union: Defending Miners and the Mining Industry*

The Thames Miners' Union, modelled on the Amalgamated Miners' Association of Australasia, did not challenge the capitalist system. Instead, it sought harmony between miners and their managers, and united with employers and shareholders in defending the interests of their industry. They saw the interests of the miners as intertwined with those of shareholders, managers, and directors, and joined the latter in seeking government aid to develop the industry. It enjoyed strong support in the community. Although there were some defensive actions against managerial decisions, there was no challenge to the legitimacy of private enterprise. From its beginning, it acted as a friendly society, its leaders were pillars of the community, and small businessmen were honorary members. Examples will be given of its leadership, and the industrial conflicts in the Te Aroha district will be examined.

**Richard G. Hartley**

*The forgotten reason why the iron ore export embargo was lifted in 1960: Griffin Coal Mining Company and the Scott River sponge iron project*

On 1 December 1960 the Menzies Government approved a trial shipment of 500 tonnes of iron ore from Western Australia to Japan. The following day the Government announced the relaxation of its iron ore export embargo. The trial shipment was made, not by Mt Newman, Hamersley, Mt Goldsworthy or Western Mining, but by a long forgotten company, Minerals Mining and Exports (MME), a minnow in the mining world which was a joint venture between the Collie coal mining company, Griffin Coal Mining Co., and an international commodity trader, Heine Brothers. The company signed the first state government iron ore agreement made by any company, which involved mining shallow ore deposits on the south coast near Augusta, which are now covered by a National Park. The paper discusses the development of the project which was precipitated by the determination of the state Premier to fully honour an election promise made to the Collie coal miners. The project, which involved the manufacture of char from Collie coal for the production of sponge iron, could well have been implemented, well in advance of those of the larger companies, had it not been for the 1962 downturn in the Japanese steel industry.

**Nic Haygarth**

*Mug or martyr?: George Renison Bell and the rewarding of 'successful' 19<sup>th</sup>-century Tasmanian mineral prospectors*

By sparking a rich mining field, George Renison Bell's tin finds in north-eastern Tasmania in 1874 stimulated the island's economy. Bell derived very little financial benefit from these, however. Nor did he gain much from his 1890 discovery of the mineral lode later worked as the Renison tin mine, recently Australia's biggest tin operation, but which only became profitable long after his death.

Bell's career was a mix of achievement, bad luck and bad management. Was he also a victim of parliamentary ingratitude? A formal reward mechanism might have saved the impoverished Bell and his family many years of suffering. The *Gold Act* (1860) made provision for a reward of up to £5,000 for finding payable gold, but not until the *Mining Act* was passed in 1905 was there similar provision for rewarding discoverers of other metals or minerals.

This paper measures Bell's career against traditional images of the prospector as either wastrel or knight errant. It also examines the parliamentary treatment of 'successful' 19<sup>th</sup>-century Tasmanian prospectors, and discusses whether such men (and their dependants) were owed a living, or whether they were victims of their own choices.

**Brian Hill**

*Reefton's forgotten War hero mine manager, Alfred Winter Evans*

Unbeknown to the people of Reefton, the general manager of the Consolidated Gold Fields of New Zealand Ltd group there from 1909 to 1915, mining engineer Alfred Winter Evans, was a war hero of some distinction. Evans had been recommended for the Victoria Cross while a teenage soldier in the Boer War, and he had been awarded the DCM. He also performed heroically in WWI, being twice Mentioned in Dispatches and winning the DSO. Evans was killed in Flanders in October 1917 at the battle of Passchendaele. Consideration of his mining career illuminates an overlooked facet of the economics of the Reefton gold field (which is the second biggest in New Zealand) during a turbulent period in its history. In 1912, Evans led the company in a bitterly fought six-months' long strike: his industrial victory over the miners' union allowed him to introduce reforms to work practices in the Reefton mines which improved productivity substantially, enabling the mines to continue operating through the next two decades when cost inflation increased prices in New Zealand by some 67 per cent. Although dividends were sparse until prosperity was restored to the industry with the price deflation and increases in the gold price in the 1930s depression, the improvements instituted by Evans ensured the survival of the Reefton goldmining industry.

**Adrian Hutton (University of Wollongong) & Leonie Knapman**

*Safety in Oil Shale Mines – Joadja Creek and Glen Davies*

A study of historical statistics indicate that patterns in Occupational Health and Safety practices and policy may not change, over time unless driven by external factors. Major accidents in NSW at one of Australia's earliest 19<sup>th</sup> kerosene shale (oil shale) operations, Joadja Creek, and a later kerosene shale operation at Glen Davis, generally resulted in a major review of occupational health and safety issues and in some cases changes to the legislation governing the industry, especially when lives were lost and widely publicized. Two recent NSW coal mine disasters - the Appin explosion that killed 14 men in 1978 and the Gretley water inrush accident that killed four men in 1996 show that the 'learning' process still goes on.

A review of the reported accidents that occurred during first four years of the Glen Davis kerosene shale industry show a total of 795 reported injuries. The National Oil Pty Ltd had to introduce a bogey or bonus scheme to initiate and promote increased safety and this appears to have worked in some of the works locations.

Whilst there is little recorded information on safety issues for the Joadja Creek kerosene shale facilities, newspaper reports show that accidents, particularly deaths, affected the community as a whole. The kerosene shale communities were isolated and lacked most of the modern facilities that are thought to be essential to every day living. Physical conditions were harsh, there was no basic medical service and working conditions and wages were poor but evidence clearly shows that serious accidents prompted the community to fight for better facilities. This paper reviews the work-related accidents at Joadja Creek and at Glen Davis (during the first four years of operations at the latter) to show how working conditions were improved and how Occupational Health and Safety issues in the industries were addressed.

**R. Keith Johns**

*Uranium in South Australia – politics and reality*

Geology and geography have conspired to assure South Australia a special place in the international uranium industry. Thus, during the past century Radium Hill, Mount Painter, Maralinga, Beverley, Honeymoon and Olympic Dam have, in turn, acquired special significance in evolution of the nuclear fuel cycle. Governments at the Federal and State levels were quick to accept the challenges offered and sought to maximize the benefits that might accrue from the mining, processing and utilization of uranium – at first for strategic military purposes and, since World War II, to power nuclear reactors for the generation of electricity.

Since 1975, uranium and the associated nuclear industry have become divisive issues for the politics of the Left. The ensuing debate which has given rise to negative perceptions of weapon proliferation, safety of nuclear reactors and disposal of radioactive wastes, culminated in protests, demonstrations and blockades in the 1980s. Opportunities that were presented for enrichment of uranium have been passed over through political expediency and the potential to add greatly enhanced processed value to product from the World's largest resource has been foregone. Likewise, the rejection, recently, of a national radioactive waste repository near Woomera could be interpreted as being counter-productive and another opportunity lost for the State.

This paper briefly traces significant events which relate to exploration, mining, processing and usage of uranium in South Australia – for medical research, in atomic weaponry and as a fuel to satisfy increasing nuclear power demand from overseas.

**Ruth Kerr**

*McIlwraith: builder of the Melbourne to Bendigo Railway, Mining Investor and Queensland Premier*

This paper looks at the construction of the Melbourne to Bendigo railway, one of the finest engineered railways in the nation, and then assesses the role of Thomas McIlwraith as a mining investor in Queensland during the 1880s when he was Premier. McIlwraith had an entrepreneurial vision for the construction of transcontinental railways in Queensland so as to stimulate the development of mineral and pastoral wealth. His personal involvement in mining investment in the Cairns hinterland mining fields and the Palmer River goldfield occurred in parallel with his political activities.

**James Lerk**

*Robert Gray Ford – A man before his time!*

Robert Gray Ford (1833-1891), blacksmith and mining inventor who eventually became engineer in charge of the Victorian Railways was a man before his time. He developed ideas for rock drills that were way ahead of any others in the world and he did so quite independently. Ford remains a virtually unknown man – an unsung hero who has been largely neglected by historians. This paper will attempt to shed a light on the man, his ideas and inventions.

**Ross Mainwaring**

*Gold Mining on the Witwatersrand – a photographic essay above and below ground*

Slide presentation of activity at a gold mine near Johannesburg in the late 1970s.

**Barry McGowan** (Australian National University)

*Earle's cave of gold: fact or fiction*

In 1931 Ion Idriess wrote his best selling account of the ill-fated 1930 Lasseter's Reef expedition, a book which is only partly based on fact. But he chose his supporting material well. The foreword was written by Herbert Basedow, an eminent anthropologist and explorer. In it Basedow stated categorically that Lasseter's original discovery was no myth, for he 'remembered seeing years ago a sample of bottle-green quartz, richly studded with gold, which a prospector named Earle claimed to have found in the identical locality to that searched by Lasseter'.

Ironically two years earlier, before Lasseter came on the scene, another well-known explorer, Michael Terry also wrote about Earle's alleged gold find, but in an entirely different vein. He referred to overseas press stories about Australian's hunting for Aladdin's Cave of Gold. Even his own expedition had been connected with the search. He recounted briefly the sorry saga of Earle's expedition and the even more dramatic events of the two follow-up expeditions involving Cockrum and the Worman brothers

Some eight seven years later in 1937 Terry wrote another account of his Centralian travels, this time firmly focussing on the Lasseter story. He stated that the yarn of the lost reef was probably conceived in Lasseter's mind out of Sayce's book, *Golden Buckles*, set in the Musgrave Ranges, and the Earle's Cave of Gold story. He clearly had little time for the latter story or for Lasseter's account of a lost reef. My paper attempts to piece together the story of Earle's expedition, the public controversy that followed it and the drama of the two follow up expeditions. The story of Earle's cave of gold is probably even more dramatic than the story of the Lasseter's reef expedition. It is a tale of mystery, intrigue and murder, which today still defies resolution.

**Kenneth McQueen** (University of Canberra)

*The Mount Boppy Gold Mine, NSW: A leader in its day and more to come*

The Mount Boppy gold mine at Canbelego in northwestern NSW was one of the most successful gold mining ventures in Australia during the early twentieth century. The reef was discovered in September 1896 by Michael O'Grady in partnership with Thomas Reid. In 1897 they sold the deposit to the Anglo-Australasian Exploration and Mining Company for £1000. This company tested the deposit before floating the Mount Boppy Gold Mining Company Ltd in London in 1900. From 1901 to 1922 the operation produced 13.5 tonnes (0.433 million ozs) of gold from about 1 million tonnes of ore. Four years after start up the mine was the leading gold mine in NSW and until 1937 it held the record as the state's largest gold producer. By 1911 shareholders had received a 350% return on their investment and over the 21-year life of the first phase of mining the operation returned five times the original capital. Success was due to good management, use of state of the art technology, application of scientific exploration and development methods, and a high quality ore deposit. In 1922 there were 0.5 million tonnes of tailings containing 6 g/t of gold. From 1939-1957 attempts were made to reprocess these tailings. In 1974 a new technology was tried by Leighton Mining NL with the construction of the first carbon in pulp (CIP) cyanide extraction plant in Australia. In 1975-76 this experimental plant produced 168 kg (5,440 oz) of gold from 200,000 tonnes of tailings. Although pioneering the revolutionary CIP process for Australian conditions this venture was not a financial success. In 1991 Polymetals Australia rebuilt the plant to extract silver and gold in flotation tailings from the Elura mine north of Cobar. In 1995 they turned to reprocessing the remaining tailings as well as backfill sands at the Mt Boppy mine. This resulted in a new open pit operation, which is accessing the old workings to extract the backfill and mine remnant ore. The history of the Mount Boppy gold mine illustrates many of the major developments in gold mining and processing technology from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

**Gavin M. Mudd** (Monash University)

*From Radium to Uranium: The Importance of Australia's Radium Mining Efforts to the Cold War Uranium Industry*

The discovery of uranium ore at what became known as Radium Hill in north-eastern South Australia in early 1906 led to a relatively small but determined mining rush for radium – a key decay product of uranium. In 1910 a second deposit was discovered at Mt Painter some 400 km to the north-west of Radium Hill. Globally, radium had been found to be 'radioactive' and was highly sought after for science and medicine with a price of the order of £10,000 per gram. Between 1906 and 1932, numerous efforts were made to exploit the new deposits at Radium Hill and Mt Painter, but with no real financial success. Although there has been some documentation of this history, the next phase during World War 2 was perhaps the most crucial for the post-war uranium industry and this period has received scant attention. Between 1941 and 1945, the

Commonwealth and South Australian Governments carefully protected these uranium resources from private enterprise and, following the request from the British Government in May 1944 for uranium for the Manhattan Project (the Allied atomic bomb project), undertook systematic exploration at Mt Painter until mid-1945. This paper will review the history of radium mining in Australia, including some of the key scientists, explorers and metallurgists involved, followed by a detailed review of the role that key mining companies and industry figures played during the Manhattan Project work. Thus, the importance of radium mining in the establishment of our post-war uranium industry is clearly shown.

**Gregg Müller** (LaTrobe University)

*The potential for lichenometric dating of mining sites in Central Victoria*

Lichenometry is a dating technique that utilizes the growth of lichens to determine the age of rock surfaces. The technique has primarily been used in geomorphological contexts in arctic and alpine areas, but some limited application has been found in the dating of archaeological structures, fluvial landforms, and tectonic surfaces). Apart from very limited application in dating river flow regimes no investigation of the technique has been undertaken in Australia. This is surprising since existing dating techniques are often limited in their usefulness either through lack of dateable material or records, or the expense of testing

The goldfields of central Victoria are considered to be an historical landscape of national and international significance. Sites and artifacts dating from the discovery of gold in the mid 1850s to the present are widespread across the bushland and forest reserves of central Victoria. Establishing chronologies for these sites is difficult, since record keeping in the early rushes was patchy, many sites were subsequently reworked, and materials from abandoned workings were scavenged for re-use at other sites. Archaeological and historical research often relies upon relative dating techniques based upon the presence or absence of artifacts, and evidence of mining styles, and can only give broadly indicative dates.

Lichenometric dating may enable the determination of minimum ages for many of these sites where concrete structures exist. If the technique can be extended to lichens growing on the local rock, then water races, buildings, and other structures may be assigned minimum ages. Individual workings where rock was extracted while mining, such as mullock heaps and diggings, may also be able to be dated.

**Gilbert M Ralph**

*'We did our dough, in Bendigo'*

In the mid-1930s Bendigo Mines Ltd, a subsidiary of Gold Mines of Australia Ltd, a sister company to Western Mining Corporation Ltd, spent over \$1 million reopening gold mines on the Bendigo Goldfield. With great fanfare BML established three new shafts, did extensive underground work, built a stamp battery and associated plant and acquired George Lansell's 'Fortuna Villa'. The short-lived effort was a financial disaster and led to the jingle, 'We did our dough, in Bendigo'.

In the 1970s WMC decided to reassess the Bendigo field using the data available to it from the 1930s work. They obtained exploration licences in 1978, re-opened the Williams United shaft and processed some bulk samples through a purpose-built plant. By the time a development proposal was prepared and an Environmental Effects Statement submitted the gold price had fallen. Great Bendigo Goldfields Ltd was incorporated in 1987 to raise funds from WMC shareholders and residents of Bendigo, but the public float did not proceed. In 1992 after spending about \$20 million WMC withdrew from field and sold its interests to Bendigo Mining NL for \$1.6 million. Once again the jingle rang out, 'We did our dough, in Bendigo'. This paper endeavours to compare the factors which influenced the managements of BML and WMC to withdraw from the Bendigo field'.

**Eleanor Swent** (University of California, Berkeley)

*Yanks and Aussies, a symbiosis: A look at some illustrative careers [Keynote Presentation]*

This paper will draw from six oral histories conducted for the series on Western Mining in the Twentieth Century by the Regional Oral History Office at the University of California, Berkeley. Three of the six were born in Australia: Frank Joklik, John Turney, and Roy Woodall. Paul Schipke, Langan Swent, and Alexander "Bud" Wilson were Americans who worked in Australia. All of them recollect experiences which illustrate the significant changes in mining in the last half of the twentieth century: a globalized economy, environmental protection, and increased mechanization. Stark facts are made more vivid by their personal stories.



**John Watts***Infrastructure Maintenance at the Central Deborah Mine*

The Heritage listed Central Deborah Gold Mine (1938 – 1954) is the last of the quartz reef mines on the Bendigo Goldfield accessible to the public. The mine is operated by The Bendigo Trust on behalf of the City of Greater Bendigo. Contractors and mine maintenance staff are currently carrying out significant infrastructure upgrade. The works include the accreditation of the winder, the refurbishment of the skyshaft, shaft collar and shaft to No 3 level (85.2m).

The paper discusses issues encountered in maintaining a heritage-listed asset within current Victorian Mineral Resources Regulations. The work method to stabilise the shaft collar and on-going shaft refurbishment is illustrated and described, as are issues relating to the refurbishment of the skyshaft. Issues relating to sourcing replacement construction materials compatible with current engineering requirements, and at the same time sympathetic to the terms of the Burra Charter are examined. The upgrade of the winder is illustrated and discussed with reference to engineering resolutions needed to bring plus century old machinery to current standards.

**Nicola H Williams** (Monash University)*Continuing the Quest: Still 'Oertling' along'*

In our continuing search for surviving instruments made by the UK firm of Oertling, especially analytical, bullion, chemical and physical balances, we have also come across unexpected pieces of Australian mining history. In this short paper, I'll discuss some of these historical snippets, as well as a few highlights from our recent Oertling searches.



# AUSTRALIAN MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

All correspondence to: Mel Davies  
Business School, Economics  
MBDP M251  
University of Western Australia  
35 Stirling Highway,  
Crawley 6009, W. Australia  
Tel. (08) 64882939  
Fax (08) 64881016  
E.mail: mel.davies@uwa.edu.au

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### Editorial

#### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Bendigo

Thanks to the efforts of the Bendigo committee of Sandra Kippen, Ralph Birrell and James Lerk (and services of David & Sarah Kippen), this turned out to be a very successful get-together. The location at the Iron Bark Centre, La Trobe University, proved an ideal location in that it had excellent facilities and was far enough from the town to prevent people from wandering away, resulting in a full house for the sessions. Not that this was necessary, for the 'captive' audience was treated to some excellent presentations not least of which was Greg Mûller's paper on 'lichenometric dating' – those present will never look at a rock in the same way again! Eleanor Swent also cemented trans-Pacific relations with a fine keynote speech. She charmed everyone and performed with a sprightliness that was further exhibited on the post-conference tour when she out-walked and out-climbed many of her junior compatriots.

There was also light entertainment to start the proceedings, with Jim Evans providing an excellent dramatic exposition of the early conflict over licencing on the goldfields, donning many hats and red ribbons in the process. The social functions were also excellent, from the Civic Reception at the

magnificent Town Hall, to the underground tour of the Deborah Mine, and the tram tour to the Chinese Joss House that followed – not forgetting the excellent dinner at the Bendigo Pottery, where some rather dubious entertainment was provided by Wendy Carter, Gilbert Ralph and one who shall remain nameless. A few individuals promised that at Kadina they will try to outdo those presentations – we await that with trepidation!

David White did a magnificent job in organizing the post conference tour. There were visits to mine sites that were normally off limits, as they were on private property, and in the thorough exploration of the region there must have been encounters with almost every mullock heap in Victoria. The accommodation was first class, with special mention being made to 'The Dukes' and the 'Keebles Hotel' in Clunes. Enjoying a magnificent meal at the latter, Eleanor Swent and Jim Besleme decided to get their own back for the 'entertainment' at the Conference dinner by serenading us with an American version of 'Sweet

Adeline'. One quite memorable meal – a two-course affair with as much tea or coffee as could be consumed - took place at scenic Talbot – memorable because it only cost \$5 per head. There were many present who talked about retiring there so as to make their Super go further! Of course it wasn't all beer and skittles especially on the final day when cold winds and rain and even promise of snow saw a few blue noses and hacking coughs and splutters. This brought up the question as to timing of our ventures and whether in future we might consider shifting our 'go-it-alone' conferences to September or October – something perhaps worthy of serious consideration.

### **Call for Papers - Mining History Conference Copper Triangle 2006**

Even before the ink is dry on the ledger for the Bendigo conference we announce that the next annual conference of the Australian Mining History Association will be held in the District Council of the Copper Coast, South Australia, 5-9 July 2006. The region was known historically as the Copper Triangle, because it consisted of the three settlements of Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo. Copper production commenced in 1860 and continued until 1923. The district is also known as 'Australia's Little Cornwall' as it had a large concentration of Cornish immigrants, whose ethnic influences are still evident not only locally, but in the wider South Australian region. One of Australia's greatest base metal mining fields, the Copper Triangle's minesites and settlements now form a complex and fascinating industrial landscape.

The Association invites papers on any subject relating to the history, archaeology or interpretation of mining industry and settlement. Papers giving insight into the themes of copper extraction and processing, or any aspect of Cornish mining heritage, settlement and culture would be particularly appropriate. If you wish to submit a paper, please send an abstract (or at least a title) to Peter Bell in Adelaide by 2nd December 2005.

(See flyer enclosed for more details).

### **Forthcoming Conferences Cancellation**

Those folk who had planned to go the AHA 2006 Conference at **Juno**, (Juneau) **Alaska** should note that this has been deferred until at least 2008. Next year's conference will probably be held at Leadville, Colorado.

### **Location 2007 Conference**

At the AGM we received an attractive offer from Wendy Carter to organize the 2007 Conference at Kununnurra in the north of WA. This is a once off chance of getting into the area and in addition by being hosted by Argyle Diamonds. However, at the AGM some members expressed the feeling that getting there might be too expensive (check out the fares on the web) and that if the AHA had their conference in an interesting mining location we should look carefully at that as an alternative. Since the AGM, such an area has indeed come to the fore, as the AHA will be holding their conference at Armidale, NSW.

**We are seeking your opinion** as to where we should locate on that occasion – at Kununnurra, or at Armidale? Please send an e.mail to [mel.davies@uwa.edu.au](mailto:mel.davies@uwa.edu.au), or drop a line to **indicate your preference:**

- a) Kununnurra
- b) Armidale
- c) You are indifferent

### **Journal**

All paid up members will receive the 2005 Journal along with this newsletter. As 2006 isn't far away, its time to send in those articles that

you'd love to see in print. Before doing so, however, please request a

style guide from the Secretary/Editor, or download from our webpage at:

[http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian\\_mining\\_history\\_association](http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian_mining_history_association)

## Seeking Information

### *Scottish Gold!*

Gerald Higginbottam has asked whether anyone can suggest a media source for information he is researching on Robert Gilchrist. What will no doubt interest readers is that there was a goldrush in the Scottish Highlands in the 19<sup>th</sup> century - and on the light side, when recognising the reputation of the Scots – how is it that there's still some gold in the ground! Gerald writes: 'I am part of a small group who are researching the Scottish Gold Rush. This took place in and around Baile an Or, Kildonan, near Helmsdale in the Scottish Highlands in 1868/9. We are conducting an archaeological dig on the site of a temporary settlement, looking into the family history of some of the miners and involving local schools. The results have to go to the National Archive in Edinburgh. However we are hopeful that they will eventually be returned to Timespan, the local exhibition centre in Helmsdale.

The Gold Rush was started by Robert Gilchrist who started panning the Suisgill Burn in Kildonan. When the news broke hundreds flocked to join in. They had to be licenced by the Duke of Sutherland who withdrew permission after only one year. Some amateurs still pan and find small quantities of gold.

Robert Gilchrist returned to Australia where he had visited previously. One of our members saw a copy of an early Australian newspaper which had a report of the Ned Kelly trial. Alongside the report was a list of mining claims including a Robert Gilchrist. Regrettably he has forgotten the name of the newspaper. Can you give me any clues of where to look so that we can try to see if this was the same Robert Gilchrist. If you can help Please contact: [g.higginbotham@fsmail.net](mailto:g.higginbotham@fsmail.net)

### *Mining Dams*

A query from member Lori Sciosco who wants to know whether anyone has heard of Oscar Schulze who constructed a masonry brick buttress dam, completed in 1897, for the Lyndhurst Goldfields (Junction Reef) in NSW? Lori also wants to know whether there are any other similar dams privately commissioned for other early mining ventures in Australia. If possible, she would like to place the structure into some sort of national context, though as this is the only one recorded of its kind in NSW it is possible that it is the only one of a kind in the nation. See photo and description on back page.

Contact: Lori Sciusco,  
Heritage Concepts Pty Ltd., PO Box  
1075 Leichhardt NSW 2040.  
Phone/Fax: (02) 96606137 Mobile:  
0417-417458.

e.mail:

[lori@heritageconcepts.com.au](mailto:lori@heritageconcepts.com.au)

### *Union Consolidated Copper Mines*

Tassie member, Volker Hahl was cleaning out a box of old papers recently when he came across a newspaper article from 1907 about a shareholders meeting of the Union Consolidated Copper Mines. He states that from some of the information provided, this mine was going to become the wonder of the age. It didn't say where the mine(s) was (were) other than to say that to get there one left the train some 400 miles north of Adelaide. While South Australian mining is not Volker's area of interest the article has made him rather curious - so if anyone could provide him with a bit more information about the company and mine he would be able to sleep more soundly in his bed. Contact Volker Hahl at: [snauw@tassie.net.au](mailto:snauw@tassie.net.au)

## Congratulations

Congratulations to Gilbert Ralph who was recently presented in the Queen's Birthday Honours list with the OAM for services to the 'preservation and recording of mining history'. Gilbert adds this honour to the MBE that he was awarded some years ago.

## Annual General Meeting

Everything appeared to go smoothly as there were no contentious issues and the election of officers and committee was carried out with no upsets. It was agreed that the fees for 2006 would remain the same as in 2005, though the Treasurer did point out that a worrying sign was the ageing of our membership (now 160 strong), for while the number of waged fees was declining rapidly, the number of unwaged was rising in proportion, making the rationale for reducing the fees for the unwaged somewhat tenuous. However, there was no urgency in making an adjustment as our financial situation at the moment was quite comfortable.

For names of officers and committee members see page 5.

## New Publications

Allen Buckley, *The Story of Mining in Cornwall*, Cornwall Editions 2005, Cornish 'bibliocrats' [particularly Keith Johns] will be delighted to hear of another major work to be published in November 2005 by 'Cornish Editions'. Authored by Allen Buckley, it is described as the first synthesis of Cornish mining. As noted in the information supplied by the publishers, 'the book covers 4,000 years of mining history with clarity, attention to detail and empathy for generations of Cornish who worked in the industry. It is magnificently illustrated with much rare and original material and written by ... Cornwall's foremost mining historian. ... His book provides the first overview of the industry from the prehistoric to the present, and is narrated with technical understanding, social awareness and foresight into the future of Cornish mining'

Contact:

Australia: Cornwall Editions Ltd,  
c/o Net Response, Unit 6, 10 Anella  
Avenue, Castle Hill, NSW 2154,  
Australia; tel +61 (0) 2 9680 8666 or  
e-mail [info@cornwalleditions.co.uk](mailto:info@cornwalleditions.co.uk)

## Bits-and Pieces

*Film documentary?*

Members might care to look out for a film documentary by Craig Hornby that will be appearing in Australian cinemas that's called 'A Century in Stone'. It's the story of the days when Teeside's, Middlesborough (UK), was the world capital of iron forging. It records the discovery of Britain's richest iron seam by John Vaughan in 1850 and the impact this had on the development of the town and of the industry. Note that it's claimed that much of the world's railway tracks in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was built from the material produced in Middlesborough, as was Sydney's Harbour Bridge.

The film includes interviews with retired craftsmen, miners and their families who went through 'good times and bad'. It also depicts the vast 19<sup>th</sup> century complex of furnaces, shafts, railways, etc. in the Rosedale area.

Taking the lead part in the film is Paul Chapman who co-starred with Judi Dench in the TV series 'As Time Goes By'. I should imagine it will be shown in the 'specialist' cinemas, so if interested, watch out for the notices.

## Bureaucracy at Work

Note my new e.mail address:  
[mel.davies@uwa.edu.au](mailto:mel.davies@uwa.edu.au)

The previous address will work for a while (and this one will until the powers-that-be decide that there's a need for another change!).

## AMHA Officers and Committee 2005-2006

### *Officials*

Patron: Prof. Geoffrey Blainey, AC

President: Dr. Peter Bell, PO Box 3044, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, SA 5000.

Tel. 08- 8373 1900; e.mail: [pbell@adelaide.on.net](mailto:pbell@adelaide.on.net)

Secretary/Treasurer: Mr. Mel Davies, Economics, Business School, M251, University of Western Australia, Crawley 6009, WA. Tel. 08-64882939; e.mail: [mel.davies@uwa.edu.au](mailto:mel.davies@uwa.edu.au)

### *Committee*

#### ACT

Mr. Chris Carter [archaeologyaust@ozemail.com.au](mailto:archaeologyaust@ozemail.com.au); Dr. Barry McGowan [barry@cyberone.com.au](mailto:barry@cyberone.com.au)

#### SA

Dr. Ross Both [ross.both@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:ross.both@adelaide.edu.au); Mr. Greg Drew [drew.greg@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:drew.greg@saugov.sa.gov.au)

#### NSW

Dr. Graydon Henning [ghenning@metz.une.edu.au](mailto:ghenning@metz.une.edu.au); Mr. Ross Mainwaring Tel. 02-94492738.

#### NEW ZEALAND

Dr. Philip Hart [PRHart@Waikato.Ac.NZ](mailto:PRHart@Waikato.Ac.NZ); Dr. Brian Hill [brhill@senet.com.au](mailto:brhill@senet.com.au)

#### NT

Prof. David Carment, AM; [David.Carment@cdu.edu.au](mailto:David.Carment@cdu.edu.au)

#### QLD

Dr. Ruth Kerr, OAM; [ruth.kerr@nrm.qld.gov.au](mailto:ruth.kerr@nrm.qld.gov.au); Dr. Diane Menghetti [diane.menghetti@gonet.com.au](mailto:diane.menghetti@gonet.com.au)

Dr. Jan Wegner. [janice.wegner@jcu.edu.au](mailto:janice.wegner@jcu.edu.au)

#### TAS

Mr. Greg Dickens [gdickens@mrt.tas.gov.au](mailto:gdickens@mrt.tas.gov.au); Dr. Glyn Roberts [robertsg@tassie.net.au](mailto:robertsg@tassie.net.au)

#### VIC

Ms. Sandra Kippen [s.kippen@bendigo.latrobe.edu.au](mailto:s.kippen@bendigo.latrobe.edu.au); Mr. David White [dawbd@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:dawbd@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au)

#### WA

Dr. Patrick Bertola [p.b.bertola@curtin](mailto:p.b.bertola@curtin); Ms. Wendy Carter [wjcarter@tpg.com.au](mailto:wjcarter@tpg.com.au);

Dr. Charles Fox [cfox@arts.uwa.edu.au](mailto:cfox@arts.uwa.edu.au); Dr. Richard Hartley [rhartley@hotlinks.net.au](mailto:rhartley@hotlinks.net.au);

Mr. Gerard MacGill. [germacg@inet.net.au](mailto:germacg@inet.net.au)

### **Where's Wally?**

**Intrepid band of AMHA venturers on post-Bendigo conference tour, rugged up against Arctic cold of the Victorian goldfields.**

## Junction Reefs Dam, NSW



- Junction Reefs Dam is classified as a multiple brick buttress and arch dam and is the oldest of this type in Australia. It was designed by Oscar Schulze to provide a constant supply of water for mining operations at Junction Reefs, which formed part of the Lyndhurst goldfield. It was completed in 1897.
- The Dam is situated in Blayney Shire, on the Belubula River close to the towns of Mandurama and Lyndhurst. It lies to the west of the town of Blayney, approximately 8 km from Mandurama on Junction Reefs Road.
- It is 18.3 m high and comprises five elliptical arches, each with an 8.5 m span and a 60 degree lean. The original design for this dam had six arches, but only five were built due to a delay in the brick making. The Dam foundations and abutments are made of concrete, but the arches and buttresses are of brick. Brick was selected as the cheapest and quickest option for the arch construction.
- The dam is founded entirely on rock, with the arch sections on diorite and while the abutments are on hard shale, a number of ridges were apparent on the valley floor and the buttresses were designed to sit on these. Reports by Schulze suggest that initial investigations indicated rock outcropping right across the foundations of the site, but this proved somewhat deceptive. He also implied that the ends of the abutment walls were carried into disturbed shale. According to drawings, the spillway is also on diorite.

**For a detailed description of the dam structure,** contact Lori Sciusco at the address provided in the 'Seeking Information' section.



# AUSTRALIAN MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

All correspondence to: Mel Davies  
Business School, Economics  
MBDP M251  
University of Western Australia  
35 Stirling Highway,  
Crawley 6009, W. Australia  
Tel. (08) 64882939  
Fax (08) 64881016  
E.mail: mel.davies@uwa.edu.au

## Newsletter No. 4 DECEMBER 2005

Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC

ABN 96 220 329 754

Web page: [http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian\\_mining\\_history\\_association](http://www.ecom.uwa.edu.au/research/links/australian_mining_history_association)

**ISSUE 43**

### Editorial

On pondering over what to place in the editorial my eye caught comment in the *American Mining History News*, where the editor was pleased to note the increased membership for 2005 to 300 north American and 17 international members. Just looking at that number made me realize that with 166 local, 9 Institutional and 11 overseas members, we are relatively very respectable in comparison with our bigger brother, especially considering our population size of about 20million compared with that of north America. However, there still remains room for expansion, particularly in some of the States where our memberships tend to be low. A sizeable membership in each state will mean that our search for potential conference organisers will increase, our field for a greater variety of conference papers widen, and the number of contributions to the Journal to increase. A larger membership will also allow me to get rid of surplus publications so as to allow me to gain access to my room! There might even be a greater chance of someone taking up the offer to act as a guest editorial writer in the newsletter! So all you members out there do your best to pass on the good word.

In another respect, we are very much like the MHA, for their subscription (including a

journal) amounts to a bargain \$25, which must make them the most reasonably priced organization on the North American Continent. It goes without saying that our fees are also the lowest in Australia – though having said that, there will be no money back guarantee if you do find a cheaper association that comes complete with publications and a conference.

As this is the final newsletter of 2005, I think we can look back on another successful year thanks to our dedicated band of volunteers, including the Bendigo Conference organisers. We look forward to 2006 and anticipate another exciting year in the form of the Kadina conference offerings and further publications.

### Forthcoming Conferences

*2nd International Conference 'Advances in Mineral Resources Management and Environmental Geotechnology'*,

The conference will be held in sunny Hania, Crete, between 25-27 September 2006.

Detailed information about the conference topics, the programme



committee, the call for papers, the registration procedure as well as a competition for young researchers, are available on the web site <http://heliotopos.conferences.gr/amireg2006>

#### *American MHA Conference 1-4 June 2006*

An amendment to the information contained in the September newsletter. The 2006 conference will be held in Globe-Miami, Arizona and the conference located at the Apache Gold Casino resort located on the San Carlos Apache Reservation east of the town. For details see the *Mining History News* at: [http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/MH\\_ASept.2005b.pdf](http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/MH_ASept.2005b.pdf) or contact Jim McBride, 1223 E. Manhattan, Tempe, AZ 85282, USA. e.mail: james.mcbride@asu.edu

The likely venue for 2007 will be Leadville, Colorado. Many of our members will be familiar with this location which is in the heart of the Rocky Mountains.

#### *International Congress Belgium 2006*

We are sorry to announce that the organizers of the congress have decided not to go ahead with the proceedings in 2006. We can, however, titillate members with the promise of a Congress at Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India in January/February 2008. As well as the mining aspect, Bhubaneswar is known as the 'Temple City of India' being an important Hindu pilgrimage centre. Hundreds of temples dot the landscape of the Old Town, which once boasted more than 2,000 temples. We hope to bring you details soon.

#### **Location 2007 Conference**

We are still awaiting a mass response to the query in the last newsletter (thanks to the handful who have responded) where we asked if you would indicate your location preference for the 2007 conference. We either organize our own proceedings at Kununurra near the Argyle Diamond Mines, or organize alongside the Australian Historical Association at Armidale. Please e.mail your preference to the Secretary at [mel.davies@uwa.edu.au](mailto:mel.davies@uwa.edu.au)

- a) Kununurra, WA
- b) Armidale, NSW
- c) You are indifferent

#### **Information Wanted**

##### *Chimney Stack*

Keith Bailey, South Australia, has forwarded this photograph for identification. It shows a riveted steel chimney stack and by the dress is late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. As far as he can tell, Brian says it's not a Wallaroo or Moonta fabrication, although two steel chimneys were erected at Wallaroo after a fire in Taylor's shaft in 1904. Keith also believes there were several at Moonta. However, the rounded shape of the concrete base is unusual and a Moonta historian he had consulted said he had never seen a curved base such as that in the picture. So if you've come across this picture and can put a label underneath, then it would be greatly appreciated. Keith Bailey can be contacted at: [olfiree@dodo.com.au](mailto:olfiree@dodo.com.au)



##### *Poor man's Diggings*

Member Vic Taylor is researching the remote Woolgar goldfield in northwest Queensland which he says fits neatly alongside Susan Lawrence's (1995) *Poor Man's Diggings: Subsistence Mining in the Nineteenth Century*. If any of our

members know of similar publications, would you please contact Vic at the School of Archaeology & Anthropology, ANU, Canberra ACT 0200.

Tel. (02) 6238 2506; Mob. 0427 158 081

E.Mail: [vic.taylor@anu.edu.au](mailto:vic.taylor@anu.edu.au)

### **Journal**

Ensure that your articles are in early for the 2006 edition, especially if you want to publish in the refereed section. There's no guarantee that if you wait until the Kadina Conference to submit that your work will be printed in 2006. Also remember (refereed and non-refereed) to submit according to the instructions in the style sheet. This is often ignored – but every slipshod submission means you are passing on the work to someone else!

### **Bits-and Pieces**

#### ***Member honoured***

It was a proud day for our committee stalwart Dr. Ruth Kerr and others of her family when they attended the 'launch' of a locomotive in memory of her late husband John Kerr (see Obituary, *Newsletter 4*, Issue 35, December 2003). John had a fine reputation as a railway historian and many of his works were associated with mining rails. It was appropriate therefore that Locomotive L271 (standard gauge) should be commissioned on 16 November 2005 at Newstan Colliery at Newcastle and named 'John Douglas Kerr Historian'. Accompanying the occasion was a function organised by Queensland Railways and the managers of Interail (a QR subsidiary who own the loco). In attendance were the railway staff, (including the driver of steam loco 3801, which is the premier and fastest steam loco operating on Australian railways), John's cousin and his wife, a few railway historians, John Shoebridge (Newcastle member of AMHA and former manager of Mines rescue in the region) and Ruth (see photo towards end of newsletter).

#### ***AustIMM Publications***

Anyone interested in a long run of the News Bulletins of the Australasian Institute of Mining & Metallurgy (from about 1950 to 1980s), and a few other AustIMM oddments?

Lots of information about people and events in an interesting period of Australasian mining. You pay freight/postal charges, otherwise FREE to the first one in touch.

Contact David Branagan, e-mail: [dbranaga@mail.usyd.edu.au](mailto:dbranaga@mail.usyd.edu.au)

#### ***Willunga Slate Museum open – the first of its kind***

Member Faye Lush who has long had an interest in the history of the Willunga Slate Quarry, provides the following information on the recent opening of a museum in South Australia devoted to the subject. Faye would like to know if there are any other slate museums in Australia? Faye hopes to attend the Kadina Conference along with a few other members of the local national Trust group and they will no doubt be happy to discuss the project with anyone interested. Faye can be contacted at: Willunga National Trust on 08-8323 7513. Email: [fayelush@ozemail.com.au](mailto:fayelush@ozemail.com.au), or contact Chair of the Willunga Branch, Contact Julie Taylor (Chair, Willunga Branch, National Trust of SA) phone 08 8556 2255.

'A long held ambition of members of the Willunga Branch of the National Trust of SA has been fulfilled with the official opening of the Willunga Slate Museum. More than 700 people attended the opening on 6<sup>th</sup> November, during an open day to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the National Trust in SA.

Slate was discovered in the steep hills behind Willunga in 1840 and the slate industry was important to the social and economic development of the district. The slate quarries attracted skilled quarrymen and slate workers to the colony, mostly from Cornwall. Slate is a distinctive feature of Willunga's many quaint

historic cottages and public buildings through its use in roofing, flooring, paving, fencing and water tanks. Willunga roofing slate was also used in many public buildings in SA and interstate.

The Willunga Slate Museum is housed in the heritage-listed stable buildings at the Willunga Courthouse and Police Station at 61 High Street. The displays tell the story of the discovery of slate and the traditional skills of quarrying, splitting, sawing, measuring and trimming. The dangers of the quarryman's life and the contribution of the quarrymen and their families to the community are also featured. Of special interest are the tools used by Cliff Reed, one of the last of the quarrymen. Also on display is a foot-powered slate trimmer, the first to be used in the quarries.

Although there were other slate quarries in the state there is no other slate museum in SA, possibly Australia. The Willunga museum will complement other SA initiatives in cultural tourism such as the Mining Heritage Trail and a tourism focus on Cornish heritage and mines.

Planning and fund-raising for the Slate Museum started at least five years ago and a comprehensive concept plan was prepared in 2001, followed by modification of the existing stable building to create a secure, dust-free environment and to address access and lighting deficiencies. Finally in 2005 the displays were created and installed.

The total cost to date has been \$63,000. This was funded by generous grants from the History Trust of SA and the SA Tourism Commission with the balance from the Willunga Branch of the National Trust of SA and several generous private donations. The Willunga Slate Museum and the adjoining Courthouse Museum are open from 1.00pm to 5.00pm on weekends and public holidays (excluding Christmas Day) and from 11 am to 4 pm on Tuesdays. Group visits, which often include a courtroom re-enactment, can be arranged at other times, phone 08 8556 2195.

## KADINA CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Attached is some pre-conference information prepared by our keen South Australian Committee. As a **note of warning** to those who wish to present a paper, the allocated slots on the programme are **fast being filled**. So if you intend to submit an abstract, it's best to do this **soon**. You have been warned! Also, please contact the following specified folk with regard to registrations, delivering a paper, or for general information.

For information about registration contact:

Mel Davies, Ph: (08) 6488 2939

Email: [mel.davies@uwa.edu.au](mailto:mel.davies@uwa.edu.au)

For information about delivering a paper contact:

Peter Bell, Ph: (08) 8373 1900

Email: [pbell@adelaide.on.net](mailto:pbell@adelaide.on.net)

For general information about the conference and the Copper Triangle contact:

Greg Drew, Ph: (08) 8463 3270;

Email: [drew.greg@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:drew.greg@saugov.sa.gov.au)

or

Graham Hancock,

Ph: (08) 88211600; Email:

[ghancock@yp-connect.net](mailto:ghancock@yp-connect.net)

## Memberships

Yes folks, the time has come the Walrus said to think of many things, of ships and sails and ceiling wax and cabbages and kings – but also he so softly said of **memberships** and things!! So dip into your pocket or to your cheque book go and write the name of AMHA to reach me by New Year!

MJD/Dec'05

**AUSTRALIAN MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE, KADINA JULY 5-9, 2006**

**The Copper Triangle – *Australia's Little Cornwall***

**GETTING TO KADINA**

Kadina is about 2 hours drive from Adelaide. For those without a vehicle or who prefer not to drive, mini-buses will leave Adelaide on Wednesday morning July 5, arriving in Kadina late morning. The buses will return after the Moonta Mine Tour arriving in Adelaide on Sunday evening July 9 or Monday evening July 10 for those on the Post Conference tour. Limited seats will be available at approx. \$50 return depending on numbers. Pick up/drop off locations and times will be advised.

**THE VENUE**

All presentations will be held in the Kadina Visitor Centre which is located at 50 Moonta Road about 1 km south of the Kadina commercial area. Morning and afternoon teas and lunches are included in the registration fee.

**ACCOMMODATION**

You will need to book your own conference accommodation. However, conference block bookings at special rates have been made at:

**Kadina Gateway Motor Inn, Adelaide Rd, Kadina**

**Phone: (08) 8821 2777 Free call 1800 665 005**

Email: [kadgatewayminn@bigpond.com](mailto:kadgatewayminn@bigpond.com)

About 3 km distance from the conference venue.

Standard motel accommodation – approximately \$110 per couple per night.

*The Copper Triangle has a wide range of accommodation which can be booked at:*

***Kadina Visitor Information Centre***

*Freecall: 1800 654 991153 and ask for Rose Boxall*

*Email: [tourism@yorke-peninsula.net](mailto:tourism@yorke-peninsula.net)*

Accommodation options can be viewed on: [www.yorkepeninsula.com.au](http://www.yorkepeninsula.com.au)

**Please book your accommodation directly, not through the conference organisers.**

**KADINA FACTS**

Kadina, at near sea level, has a Mediterranean climate with a cool, moist winter. The average annual rainfall is 370mm with most rain falling between April and October. Average temperatures for July are about 8°C minimum and 15°C maximum.

## **REGISTRATION AND OPEN HOUSE**

Registration will commence at 2 pm. on Wednesday in the Kadina Visitor Centre which is adjacent to the Matta Mine and the eastern end of the famous Wallaroo Lode. The adjacent National Trust Farm Shed Museum which includes Matta House built in 1863 for the manager of the Matta Mine will be open free for registrants during registration. The remains of the beam enginehouse at the Matta Shaft can also be inspected.

At 2 pm and 3.30 pm, local historian Keith Bailey will lead guided tours (free to all registrants) of the Wallaroo Mines Historic Site including Harveys Enginehouse. Tour leaves from the car park in Lipson Ave.

## **SOCIAL EVENTS**

On Wednesday evening the Copper Coast Council will host a Welcoming Reception in the Kadina Town Hall following the Open House. This is included in the registration fee. A Social Event will be held in the Wallaroo Town Hall on Thursday evening. Food and drink will be provided and are included in the registration fee. The highlight of the evening will be entertainment provided by local groups.

The Conference Dinner will be held on Friday evening in the Moonta Town Hall.

## **TOURS**

A number of tours to sites of interest in the Copper Triangle have been interspersed throughout the program. All excursions have limited numbers so early booking is recommended.

On Thursday afternoon, a tour will give an overview of the history and development of the coastal town of Wallaroo, which was once the site of the largest copper smelter outside Wales. It will include the smelter site and the Heritage and Nautical Museum.

On Friday a special two-hour tour of Wheal Hughes tourist mine has been arranged. This mine was developed in the early 1990s as an open cut and later as an underground mine. This fascinating tour includes inspection of the underground workings. Transport will be provided if necessary. An alternative bus tour of the Moonta cemetery will be provided for those not wishing to go underground.

On Saturday morning there will be a walking tour of Moonta provided by local guides. The cost is included in the registration fee.

The highlight of the tours will be Moonta Mines State Heritage Area on Sunday. In the morning you will visit the National Trust sites including the Moonta Mines School Museum, Tourist Railway, Miners Cottage, Moonta Mines Uniting Church and Moonta Mines settlement. Morning tea and lunch are included in the cost. In the afternoon, the tour will cover the 1.5 km length of Elders Main Lode including Hughes and Richmans Cornish enginehouses, the Skimps Heap Lookout and Taylors Shaft.

Inspection of other mines in the Moonta district will be arranged for Monday July 10 if there is sufficient interest.

### **Bendigo Tour July 2005**

A few photographs thanks to Mr. Click himself (Greg Dickens) on the post Ballarat Conference three-day tour. Some of the sites were tracked down by David White on private property

Brick Cornish engine house, **Berry No.1 Shaft**, near Smeaton



Engine house, **Duke of Cornwall Mine**, Fryerstown



Adit portal, **Quartz Hill Mine**, near Chewton



Elevated view of AMHA group around a shaft, **Stewart's Freehold Mine**, near Carisbrook



Brick magazine, **Loddon Valley Goldfields Mine**, near Carisbrook



Cornish engine house, **Victoria Gold Estates No.1 Shaft**, near Smeaton



Machinery site & dump in the background, **Berry United Mine**, near Smeaton



Shaft water baler, **Dyke's North West Shaft**, near Smeaton



The 'John Douglas Kerr Historian' Locomotive, with Ruth Kerr at the controls

