



AUSTRALIAN MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC

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Editorial

That mining history has a positive future was well illustrated at the 7th International Mining History Congress held in December 2007 at the magnificent Mayfair Lagoon hotel and conference centre in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India. There were about 150 delegates (and some partners) who attended the sessions, and it was heartening to see that many of our Indian colleagues from the industry who before the conference did not really know what was meant by 'mining history', came out with an appreciation of the value of looking back to the past at mining issues and developments even if only as a tool of understanding the present state of the industry and in learning lessons from the past.

It was pleasing to see AMHA members and partners well represented among those in attendance. As well as yours truly and wife Sharon, we saw Ross and Anne Both; Criena Fitzgerald & Bill; Charlie Fox & Jan; John Hillman; Jeremy Mouat & Linda; Ken McQueen; Ian Schomburgk, and Eleanor Swent. In addition to the presentations, there was an attractive cultural programme, invitations to

meals at the homes of our hosts and some of our members were even invited one evening to an exotic wedding at the hotel. There was also an interesting bus trip to TATA's chromite mine that saw Ken McQueen salivating along the way when we came across miles and miles of bare mountain faces that were being quarried for rock. His sample bag full, it is a puzzle as to how, with the added load, that his plane managed to take off when pointed in the direction of Australia.

For pasty eaters of Cornish descent, it will come as a nice surprise to learn that it was moved and unanimously agreed that the next and 8th International Mining History Congress will be held in Cornwall in 2009. Details will be announced soon.

Forthcoming Conferences

International Conference on Chinese Mining in Australia and Asia-Pacific: Trans-national Histories, Archaeology and Heritage, ANU, Canberra, 11-13 July 2008

To mark the sesquicentennial of the influx of Chinese on to the New South Wales goldfields in 1858 an international conference, hosted by the Centre for the Study of the Chinese Southern Diaspora, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, with the main sponsor being the National Museum of Australia, will be held

at the ANU in July 2008. It will bring together scholars, historians, archaeologists, heritage and museum specialists, and other researchers from throughout Australia and overseas to explore, examine, and share their research findings on the Chinese in Australian Mining History. In addition to the Chinese on the New South Wales mining fields, the conference will be concerned with the comparative history and archaeology of Chinese on other mining fields in Australia and overseas, in particular southeast Asia, the Americas, and New Zealand, as well as within China itself. The four major themes of the conference, for which proposals for panels and papers are now sought will be the following:

- a) Comparative and trans-national histories of Chinese mining communities in Australia and the Asia-Pacific;
- b) Chinese mining technology, technological transfer and innovation overseas;
- c) Historical archaeology of Chinese mining: sites, artefacts, and material culture;
- d) Presenting and representing Chinese mining heritage overseas in the digital age: theme parks, heritage trails, museums, and digitization.

Proposals for panels and papers on other aspects of Chinese overseas mining history beyond these themes would also be welcomed and considered. Pre- and post-conference tours, field work and workshops are being planned to Southern NSW and Braidwood, and to Hill End Sofala, and the Turon, in the central west of NSW.

Expressions of interest and offers of panels or papers should be sent to one of the following convenors of the

conference, from whom further information can also be obtained:

Henry Chan (Chinese Australian Historical Society & University of Sydney), Chair of the Conference Organizing Committee, e-mail: <henry.chan@arts.usyd.edu.au>

Dr Keir Reeves (Univ of Melbourne), <keir@unimelb.edu.au>

Dr Li Tana, (Director, CSCSD, ANU), <tana.li@anu.edu.au>

Dr Barry McGowan (ANU), <barry@cyberone.com.au>

AMHA 14th Annual Conference, Queenstown, Tas. 4-10th October '08. 'Mines Amongst the Mountains'

Our Tasmanian organiser, Greg Dickens, has been burning the miles to tee up a full and exhilarating programme for Queenstown that will gladden the hearts of all our regular conference addicts and camp followers. Greg reports that conference delegates will leave Launceston at 9.00am, or the Airport at 10.0am, on Saturday 4th October. At the end of the conference, buses will travel on the morning of Friday 10th October to reach Launceston Airport at approximately 1.30 pm. Queenstown, home to the famous Mt. Lyell Mine, is set amongst spectacular mountains, rivers and rainforest. The town is central to the many attractions that are planned for the Conference. Places to be visited include historic Zeehan; Robert Stitch's mansion 'Penghana'; the mining centres of Rosebery, Tullah and Renison Bell; Lake Margaret Power Station; Waratah; Mt. Bischoff Mine; a trip on the Mt. Lyell Railway, as well as a visit to Strahan. A wide range of accommodation is available. Abstracts of papers to reach the AMHA Secretary by 30th July 2008. **Note:** five papers already in! See registration form enclosed.

Bits-and Pieces

Pastie – Pasty!

Yours truly has been sharply and rightly pulled up by Moonta's Richard Hancock who noted that in the December'07 newsletter I scurrilously spelt the delectable Cornish

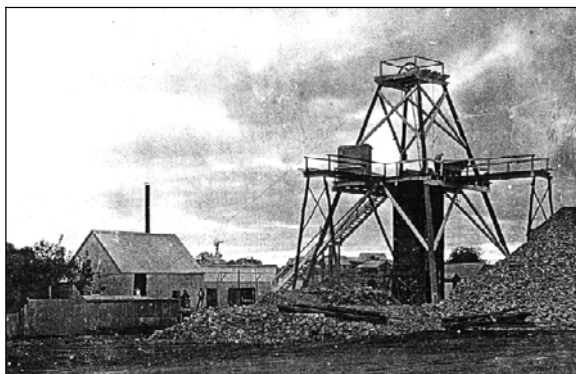
delicacy as 'pastie'. The true spelling is of course 'pasty'. As Richard points out, 'pastie refers to the twirly attachment to the nipple of a go-go dancer'. Quite a different dish, and perhaps reflecting upon the editor's devious subconscious mind!

Loss of the London North Headframe

Our good President presents this sad story regarding an important mining heritage structure in Queensland:

For many years, one of the remarkable sights of the gold mining town of Ravenswood in North Queensland was the headframe of the London North mine, located beside a main street in the heart of the town. This was probably Australia's last timber mine headframe (apart from modern replicas) standing in an urban area.

The London North was a small mine which opened in 1903 to explore an extension of the London reef, mined from a shaft near the railway station. At that late date the London North was forced to operate on a surveyed allotment in built-up Elphinstone Street. The shaft was sunk to 458' (140m) depth, but production was disappointing, and it was let on tribute in 1907 and operated intermittently until 1915. The London North re-opened during the Depression-era revival in 1937, but closed again a few months later.



London North Mine about 1905 (MIM Holdings Archive)

In September 2007 the headframe collapsed, the victim of old age and long-

term lack of maintenance. It had been recognised since the 1960s that the London North headframe was of heritage significance, as well as a tourism asset to the town of Ravenswood and the Dalrymple Shire. No fewer than five conservation studies advised on the headframe between 1975 and 2000. Public funding was made available for conservation work on the London North headframe in the early 1990s, but apparently used for another purpose. Not one cent had been spent on conservation work on the headframe since 1937.

The Record of Ravenswood's Headframes

Sad as the loss of the London North headframe is, the bigger picture is much worse. In 1975 when the first conservation management plan for Ravenswood was written, there were still seven timber mine headframes standing in and immediately outside the town. These were the Eureka beside the Imperial Hotel in Macrossan Street, Golden Hill near Saint Patrick's church, the London North in Elphinstone Street, and four - the Grant & Sunset Extended, Sunset No.2, Duke of Edinburgh Underlie and Sunset Underlie - on the former New Ravenswood Company leases just south of the town.



London North Mine from the doorway of the Railway Hotel, 1979

Since then the Eureka and Sunset No.2 have collapsed, and the Golden Hill and Grant & Sunset Extended have been demolished in the

course of mining operations. All these losses occurred between about 1977 and 1988. The headframes at the Duke of Edinburgh Underlie and the Sunset Underlie - which was the most important mine in Ravenswood's history - have now collapsed into heaps of rotting logs. The only one left standing until a few months ago was the London North headframe.

This is an abysmally poor record, which raises the question of how effective the whole modern era of heritage registers and conservation grants has really been in preserving relics of mining industry. In the 30 years since Ravenswood's significance was recognised and active conservation measures commenced, the town has lost all of its seven timber headframes.

Peter Bell

Information Wanted

Sydney Quarrying Sites- Coal Mines

LachlanHunter is hosting a growing directory of geological and quarrying sites, working out from Sydney. If any of our members know of any quarry sites around Sydney then John Byrnes (details below) would like to hear from you.

John is also looking for people who know and are interested in coalmines between Sydney and Newcastle. In particular he is interested in the mines of the Swansea peninsula. He also seeks information on the Southern Pacific Colliery at Fennell Bay near Toronto. To date he has been unable to locate any records but knows that it commenced operation and ceased production in the early 1900s. It was a small mine and didn't employ many men.

John's interest in the coal measures and the mines of that area is to discover records that mention fossil trees in order to trace laterally the

fossil forest of Fennell Bay. A story recorded by a missionary states that there was an Aboriginal connection to the trees but contact with modern day Aboriginal sources reveals nothing, though John suggests that it may represent one of those stories which indicate people may have met the megafauna, the experience of which was held in 'cultural memory'.

For further information see web page:

<http://www.lachlanhunter.deadsetfreestuff.com/JB/fennell-bay1.htm>

If you have any information please contact John Byrnes (Geologist), LachlanHunter Associates, P.O. Box 121, Burwood, NSW 1805. Tel: 02-97473701;

Email: john.mail@ozemail.com.au

Book news

The following note is from our foreign correspondent, Ruth Kerr (Qld), who spotted the article by John Feary, in 'Mining News', a daily e.mail on the mining industry in Australia (23 November 2007). As Ruth states, cultural heritage and history stories are very rare in that medium.

'THE usual image of Western Australia's Pilbara region is of a dry, dusty, harsh and blokey place that also happens to be one of our greatest national sources of mineral wealth. Less commonly noted is that the area is also a place of great beauty for those who are able to recognise it, including many women.

Now a group of women with long associations with the Pilbara are showing the world the region's intense appeal in a new book, *Red Dust in Her Veins*. Writer Lisa Holland-McNair has interviewed 12 women of the Pilbara for the book, which was officially launched in Karratha on November 14.

The publication of *Red Dust in Her Veins* was initiated by two of the women whose interviews appear in it. Melva Stone was the first European woman to become a permanent resident of the new town of

Newman when she moved there with her husband in 1968, in the early stages of the iron ore mining boom, and later became a radio operator for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Port Hedland. Erica Smyth was transferred to the region in the early 1970s and her career as a geologist has taken her back there for several stints. Although now living out of the region, both women retained their love for the Pilbara. Smyth was later appointed by the WA Government to chair the Pilbara Development Commission, and Stone continued her association with the RFDS by serving as its WA president. They have also become close friends, and the idea for the book came from the number of people who, hearing about Stone's pioneering role, urged her to write her story.

But in the choice of interview subjects and the writing skills of Holland-McNair, *Red Dust in Her Veins* goes much further than the challenges faced by white women in a tough, male-dominated region. Four of the women whose stories are told in the book were born in the Pilbara, indigenous women who are connected through thousands of years of culture and custom. For Stone and Smyth, it was important that the stories of the original Australians in the region were also told.

Although mining is the Pilbara's dominant economic activity, *Red Dust in Her Veins* also tells the stories of women linked to the pastoral industry and fishing industries. And it is not just a celebration of the attractions of Pilbara, because the women also talk of having to cope with isolation, the strains that led to many family breakdowns, and the health challenges in a place so far from immediate medical aid.

Even as the person who originally proposed the book, Stone said she

never imagined the end product would be so inspiring. Smyth said she also was amazed at the willingness of the women to open up to the interviewer. "They have shared with us places and experiences most of us have never imagined," she said. For both Stone and Smyth, however, the publication of the book has highlighted the loss of regional communities because of the modern trend towards fly-in, fly-out mining schedules. "If you don't have communities," Smyth said, "the blokes don't stay."

The publication of *Red Dust in Her Veins* has been underwritten by Rio Tinto Iron Ore, whose chief executive Sam Walsh described it as a "blockbuster" that he had read in one sitting. Profits from the initial print run of 4500 copies will go to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The book will also be launched in the United States as part of the G'Day USA event hosted by Australian Consul General to New York in January next year. Copies of *the book* can be ordered through the website: www.womenofthepilbara.com.au

There is also a section on the website where others can tell their own stories of women in the Pilbara'. See source at <http://www.miningnewspremium.net/> 23 November 2007

Research Holdings

Members carrying out research in NSW, in particular, might care to examine the offerings for downloading from the following web site: www.ozhistorymine.com/html/services.html

Congratulations

Congratulations to old time members **Michael** and **Jennifer Tracey** who both obtained their PhDs in 2007. Michael (who designed our logo) and Jennifer have since moved from Canberra and will be located close to Ruth Kerr at St Lucia, Queensland. Congratulations also go to **Michael Williams** who was also doctored in 2007! He and Nic continue to contribute greatly towards the functioning of the AMHA. And again, congrats to John Mills who similarly triumphed with his doctorate in 2007.

Journal

Sincere apologies to Bill MacGee for a problem that arose in his article, 'Tragedy on the Strickland: Jack Hides and the Investors Ltd Expedition of 1937', in the last journal, Vol. 5, 2007. Because of some unfathomable reason the overlay that was included in Map 1, p. 51, disappeared and left a blank where rivers and other features should have been shown. An *addendum* will be included in the next volume to try to re-dress the problem.

Regarding this September's Vol. 6: while the editor was delighted to see two articles being submitted even before the print on the September 2007 volume had cooled, the expected stream of articles has dried up. I know there are a number of people out there who are anxious to get their work published but please don't leave your submission to the last minute. In theory we require articles to be submitted **at least** four or five months in advance if justice is to be done to the submitted works. There are referees and editors to consider and most papers require an appreciable amount of vetting before they are ready for publication. So please submit as soon as you can. This will add to the joy of the editor and expectant readers!

IMHC Bhubaneswar 2007

Intrepid mining historians at TATA's Chromite Mine, Orissa, including AMHA delegates and rock fanatics



Swimming pool at the Mayfair Lagoon, Bhubaneswar where members 'slummed it' at the 7th International Mining History Congress



Mayfair Lagoon – Lagoon and accommodation



Grand entrance to Bhubaneswar Conference venue, Mayfair Lagoon



Memberships Reminder

Have you remembered to renew your membership for 2008? Early return of forms and cheques greatly appreciated.

MJD/March'08



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Editorial

Although we might note with interest and even applaud the boom in iron ore exports and Chinese take-overs that is making fortunes for miners, there are two sides to the story. While on the one hand the thriving West of the country is contributing to our buoyant economy and making shareholders in the industry very happy, on the other hand it is creating mayhem. Not that the 'Dutch Disease, or 'Gregory effect' is something new, as folk with memories of the 60s and later mineral booms will recognise, for the same story is being played out – high mineral prices, massive development and exports that raise the value of the Ozzie dollar and force up costs that impact on our other export earning industries. These become less competitive on the international market as prices in our currency increase and imports become cheaper. The situation also adds to inflation, causes wages to increase, and consequently results in a flow of resources from other sectors to mining. The result is seen in skill shortages, and as witnessed recently in Western Australia, results in a rise in housing costs and rents, to the distress of the less fortunate in society.

There are obviously winners and losers but that has long been the story of booms in the primary sector. Thus a matter of swings and

roundabouts that works its way out with great advantage to some but disadvantage to others. The answer of benefiting all sectors of the economy and population in the process is a conundrum that tends to defeat economists. It's no wonder that economics is known as the dismal science!

This is not to condemn the developments, but just to point out that success can create a plethora of problems. History has a habit of repeating itself and without any meaningful economic solution all that can be said is that in the long run there should be benefits to society! But as all will be aware – in the long run we are all dead.

Web Page

Please note a change of address for our web page. This is now being hosted by web master (mistress?), Judy Rechner, from the Royal Historical Society of Queensland. The new address is: <http://amha.asn.au/> which is about 30 digits shorter than the old one – so a far easier exercise for the brain of those suffering, as is the ed., from shrinking neurons and memory.

Forthcoming Conferences

*AMHA 14th Annual Conference,
Queenstown, Tas. 4-10th October '08.*

Quite a few registrations already received but please don't leave it until the last minute

to send back your forms, as its important that we get a good indication some time before the event so that planning can be finalized. Greg Dickens and yours truly will be disappointed if you're tardy in responding.

As stated on the registration form, there was a limit on the underground visits at Mt. Lyell. **Most places have already been filled**, so before sending in your form, please e.mail the Secretary to see if there are still slots available. Even if there are no vacancies, the surface tour will still provide members with a visit to that famed mining spot where you can breathe in the rare and embracing mineral laden air. Please note: **abstracts have to be in by the 31st July**. To date we have had 17 people respond, so again, hurry if you are to be accommodated. Don't wait - get in now so as to feature as a Queenstown star.

8th International Mining History Congress, Cornwall, June 2009

Roger Burt and his hard working Exeter University group are now publicising the next International meeting of the IMHC. Pre and post conference tours are also being arranged and the conference will be held at the 'bouquet' Penventon Park Hotel, Redruth, between **12-15 June 2009**. See web page at:

www.huss.ex.ac.uk/history/imhc/index.htm

If interested in giving a paper, contact Dr Peter Cloughton at p.f.cloughton@ex.ac.uk and provide a title. Abstracts of no more than 250 words have to be forwarded by 1st December 2008. Peter will also be present at our Queenstown Conference to whip up support for this Cornish venture.

Furthermore, appealing to jet-setting Mining History junkies will be the additional conference put on by the **British National Association Of Mining History Organisations [NAMHO]**. This will take place at Matlock, Derbyshire, the following weekend, 19th to 21st June 2009. Details yet to be announced.

Information Wanted

Wangat and Whispering Gully Gold mines, Maureen Kingston asks for help in her research of mines in the Hunter Valley region of NSW. She writes:

'By way of background, Dungog is a small country town located in the Williams Valley, in the lower part of the Hunter Region, NSW. In 1879 gold was discovered at what is now called locally Upper Wangat and Whispering Gully - about 30kms from here. Both locations are now in the Barrington Tops National Park and wilderness areas. Another member of the Dungog Historical Society and I are undertaking research for a book about the mines and the miners and their families. We have got the mine's reports and many of the plans for the mines, the post office records and some family histories and photos and the plans for the village of Upper Wangat, as well as photos of remnants of equipment. National Parks have been very helpful in taking us to areas where road access is usually not permitted. They are also going to take us to the remnants of the village later in the year. The mines in the area are virtually unknown and we believe their history should be recorded - eg unemployed coal miners from Newcastle were sent up here during the depression.

There were also gold mines near Gloucester, known as the Copeland Mines - there is a book about them.

The mines were located in difficult, steep and remote country. There was some alluvial mining at Whispering Gully but the rest was located in quartz veins near Upper Wangat and the Little or Wangat River and the Mountaineer Trail. The mines were never very successful because of the lack of capital and their location. Another problem was that the quartz veins often disappeared because the area had been subject to volcanic activity (I have found a book on the geology of the Barrington's but it is really written for geologists or amateur

geologists) - most of the other papers I've located are very technical - if you have any suggestions about possible articles or books to search I would be most grateful for any assistance. The mining history of the area will not any make sense unless it is put in geological and geographic perspective.

They had stampers, including one with an 18 ft water wheel. We are particularly looking for a photo of the water wheel - we have a photo of a much smaller stamper driven by steam.

If your members have any information, including geological information, photos or family history material about the history of the Wangat and Whispering Gully Gold mines, which could be used in the book, please contact Maureen Kingston, Secretary, Dungog Historical Association, PO Box 3 Dungog, NSW 2420.

E. Mail: maureenk@bravo.net.au

Tel.: 02-49922094.

All sources will be acknowledged'

Journal

The editor is getting worried – June already and only three articles and a comment on a previous article in the pipeline. As stressed on a number of previous occasions, the process for refereeing and editing takes some time, and with the next volume due in September it leaves very little margin to get the material into print. So, if you have something to offer, please submit your paper this month rather than in late August! Articles for both the refereed and un-refereed sections welcome.

Also, please look at the journal style sheet on our web page, or contact me for a copy before you submit. This will save us both time and effort.

Bits and Pieces

Wheal Hughes

Our good President alerted me to the following article written by Sharon Mascall, that appeared in the *Adelaide Review* of 28 May 2008 (so hot off the press!). This may

be of interest for those who went on the underground tour during the 2006 Kadina Conference

“Take a tag and hang it on your belt. You’ll need it later,” says Ron Knott, a straight talking miner from Broken Hill with a long white beard that looks like it has been permed. Either that or he puts it in plaits at night. The perfect curl looks too neat to be natural.

Next, we put on hairnets. The ones made of thin, white gauze that you see in emergency departments and cheese factories. Our hair is tucked underneath; a miner’s helmet is slapped on top.

“The light’s in the wrong place,” says Ron, adjusting the switch on the side of his bulb. Suddenly we all discover our lights and fiddle, like a herd of blinking Cyclops. “The lights used to be angled down so they didn’t shine in people’s eyes,” he says. Once we are underground I see what he means. Every time our eyes meet, our photons do too.

The blue tag is important. We are about to descend into a real mine, where men have fired holes, detonated explosives and created caverns by smashing rock and ore. We may be tourists, but we have the same rules. Our tags go on a board, hanging at the entrance. If we don’t escape the darkness, they are proof we’re still there.

The mine – called Wheal Hughes – has also found a way out of obscurity. Located near Moonta, on the Yorke Peninsula, it is one of the few tourist mines still operating in Australia. Six months ago, it faced closure. It was draining the local council’s coffers, costing tens of thousands of dollars to run.

“Give the Mine a Go,” said the local newspaper. “Save Our Mine” said protestors with placards. The campaign worked. The council reconsidered and a business plan was drawn up. Costs would be cut by staffing the mine with volunteers. In true Aussie style, a sausage sizzle was organised

to recruit the helping hands: 59 people signed up from Moonta and towns nearby.

The campaign was fuelled by nostalgia and a nose for business. Moonta is a place where engine houses are held in high esteem and stories of Cornish miners fill bookshop shelves. The “Copper Triangle” towns of Moonta, Kadina and Wallaroo take their mining heritage seriously.

While most visitors to the Yorke Peninsula come for the sea – with its Whitsunday white beaches and stocks of fish – the locals know it takes more than whiting and crabbing to win the tourist dollar. Cornish copper mining has become Moonta’s marketing mantra. It is “Australia’s Little Cornwall” where the pasties are almost always Cornish and the mines are “National Trust”. “Wheal” is Cornish for mine and “Hughes” was the name of an early Moonta mine owner – his land revealed the first traces of copper in 1861. Wheal Hughes was a modern mine with an historic marketing opportunity.

While production at most Moonta copper mines ceased by 1923, Wheal Hughes did not open for business until 1990. Exploration in the 1960s revealed a seam of copper that went on to produce nearly half a million tonnes of ore.

At first the money was good. Then, the price of copper crashed. Worth just 74 cents a pound, it cost 72 cents to produce. Just seven years after it opened, management decided to close the Wheal Hughes mine in 1993, only to discover – fifteen years on – that the price of copper has risen 500 percent to \$3.60 a pound. Had the mine stayed open, it would be worth millions today.

Instead, Wheal Hughes became a tourist mine – with reinforced rock faces held firm with bolts and mesh. As Ron drives us down to the black hole – the entrance to the mine – the seam of copper is easy to spot. At first glance it looks like green paint has

been splashed down the cliff-face. At times it is turquoise; in places it is powder blue. The red rocks become a canvas daubed with colour. Then the copper dissolves into green rivers beside the path, and you descend underground.

The tour is as real as it can be. It winds through seams of copper ore to rock faces where explosives have done their worst. “The only difference in a working mine,” says Ron, “is the smell of diesel.” Here it just smells damp, from the water that drips, forming bright blue stalactites hanging down from the roof.

We hear about hidden gems - Jock McAllister, a Scot with a predilection for fossicking, is also a volunteer tour guide – and how the rock is smashed with explosives blasted at microsecond intervals. Ron knows his dynamite from his nitro. He may be a volunteer, but 20 years as a miner means his expertise is professional, not amateur.

After an hour we rediscover daylight and our blue tags. We hitch a ride to the top of the green spattered cliffs to find an army of helmet-carriers, belt-undoers and hairnet-helpers. Some days there are more volunteers than tourists – but no-one seems to mind. So far the new plan is working, since the mine re-opened in January, it has met its visitor targets.

“It’s something to do,” says Ron, matter-of-factly, when asked why he signed up as a volunteer. But as the next tour group arrives and he grabs his helmet and blue tag his beard betrays a smile.

Useful Information

Gavin Mudd has a useful page of mining information that he would like to share with members. All will be revealed by clicking on to his web page at:

<http://civil.eng.monash.edu.au/about/staff/muddpersonal/rr5/>

Another link has been forwarded by Rob Glazebrook on behalf of the Willis L. Haenke Historic Foundation, Ipswich, Qld. The Foundation promotes coalmining history in the Ipswich area, and their page can be found at:

www.haenkefoundation.org.au/mainsite/

You'll also find the link on our web page along with a list of other sites.

Photograph Identification

Ruth Kerr was recently given a few mining photographs. One has been identified as Tannymorel in Queensland but the rest remain a mystery to Ruth and folk at the Queensland Department of Mines and Energy. If you can identify any of the photos could you please contact Ruth at:

Tel: 07-38709588.

E.Mail: Ruth.Kerr@dpi.qld.gov.au

Photo 1: *Possibly Tannymorel, Qld.*



Photo 2: ?



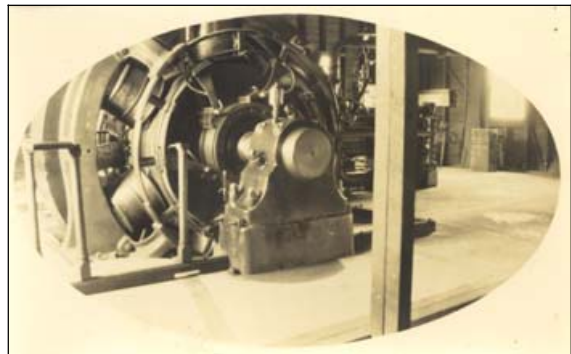
Photo 3: ?



Photo 4: ?



Photo 5: ?





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Editorial

I've run out of words of wisdom (and time), so this section shall remain blank, other than to say that the number of registrations suggest it we are going to enjoy another great gabfest at the Queenstown Conference. One year leaps out to grab at the next, and forward planners should note our 15th Annual Conference that will take place at Lithgow towards the end of 2009 under the eagle eye of Leonie Knapman. Details available in the December newsletter.

Forthcoming Conferences

AMHA 14th Annual Conference, Queenstown, Tas. 4-10th October '08.

If numbers are anything to go by the Queenstown conference should be a success. To date we have about 80 registrations, and 29 presentations that are spread over the programme. These nestle among a host of social activities being organised by Greg Dickens and his local committee. The only area where we are a few short of the targeted number is the Abt Railway trip, probably because a number of people have already experienced the joys of that venture. But if you are among that group and want to enjoy the company of fellow rock hounds then please think again and let Greg Dickens or myself know and we'll be delighted to accommodate you.

Those attending should note that the location of the **Civic Reception** has been changed from Queentown's TAFE to '**Penghana**', the historic former residence of Mt Lyell's General Manager, Robert Sticht.

In addition, there has been a change of venue for the morning tea and lunch scheduled for Thursday 9 October. This will now be held at the **Central Motel** (opposite the Zeehan Museum) rather than at the Zeehan RSL Club.

Also, note that the buses leaving **Launceston** will make the first pick up at **9.00am** at the **Avis Rental depot** that's located at the **Hotel Grand Chancellor** in the CBD. Address is 29 Cameron Street, Launceston, and it lies one block away from the GPO. The other pickup will take place at the **Airport** at 10.00am.

8th International Mining History Congress, Cornwall, June 2009

As major contributors to these events, it comes as no surprise to find that a fair number of members have already registered and forwarded abstracts to the conference organisers of the Congress that will be held at Redruth, between **12-15 June 2009**. Peter Claughton will be delighted to receive abstracts. These should be prepared so as to reach him by 1st December 2008. His

contact: <p.f.claughton@ex.ac.uk > or, hand them to him personally at our Queenstown conference. See web page for further details re the programme, accommodation, etc. at: www.huss.ex.ac.uk/history/imhc/index.htm

NAMHO Mining History Conference June 2009 – Call for papers

The 2009 National Association of Mining History Organisations Conference (UK) will be held at Matlock on the weekend of **19-22 June** (a few days after the International Congress). There will be the usual wide range of surface and underground field visits (at all grades of difficulty) extending from Friday to Monday, and a lecture programme on the Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday. Contributions to the lecture programme are now invited: the main theme will be mining landscapes, especially underground, and contributions concerning overseas mining. In particular papers relating to British ventures or technical linkages will be welcome. Papers will be published in *Mining History* and written drafts should be available at the conference.

For contributions to the lecture programme: contact Lynn Willies as soon as possible at <lynnwillies@Hotmail.com>

Preliminary Programme booking details will be available from November 2008 contact Robin Hall at: <www.peakmines.co.uk>

Colloque au Centre Historique Minier, 13, 14, 15 November 2008

Not much notice but some members may be interested in attending this international meeting run by the Mining History Centre of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region and CILAC - the National Association for Industrial Archaeology. The conference entitled 'Mining landscapes, a controversial heritage', will deal with all sorts of mining in France and abroad. The aim is to assess the state of the research on mining landscapes, and preservation. Registration forms and calls for papers can be found at:

<<http://groups.google.com.au/group/ticcih-inoz?hl=en>>

A little bird informs we'll be represented at this meet by Ruth Kerr!

Journal

Thankfully, there was a last minute rush of contributions, so that we can breath yet again. However, to ensure fewer sleepless nights, the eds would welcome early contributions for the 2009 volume. Make our Christmas by posting early!

Information Wanted

Philip's on a 'Bender'!

Our Kiwi cousin, Philip Hart, wishes to know whether anyone has come across a Russian-born American mining engineer and general self-proclaimed expert by the name of William Bender who claimed to have worked in the Americas and Europe before settling in New Zealand? He also claimed to be Dr Bender, though this would appear to have been a stretch of his imagination. He was active in first quarter of the twentieth century in prospecting for both gold and oil. If you can help, please contact Philip at: <prhart@waikato.ac.nz>

Bits and Pieces

ASHET

Our esteemed member from James Cook Uni., Jan Wegner, has drawn attention to an organization that may be of interest. This is ASHET, the Australian Society for History of Engineering and Technology, a non-profit society, incorporated in New South Wales and affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society. ASHET was formed in Sydney in 2003. Its objects are to encourage and promote community interest and education in the history of engineering and technology in Australia. Annual membership of ASHET is \$20 for ordinary members and \$30 for family membership. For more information or to download a membership application form, go to the ASHET website:

<http://www.ashet.org.au/>

ASHET's June newsletter contained an interesting article on Broken Hill, the personnel who formed the company, and the technological/chemical solutions found to recover the various metals in the ores.

Is the Pasty the new Champagne!?

This piece taken directly from a report 'Cornwall Protects its pasties' by Valerie Elliott in the *The Australian* of 28 July, will no doubt fill our Hancocks' and Johns' with ancestral pride – for the rare delicacy looks as if by decree of Brussels it will be removed from the list of endangered European species! So, to continue the pasty saga that has unfolded in past editions of this newsletter, we record the following:

'There are pasties and there are Cornish pasties, and it has been left to a vegetarian to tell them apart. A six-year campaign by pasty-makers in Cornwall has persuaded British Rural Affairs Minister Hilary Benn, a vegetarian, that the name "Cornish Pasty" should be protected in law. He has decided that the Cornish should have the exclusive right to use their county's name when selling pasties, which took off as a staple food for the county's tin miners in the 18th century.

If Brussels approves, the Cornish pasty will join the prestigious club of other top-quality produce in Europe such as Parma ham and champagne.

According to the rules put forward by the Cornish Pasty Association [shame on you Keith Johns if you're not a member], the authentic pasty must have a distinctive D shape and be crimped on the side. This feature was demanded by miners who had dirty hands. They were able to eat the meat and vegetable pie and then throw away the grimy crust. The filling must be uncooked mince or roughly cut chunks of beef – at least 12.5 per cent of the filling – mixed with potato, onion, swede or turnip, and a light peppery seasoning. The pastry is then glazed with milk or egg and baked'.

Thus, not only does this newsletter bring you the latest on the great pasty saga but also the recipe for those hungry for this newly elevated Cornish dish. What next we wonder - a revolutionary Cornish anthem in honour of the delicacy to be sung to The Internationale?

*'Arise ye starvelings, from your slumbers;
Arise ye prisoners of want;
For pasties now are here aplenty;
and ends at last the age of cant' ...*

Chorus

*So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The humble Cornish pasty
Unites the human race.*

Radium Hill Heritage Museum

Kevan Kakoschke has provided the following report on an award recently made to the Radium Hill Museum to the Radium Hill Museum:

'In 2008, ABC Radio National, conducted an Australia wide 'Marvellous Regional Museum's' competition. A special mention was awarded to the Radium Hill Heritage Museum for "working in most difficult circumstances", it being located in an isolated, ancient desert landscape of saltbush and bindii and suffering the harsh conditions of excessive temperature (49C in 2007) and dust. What caught the eye of the adjudicators were unusual problems caused by an under-floor resident goanna clawing holes in the concrete verandah, plus rabbits that undermined the building stumps necessitating major repairs. Such incidents helped sway the judges and caused them to comment that, "the Radium Hill Heritage Museum exhibited the additional, elusive 'something' that elevated you above your competition. Congratulations, Radium Hill".

Radium Hill was the site of Australia's first uranium mine (1906) and in the 1950's a town to accommodate up to 1200 people was built to house its employees and their families. The mine closed in December 1961 and all houses and mine buildings

were removed from the site. In 1994, the Treloar family, owners of the nearby sheep station, Tikalina, made an ex-station hand's house available (complete with bullet holes) to the Radium Hill Historical Association so that it could be rehabilitated and used for preserving and displaying memorabilia and artifacts of Radium Hill as part of the Olary region's history and cultural heritage. The resulting Radium Hill Heritage Museum has helped encapsulate the Radium Hill story from its initial discovery, its association with Sir Douglas Mawson, its heyday during the 1950's and its closure. It now houses its memories, legacies and historical artifacts'.

For additional information on the museum competition see: abc.net.au/rn/museums

Kevin Kakoschke OAM

The Mountain Mine

From the pen of our President, the following snippet proves that his mind is always on his on his work.

I was in Dublin for the World Archaeological Congress in July, and took a long detour to visit the Mountain Mine. This is a legendary Cornish engine house, built on a rugged mountainside overlooking the Atlantic Ocean on the tip of the Beara Peninsula at the extreme south-western tip of Ireland. The view from the mine can only be described as spectacular. This is just about as far west as you can go in Europe; the nearest land to your left is Canada.

The copper mine was operated by the Allihies Mining Company, a Cornish cost book company formed in 1812, which founded a little Cornish community in the wilds of West Cork to work the mine. In the village of Allihies at the foot of the mountain, the local mining museum is in the former Methodist chapel, an institution rarely found in Ireland.

The engine house was built in 1862 to house a 36-inch rotative beam engine which was used for ore haulage. It also

operated a man engine. It worked until the mines closed in 1884. The Bearhaven Mines formed a cluster of workings in the vicinity - the Coom Mine and Kealogue Mine enginehouses are also visible from the site, although more tamely sited down on the coastal plain.

There were sporadic attempts to revive the mines until as recently as 1962, and the surroundings are scarred by opencut workings, old and new. The Mountain Mine enginehouse has lost its machinery, but the masonry is in good condition; conservation work carried out by the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland was completed in 2006. There is an account of a visit to the mine by our colleagues at the University of Exeter, on the web at <http://www.projects.ex.ac.uk/cmhp/visit.htm>

Peter Bell

Bereavement

We are sorry to report that Daryl McLeish, the informative guide, who assisted David White on a tour around the Moolort Deep Leads, Carisbrook, Talbot and Majorca, following the Bendigo Conference, passed away a couple of months ago. Since the 2005 Conference, Greg Dickens had kept in touch with him and has conveyed this sad news. Daryl had a number of publications to his credit, including the following mining texts:

Majorca: The Last Eldorado, (2007): *In the Beginning there was Carisbrook*, (2001). The latter two, published by the author, were associated with mining, and printed by McPherson's, Maryborough, Victoria.

Conference Abstracts

It's been practice in the past to publish the conference abstracts and mail the list with the newsletter and AGM Agenda. However 29 papers adds up to a problem of bulk, so to save trees and postage we refer you to our web page where the abstracts will be available. See: <http://amha.asn.au/>

MJD/Sept'08



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Editorial

As with good wine our conferences seem to improve as the years go by and proof of this was certainly seen at the recent Queenstown Conference organized by Greg Dickens and his committee. Using Queenstown as the hub, the tours around the rugged but scenic West Coast of Tasmania were a revelation to those used to more arid mining landscapes – and even Queenstown with its recently acquired greenery looked inviting with mountains wreathed in low cloud and occasional flashes of sunshine. Visits to Zeehan, Mt Bischoff and other well known sites of mining fame, as well as to Mt Lyell and places such as the Iron Blow that loomed over the town, made people appreciate the tremendous effort that must have been made by those pioneers and prospectors in this part of the world at a time when communication was to say the least, primitive.

The conference got off to an excellent start with a municipal reception at Penghana House, originally home to Mt Lyell's manager Robert Sticht who used the vantage point on top of a hill to look down on his minions in the town below. With 29 papers on offer there was something to interest everyone and the quality of papers was appreciated by the eighty or so people who attended. A major highlight was the

keynote talk by our Patron, Geoffrey Blainey, who gave an inside story of his young days at Mt Lyell where he conducted his research into his first renown publication 'The Peaks of Lyell'. Not only was this an insight into the efforts that Geoffrey made to come to grips with the written records of this vast undertaking but it also touched upon the human side of his activities whether in playing 'footie' on the famed gravel oval, or in sitting with old miners and their families to catch their version of events, the hardships faced and the characters who inhabited this mining Mecca through days of prosperity and of hardship. Particularly memorable was the service held at the Queenstown cemetery to remember the 42 miners who died tragically underground in 1912 – an event earlier given substance through an excellent paper presented to the conference by Peter Schulze. Attended by local schoolchildren and descendants of the deceased, it was obvious that the tragedy has had a lingering impact. The speech by Geoffrey Blainey on this occasion, as well as the presentation made to him by the community was particularly poignant and perhaps highlighted more than anything else the importance that mining history has in keeping alive memories of the past that still resound today in many Australian communities.

Annual General Meeting

Of interest to everyone was the decision to keep the fees for 2009 at the current rate. However, it was noted that to keep the fees at this level it will be necessary in future to raise some sponsorship, especially to meet the costs of the journal. This avenue will be pursued before the next AGM is held at Lithgow next October.

It was also agreed that presenters be encouraged to illustrate their presentations using power-point, with Greg Drew volunteering to format presentations if there are difficulties.

Leonie Knapman confirmed the running of the 15th Annual conference at Lithgow, and Philip Hart and Brian Hill announced that the 2010 conference will be held sometime towards the end of June or early July at Greymouth, New Zealand.

A list of officers and committee members is listed at the end of the newsletter.

Forthcoming Conferences

AMHA 15th Annual Conference, Lithgow, NSW, 24-30th October '09.

Please note that the dates of the conference have been put forward a week from those that were advertised at the Queenstown Conference. Unfortunately, it was discovered that the dates previously chosen clashed with the World Masters Games in Sydney. Because of the numbers involved, most accommodation, even in Lithgow had been block booked by the Games organizers. So please change your diaries if you've already committed yourself to attending what looks like being another great conference. Information is contained in the enclosed brochure.

8th International Mining History Congress, Redruth, Cornwall

Planning for this event on 12-15 June is now reaching its final phase. Abstracts have already been received, though if you wish to still present a paper approach Peter Claughton at p.f.claughton@ex.ac.uk

There's no guarantee that late applications will be accepted! See Congress web page for further details at:

www.huss.ex.ac.uk/history/imhc/index.htm

For those wishing to plan, the event will start with a lecture on the evening of the 8th and trips will be organised on the 9th, 10th and 11th June, with the sessions following from 12th to 15th June at the Penventon Park Hotel, Redruth.

NAMHO Mining History Conference 19-22 June 2009

The 2009 National Association of Mining History Organisations Conference (UK) will be held at held at County Hall, Matlock, on 19, 20, 21 and 22nd - a week after the International Congress. For contribution to the lecture programme: contact Lynn Willies as soon as possible at lynnwillies@Hotmail.com

The theme of the conference is Archaeological Landscapes. Registration is available at the Museum throughout Friday until 5 pm and then at County Hall Matlock. There will be a reception on the Friday evening at County Hall which will include welcoming speeches from the NAMHO chairman and the PDHMS chairman. Dr Jim Rieuwerts, a founder member will talk about the early days of the Society. Dr John Barnatt will set the scene of the conference and finally dynamic underground photography by Paul Deakin and John Humble

A series of lectures will be held at County Hall on Saturday and Sunday. A programme of underground trips and surface walks will take place on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. This will offer a diverse insight into archaeological landscapes in Derbyshire. Details of the entire programme will be available soon on the PDHMS website, www.pdmhs.com

Underground trips are of varying severity and will require suitable attire to be worn. There are also limited places on these trips.

On the Friday and Saturday evenings, food will be available at County Hall together with bar facilities. On the Sunday evening a grand barbeque is to be held at Magpie Mine near Sheldon - the Society's field centre. For accommodation see website: www.visitderbyshire.co.uk

Information supplied by Robin Hall at: www.peakmines.co.uk

Australian Historical Association Conference 30 June- 3 July 2009

The 2009 regional conference of the AHA with the theme 'Constructing the Past' will be held at The University of the Sunshine Coast. Proposals for papers should be submitted by Friday 6 February 2009 by e.mail to: aha2009@usc.edu.au

For registration forms and details see:

<<http://www.usc.edu.au/University/MediaPublications/Events/EventsHidden/ConstructingThePast.htm>>

or access via the AHA webpage at: <http://www.theaha.org.au/conf.html>

Journal

Once again the time has come to request early submissions of papers for the 2009 volume of the Association's Journal. Note there are refereed and un-refereed sections (your choice) and before submitting study the style sheet on our web page, or request a copy from the Secretary.

Bits and Pieces

Jim Besleme

Many of those members who were at the Bendigo conference in 2005 will no doubt remember Jim Besleme from the USA. Jim enjoyed the conference and the company so much that he promised to return. And, indeed he registered and booked his flight to the Queenstown conference but had to cancel when diagnosed with cancer of the lung. I'm sure that there will be many among you who would like to offer best wishes to him. Jim, who, incidentally has promised to join us at a future conference, can be contacted at Tex61@aol.com

Bereavements

Richard McKinnon

Richard was a keen geologist interested in mining history who joined our organization just over a year ago. Sadly, Richard had been ill for quite some time and passed away earlier this year at his home in Coonabarabran, NSW. While we don't have a full-blown obituary it gives some satisfaction to our organization to hear from information supplied by one of Richard's friends that he had a passion for the AMHA and really enjoyed going through his copies of our *Journal of Australasian Mining History*. His very last wish was for someone to read him one of the articles, something which was done and that gave him great pleasure at the very end of his life.

Ray Shea

The following note from Greg Dickens will come as quite a shock to those who attended the Queenstown Conference in October.

'It is with great sadness, that I record the sudden passing of well-known West Coast identity in eighty-year-old Ray Shea on Friday, 7/11/08. Ray was a former councillor and football stalwart at Queenstown's gravel oval. Only recently, he appeared on an SBS Television program discussing the history of football played on the famous "gravel".

However, Ray will best be remembered by the 2008 Conference delegates as the person who made the introductory speech at the Lyell Mine Disaster Ceremony. Earlier, he invited the AMHA to attend the ceremony and brought the anniversary date forward to coincide with the Conference Program. Since its inception, Ray had been the inspiration and facilitator of this annual event.

It was early 2008, when Ray contacted me to enquire about a mining history conference scheduled for October in Queenstown. He had been speaking with close friend, Professor Blainey.

Immediately, there was a request for me to incorporate the Lyell Disaster Ceremony into the program. There was instant delight when I told him that that it could be arranged with both Geoffrey Blainey and Peter Schulze being present’.

During the Conference, Ray made a couple of brief appearances to hear the presentations from Geoffrey Blainey and Peter Schulze.

Presentation to Geoffrey Blainey at Queenstown Memorial Service for those miners killed in the 1912 Mt. Lyell Mine Disaster



Left to right:
Geoffrey Blainey – the late Ray Shea, Shirley Scolyer and Peter Schulze.

Sir Bruce Watson (1 August 1928 – 1 November 2008)

Sir Bruce was a keen supporter and member of the AMHA over many years, and might be remembered by those who attended the Brisbane conference in 2002 as being the distinguished looking gentleman who spoke quietly but with authority on mining issues. Sir Bruce would also have been known to many in that audience even before the conference for his work in the mining sphere was widely recognised and was honoured in June 1985 with a knighthood for his outstanding services to Queensland industry.

Bruce Dunstan Watson attended Toowoomba Grammar School before completing his Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical) and Bachelor of Commerce degrees at the University of Queensland in

the 1950s. His formative years were spent in the power supply industry in Tasmania and then in Townsville where he joined MIM’s Copper Refineries in 1956. He subsequently worked at Mt Isa developing MIM’s coal operations and also at the company’s Agnew nickel mine in Western Australia. In 1980 he was appointed MIM managing director, became chief executive officer in 1981, and took over as chairman in 1983.

Sir Bruce Watson



Photo: Courtesy of the Watson family.

He also took an interest in various professional associations associated with mining, served as President of the Australian Mining Industry Council and as national president of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy. He was also a founder member and president of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and served as vice-president of the Business Council of Australia from 1987 to 1990.

Outside of mining Sir Bruce also took active roles in other industry, financial and philanthropic related areas. He served as director of both the National Australia Bank and Boral, was vice-president of the Queensland branch of the Scouts Association of Australia and for over 50 years was an active member of the Lions club in Brisbane. He also took great pleasure in supporting the Queensland Institute of Medical Research. For over 20 years he was involved in helping to raise tens of millions of dollars for research and

at the time of his death was still chairman of that body.

Support of the arts was another area where his interest was directed and among his involvement in this sphere he will be remembered for his work as chairman of the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation, through which he was a leading generator of support for the gallery's acquisition programmes.

He has also been described as 'a powerful industry leader', and a 'people person', the latter being associated with his concern for the welfare of his employees and families. It was Sir Bruce, for example, who oversaw the introduction of shiftwork designed to let women work part time at MIM.

In 2004 he was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for service to industry and commerce, arts, education and medical research - thus, recognition of his life as a talented, dedicated and multi-faceted man.

We are sorry to see the loss of a valued member and our sympathy goes out to his wife, Lady (June) Watson, and other members of the family.

(An obituary by Annie Sanixay that appeared in the *Courier Mail* on 4 November 2008, p.76, is hereby acknowledged as the main source for the content).

Australian Mining QUIZ

Our good **President** has set the following questions. Says he can't afford a prize out of his huge AMHA stipend but will provide the answers in the next newsletter:

1. What was Australia's first commercially profitable mine?
2. Where was the first Cornish pumping engine installed in Australia?
3. What was the first place in Australia where acid leaching was used?
4. Where is the oldest surviving mining building on the Australian mainland?

5. Where were Australia's first mining company houses built?

6. At which Australian mine was the first horse whim used?

7. Where was the first viable copper discovery made in Australia?

8. What was the first Australian mining field to be served by a railway?

AMHA Officers and Committee 2009

Patron: Geoffrey Blainey

President: Peter Bell

Secretary/Treasurer: Mel Davies

Auditor: Glenda Scully

Committee:

ACT:

Chris Carter, Barry McGowan,
Ken McQueen.

SA:

Ross Both, Greg Drew, Graham Hancock.

NSW:

Graydon Henning, Leonie Knapman,
Ross Mainwaring; Graham Wilson.

NT:

David Carment.

Qld Ruth Kerr, Diane Menghetti Jan Wegner.

Vic Sandra Kippen, David White, Mike
Williams, Nick Williams.

TAS:

Greg Dickens, Nick Haygarth,
Chris Boron.

WA:

Patrick Bertola, Wendy Carter,
Charlie Fox, Richard Hartley,
Gerry MacGill.

NZ:

Brian Hill, Philip Hart.

Newsletter Delivery

It was suggested at the AGM that some members would be happy to view the newsletters on the web rather than to receive copies by snail mail. Please let me know!