

# Journal of Australasian Mining History

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## AUTHOR DETAILS AND ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

**CLIVE BEAUCHAMP:** *Disaster at the Hoskins' Ironstone Quarry, Cadia, Orange 1921.*

Clive Beauchamp is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, and has published on various aspects of Australian Mining History. His current research interests include the migration of Welsh coalminers to the NSW Northern coalfield.

In March 1921, a 'premature explosion' occurred at Hoskins Company's ironstone quarry at Cadia near Orange New South Wales. It resulted in the instant death of nine workmen. The paper traces the early history of mining at Cadia, the acquisition of the quarry by the Hoskins' Company and the development of the local township. It details the background to the explosion, attempts at rescue and recovery and the findings of the coroner's inquest. The short-term revival of mining activity, for the duration of the Second World War, is also covered.

**ROSS A. BOTH:** [rosannb@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rosannb@bigpond.net.au) *Gilles v. the Glen Osmond Union Mining Company: Anatomy of a lease dispute.*

Prior to retirement in 1999, Ross Both was Reader in Economic Geology in the Department of Geology and Geophysics, University of Adelaide, where he was concerned with mineral deposits.

The Glen Osmond Mine commenced operations in the early 1840s in the Mount Lofty Ranges near Adelaide. The Mine was located on the property of Osmond Gilles, the first Colonial Treasurer of South Australia. Osmond's brother Lewis directed operations. Lewis purchased the lease of the mine from Osmond forming the Glen Osmond Union Mining Company in London. The operations commenced in December 1846 but work was suspended in January 1849 when a writ was issued on behalf of Osmond Gilles, to have the company ejected from the lease on the ground of non-payment of royalties. He was unsuccessful but work recommenced until closure of the mine in 1851. This paper reviews the reasons behind, and the outcome of, the court case and the role of the personalities involved in the dispute.

**DAVID BRANAGAN:** [dbranaga@mail.usyd.edu.au](mailto:dbranaga@mail.usyd.edu.au) *The Open-Cut Era (Late 1940s – Mid 1960s) in the Western Coalfield of New South Wales: Including some autobiographical memories*

David Branagan is an Honorary Research Associate, School of Geosciences, Sydney University. In 2006 his biography of the geologist Sir T.W. Edgeworth David (published 2005) was one of four short-listed for the First Prime Minister's Prize for Australian History. In 2007 he was awarded an Honorary D.Sc by the University of Sydney, and at the 2012 International Geological Congress, in Brisbane, he was awarded the inaugural Tom Vallance award by the Earth Sciences History Group of the Geological Society of Australia for his contributions to the History of Geology.

After a brief operation in 1932 open-cut coal mining in New South Wales began in the 1940s, essentially in the Western Coalfield. Systematic exploration and efficient mining resulted from co-operation between the NSW Geological Survey (Department of Mines), the Joint Coal Board and the Commonwealth Bureau of Mineral Resources. The author discusses aspects of the developmental period between 1948 and 1952, mainly from his own involvement.

**LLOYD CARPENTER:** [lloyd.carpenter@pg.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:lloyd.carpenter@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) *Defining a Date and Place in the Otago Gold Rush: The Problematic Journal of George Magnus Hassing and Bendigo*

Lloyd Carpenter is a 48 year-old Maori doctoral candidate from Ngati Toa completing his thesis on the Central Otago gold rush of 1862. His research explores a range of mining subjects and he bases much of his research on the old gold town of Bendigo.

Gold rushes are marked by the construction and collapse of boom settlements, of miners rushing from one place to the next and of stories of rich finds and 'duffer' hoaxes. One such settlement is Bendigo, a town born during the Central Otago gold rush. A lack of documentary sources has led to writers speculating and misinterpreting the timeline of the events which caused the town to appear. Re-analysing the journal on which the narratives have been based, together with additional documentary evidence, leads to new conclusions about when this town became an important centre of mining in Otago.

**JIM ENEVER:** <jmenever@satlink.com.au> *The Buchan Proprietary Company: A Victorian Mining Swindle*

Educated in mining at Melbourne University, Jim Enever went on to have a working career in mining research with CSIRO. After retirement, he obtained qualifications in archaeology and history. And has authored several papers on some lesser-known aspects of Victorian mining history.

The Buchan Proprietary Company was formed in the 1890s, to mine the supposed extensive deposits of lead carbonate ore at Buchan in East Gippsland, Victoria. The 1894 prospectus for the Carbonate Gold and Silver Mining Company promised to establish a major operation based on previously ignored lead carbonate ore. Mining adventurer, Colonel Cecil C Morgan came to Australia in 1892 to manage the British Broken Hill Mine before he appeared at Buchan. What transpired was a tale of misappropriation of shareholder funds to support Morgan's extravagant and erratic life style. Events finally caught up with Morgan in 1896, resulting in his sudden departure from the country and the winding up of the Company.

**PHILIP HART:** <prhart@waikato.ac.nz> *The New Zealand Exploration Company and Aroha Gold Mines*

Philip Hart retired from the History Department at the University of Waikato a decade ago, but still retains a link as a Research Associate (perks: a windowless office and an old computer). After exploring the Waiorongomai goldfield with his young son and others he began researching its history, and particularly the lives of some of the leading figures in both mining and the general community, people who were once important but have been lost to history. His ongoing research has led to some unexpected discoveries, such as the colonial career of the future Baron James de Hirsch, as outlined in this paper.

**NIC HAYGARTH:** <lakelea22@yahoo.com.au> *An 'Island' Within an Island: the Maritime/Riverine Culture of Tasmania's Pieman River Goldfield 1877-85*

Nic Haygarth is a professional historian, freelance writer and Honorary Associate of the School of History and Classics, University of Tasmania. His major interest lies in mining.

During its initial phase (1877-85), the Pieman River goldfield on Tasmania's West Coast had a maritime/riverine culture unique among Australian goldfields. Pieman miners relied upon coastal shipping for communication, passenger transport, stores and mining equipment. The goldfield had an unusual dependence on logging, which paid for ships to visit the Pieman. Waterways were used as conduits, and the fish and birds these provided were a significant food source. There was enough gold to satisfy small parties, but extracting it was physically taxing and unprofitable except when a regular shipping service operated. Ironically, this goldfield was a far better osmiridium field, but the early diggers could not exploit this alloy.

**LENORE LAYMAN:** <l.layman@murdoch.edu.au> *Mine Fumings and Miners' Ill Health, 1880s-1910s: The Hazard of Nitroglycerine Fumes*

**Dr Lenore Layman** is Adjunct Associate Professor of History at Murdoch University. Her most recent publications are: *110 in the Waterbag. A History of Life, Work and Leisure in Leonora, Gwalia and the Northern Goldfields* [2012] and *Powering Perth, a history of the East Perth Power Station and the electrification of Perth (with website)* [2011].

Fumings (or gassings) in gold mines proved deadly in the late nineteenth century as mines deepened and more powerful nitroglycerin explosives were invented. In the worst incidents, miners died immediately of asphyxiation, some after initially appearing completely uninjured. Many experienced chronic illhealth but little was understood about fumings. Miner, mine managements, government inspectors and analysts, and medical professionals all lacked knowledge of the hazard. This paper explores the acquisition of knowledge about fumings, its treatments and efforts at prevention on the Western Australian goldfields in the 1890s-1900s.

**KEN McQUEEN:** <Ken.McQueen@canberra.edu.au> *Early Developments in Treating Pyritic and Refractory Gold Ores in Australia*

Ken McQueen is a geologist with a keen interest in mining history. He is Professor of Geochemistry and Landscape Evolution at the University of Canberra.

In the late nineteenth century new techniques were developed in Australia to extract gold locked in pyrite in refractory gold ores. Developments were made at a number of gold mining centres, including in: central Victoria; at Harden and Majors Creek in New South Wales; at Ravenswood, Charters Towers and Mount Morgan in Queensland; and Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. Treatment processes evolved from concentration and finer grinding of the pyrite to release the gold for amalgamation, roasting to assist the release of the gold and chemical treatments, including chlorination and eventually cyanidation.. None of these techniques were developed in isolation; rather there was a vigorous transfer of ideas and information between mining areas in Australia and across the world.

**BILL O'NEIL (1929-2011):** *The BHP Lock-Out of 1909: The View from Three Generations of Broken Hill Miners*

When he was 14 years of age, Bill O'Neill followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather to become a miner at Broken Hill. He served as a leading trade unionist in many capacities including being President of the Barrier Industrial Council from 1985 to 1995.

The paper looks at the industrial conflicts that took place and which shaped the local community from the 1890s, and the trials and tribulations witnessed by three generations of O'Neil's – his grandfather Michael, his father Bill 'Shorty' O'Neil, and by himself. The background to the 1909 lock-out with its links to the shearers' strikes of the 1890s is examined, along with its aftermath that led to the strike of 1919-20, which the author describes as a breakthrough for the Trade Union movement in Broken Hill.

**Note:** Before he passed away in 2011, Bill O'Neil handed the editor a rough copy of this paper, and this edited version is an acknowledgement of his enthusiasm and contribution to the Australian Mining History Association, which he supported for many years.

**KEITH PRESTON:** *Anchor Tin Mine, Tasmania: a century of struggle for profitability*

Keith Preston is a retired engineering geologist and geotechnical engineer who researches aspects of the Tasmanian mining industry, particularly the widespread application of water power for mineral processing.

Exploitation of low grade tin deposits at the Anchor mine spanned the period 1883-1996, achieving only brief periods of profitable working. During the initial three decades, a succession of mining engineers sought to increase mill throughput by reducing production costs. Mining and processing costs were acclaimed the lowest in Australia, being achieved after expensive and water-intensive Cornish dressing practices were discontinued in the 100-head stamp mill, pelton wheels were installed to supply all power requirements and a costly 48km long water race completed. Later ventures also failed to maintain profitability even though higher grade deposits were located by thorough prospecting