



**AUSTRALASIAN  
MINING  
HISTORY  
ASSOCIATION**

All correspondence to: Mel Davies OAM  
Business School, Economics MBDP M251  
University of Western Australia  
35 Stirling Highway,  
Crawley 6009, W. Australia  
Tel. (W) 08-64882926 (H) 08-92953265  
Fax: 08-64881016  
Email: [mel.davies@uwa.edu.au](mailto:mel.davies@uwa.edu.au)

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**Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC**

ABN 96 220 329 754

Web page: <http://www.mininghistory.asn.au>

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### **EDITORIAL**

The following statistics quoted in the *Australian* should be of concern to our mining constituents. The figures show the parlous decline of University trained students in mining related areas, and are the subject that Emeritus Professor Odwyn Jones OAM (late Head of the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie) has highlighted in the following comment. While we are all aware of the disruptive nature of Fly-In-Fly-Out arrangements on the family, Prof. Jones sees this as also having a serious impact on recruitment to the higher echelons of mining. While his comments place emphasis on the situation in Western Australia, his analysis is also true of the situation in other parts of Australia.

To quote the figures given by Paul Garvey on page 26 of the *Weekend Australian*, July 14-15: 'Data collected by the task force set up by the Chamber of Mines and Energy of WA showed that there were only 32 students enrolled in first year mining engineering studies across the four top [WA] universities for mining graduates, down almost 90% from a decade ago'.

The Mineral Council of Australia has also shown concern when stating there will be a skill shortage by the end of the decade because of low levels of enrolment in mining engineering and geology degrees. Their conclusion is that

between 2017-2020, the average university completions in mining engineering are expected to decline by 81% (quoted from the *National Resources Review*, July 2018). Adding to that, the *Australian Business Review*, pp. 1 and 22, stated on 28<sup>th</sup> August that mining engineering graduates are projected to drop by more than two-thirds between 2017-2020, from 171 to 47.

Prof. Jones who has also looked at the responses of students to surveys conducted to find out why there is little interest in mining disciplines, makes the following observations of measures that need to be introduced to turn the situation around:

### **The Challenges of attracting new entrants to Undergraduate Mining-related University courses in Western Australia.**

Western Australia with its 2.5 million square km of land has its population of some 2.5 million concentrated mainly in its south-west corner and a few peripheral coastal towns. In contrast its operating mines are widely scattered throughout its largely unpopulated regions with many, if not most, located in remote and unwelcoming country.

Up until the late seventies liveable townships were developed in these remoter regions to accommodate the workforce and their families as evidenced

by the still existing Pilbara townships of Paraburdoo, Tom Price and Mt Newman and Kambalda in the Eastern Goldfields.

However, commencing and accelerating in the eighties and beyond, mining companies found it much more economical to develop a commuting system for mineworkers based on a fly in/fly out, or FIFO system with the workforce accommodated at temporary camps during their working rosters.

Currently most mining operations throughout Western Australia are based on various FIFO work/leisure cycles. Unfortunately the FIFO lifestyle is socially disruptive and is not conducive to the traditional norms of community living whereby daily work schedules blend in routinely with family, social and sporting activities. These challenges can be particularly difficult for young married workers to manage.

This lifestyle has increasingly become a disincentive for young school leavers considering a career in the mining industry, not to mention the highly cyclic nature of the industry fluctuating between periods of hectic new mine developments and dramatic downturns with possible sudden retrenchments etc.

It is against this backdrop that the industry is struggling to attract new suitably qualified personnel to enrol in university mining-related programs in mining and exploration geology, mining engineering and primary metallurgy.

Essential Ingredients of Successful Recruitment of New University Entrants  
Successful recruitment of suitably qualified school leavers and/or TAFE graduates to the mining industry is largely dependent on such issues as:

a) Overcoming the reluctance of prospective students to commit themselves to the FIFO lifestyle.

b) Providing appropriate financial and other incentives to ensure students' independence during their studies and secure and attractive employment thereafter.

Considering each in turn:

### **FIFO Lifestyle**

c) Recruitment of university entrants must be done with honesty and integrity which involves discussing the challenges and benefits of FIFO lifestyles. These discussions need to focus on the family friendly FIFO rosters, high quality camp facilities and amenities including high quality restaurant services, private ensuite rooms with private telephones for each worker, WIFI, entertainment systems (e.g. Foxtel, Swift) good quality gymnasias and team sport facilities.

d) Some companies arrange for family "open days" at FIFO camps whereby families can visit camp sites to see how their spouses, sons or daughters are well looked after onsite.

e) Companies should also indicate the organisations and arrangements dedicated to provide community support and services for spouses and partners etc.

### **Financial and other support for Undergraduate Students**

f) Mining companies should be encouraged to offer high-value internships and/or cadetships to well-qualified and motivated students. These should provide each student with sufficient funds to guarantee their independence whilst staying at halls of residence or in rental accommodation. They should also include guaranteed well-supervised and varied vacation employment without any future bonding to the sponsoring company.

g) Emphasis should be placed on providing well-structured and caring training schedules for interns during vacations.

h) Students should also be made aware of the wide range of employment opportunities available in other industry sectors and regulatory authorities for mining-related graduates, should they desire at any stage to broaden their experience in other fields.

i) Current undergraduate courses should also be marketed as programs designed to produce graduates ideally

qualified to meet the challenges of the increasingly digitised and automated world of tomorrow.

### Conclusion

It is important to present prospective new entrants to mining-related undergraduate courses with a true and honest 'good story' of well-structured experiential university courses and financial independence during their studies followed by a rewarding career in an industry whose welfare is crucially important to the nation's continuing wealth and prosperity.

*Emeritus Professor Odwyn Jones AO*

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**AMHA 24th Annual Conference, 'Rivers of Gold', Cromwell, New Zealand, 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> October 2018.**

We are now well on our way to the start of our 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, and the third to be held in New Zealand. As usual there will be a number of mining related tours to excite participants and some 25 papers plus poster presentations in the business sessions. Unfortunately its being held outside the Skiing season but the area around Cromwell and nearby Queenstown should hold enough attractions to suit most palates. Its still not too late to register for our annual Minefest and registrations and other details such as accommodation can be found on our webpage at:

<http://www.mininghistory.asn.au/next-conference/> or you can contact Register Now' directly on-line at:

<https://www.registernow.com.au/secure/Register.aspx?E=30010>

To repeat **a happy hint from the previous newsletter**, if you experience trouble when clicking on the above 'Register Now' address, copy and paste it into your search engine. In addition ensure that when you come to the section on telephone contacts, you click on the triangle that provides a drop box that gives a list of countries. As the conference is being held in New Zealand this is the current setting, so you'll need to click on

your own country if you live elsewhere. We look forward to seeing you there!

### 2019 Australian Folklore Conference

Those followers of the sung word are reminded that the next Australian Folklore Conference will take place at Easter, 2019. A call for expressions of interest to present papers will be circulated later in the year. Without doubt, there will be a few mining-related ditties to be heard and enjoyed.

To view some of the papers from the 2018 conference see the blog at: <https://ozfolknet.wordpress.com>

Details of the conference programme can be viewed on a separate document.

### PUBLICATIONS

**Geoffrey E.P Hanson, Lyndon Megarrity (With paper by the late Diane Menghetti), *Goldfields That Made Townsville: Cape River, Ravenswood and Charters Towers, North Queensland History Series Number 8, North Queensland History Preservation Society/ Townsville Museum and Historical Society, Townsville, 2018, pp. xxxii, 210, Photographs, Illustrations, PB, ISBN 978-09756095-6-9.***

In producing this book, the authors have put together two previously unpublished works and an updated article by the late Dr Diane Menghetti. The discussion casts a light on the development of Townsville from the late 1860s and the links of that growth to the mining discoveries in the hinterland. The developments saw growth of the Cape River area and of two of north Queensland's largest towns, these being Ravenswood and Charters Towers Those many members who attended the 2014 Conference will be familiar with the two towns and should be particularly attracted to the publication. *Goldfields that Made Townsville* is an excellent publication that contains many photographs and details to rekindle memories of those at the Conference, and will introduce readers to developments and characters that helped shape the region.

## **BITS & PIECES**

### **Diamond's Forever!**

Member Mike Freeman has forwarded this interesting piece by Ewen Tyler on the search for diamonds. An interesting account that looks at the long road to discovery. See:

<https://www.jewellermagazine.com/Article/6957/Mines-and-tribulations-Searching-for-Aussie-diamond-mines>

### **Broken Hill Boy Coming Good? A Case for Congratulations**

Member, John Mills, Son of the late Harry of BH South fame, and now an economic historian, has been awarded his second PhD: 'The contribution of whaling to the colonial economies'.

His first doctorate thesis was titled 'The Myth of the standard gauge-rail gauge choices in Australia to Federation'. John is now working on a book about Broken Hill's early days. Any information, especially news about primary sources will be particularly welcomed. You can contact John at: [johnayresmills1@gmail.com](mailto:johnayresmills1@gmail.com)

## **OBITUARIES**

This has been a very sad month for the Association with three valued members having passed away: Barry McGowan, Zelda Martin, and Joan Hunt. All made great contributions and gave their support to the Association and all will be greatly missed. Below are acknowledgements to all three that report on their contributions not only to the AMHA but to society as a whole.

### **Vale Barry McGowan OAM (1945-2018)**

It is with great sadness that we announce the death on 1<sup>st</sup> September of member Barry McGowan. Barry, who had suffered from prostate cancer saw his health deteriorate rapidly over the previous 6 months, passed away in Canberra hospital. Barry had a last surprise up his sleeve for it had earlier been announced he had been awarded the OAM, and that this was to be awarded in the ACT Honours ceremony on 9<sup>th</sup>

September. When the news that Barry was deteriorating fast, the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, came to the hospital where Barry was decked in a blazer, on which the Governor General pinned the medal in the presence of hospital staff and Barry's family. This kind gesture was greatly appreciated by all, and occurred the day before Barry died.

Barry was a prolific publisher in the field of mining history, heritage and archaeology, specialising in particular on the Chinese in Australia. He presented papers on the subject at many of our Conferences, as well as at overseas venues including meetings of the International Mining History Association. He also published a number of books, including one on Australian Ghost Towns that attracted a lot of media attention, including interviews on national TV.

Those who attended recent Conferences, at Darwin, Cobar and Traralgon will also remember Barry's new passion for the Mandolin. His duets with the Secretary, while not hitting the Top 10, certainly proved entertaining, and attracted many curtain calls!

Barry was certainly a character who stood out in our ranks, and his like will be hard to replace. We are indebted for his support over the years, and present our sympathies to his family. Present to say farewell at his funeral were several of our members.



AMHA member Michael Pearson has presented the following eulogy to Barry that reveals some surprising detail of his many occupations and interests:

Friend and colleague Barry John McGowan was born on 18 June 1945. Barry's first degree, and his first career, was in economics. After gaining a Bachelor of Economics at the University of Adelaide in 1967, Barry spent two years as 'Assistant to the Economist', South Pacific Commission, Noumea, under the Australian Volunteers Abroad Scheme. From 1970 to 1996 he worked in the Commonwealth Departments of Health, Territories, Trade and Industry, Prime Minister and Cabinet, and finally as a Director in the Department of Industrial Relations.

Barry's inner archaeologist and historian, however, fought to break free of the bureaucracy, and after completing a Bachelor of Arts at the Australian National University in 1995, he left the public service and set himself up as a historian and heritage consultant. He had done a little moonlighting on leave before then, in 1993 and 1995 undertaking two major studies under the New South Wales component of the National Estates Grants Program (NEGP). As a consequence of that work he published two books, *Lost Mines*, and *Bungonia to Braidwood*, the former of which was revised and republished as *Lost Mines Revisited*.

Barry was a quiet and unassuming man, balancing a vibrant mix of disorderliness, unconventional approaches to challenges, energy and determination, faith and passion, with a healthy good humour. He had a deep interest in how people individually and as communities negotiated life in mining areas, and went about the physical activities of mining. As a subset of this interest, he developed a great empathy for Chinese communities, and wished to see their histories and life experiences better understood and promoted as a valuable part of Australia's history. His generosity of spirit towards local communities, his local informants and assistants, and to his wider network of professional colleagues was a hallmark of Barry's second career, as was his infectious enthusiasm for this work. In 2001, in conjunction with Lindsay Smith

and Michael and Bronwen Van Leeuwen, Barry designed an exhibition at the Canberra Museum and Gallery, 'Southern Gold', on the continuous contribution of the Chinese in the Canberra region. Barry wanted the information he had gathered and its analysis to get to the communities he was working with, and, experiencing the publishing difficulties many have experienced at some time, and initially he self-published a series of regional mining studies. Most of his later books (he wrote 17 if I count correctly) were published by commercial or government publishers. I had the pleasure of working with him on two of these.

Barry became a Research Associate at the College of Asia and Pacific at the ANU, and in 2011 was awarded a PhD from ANU for his thesis 'Dust and Dreams: a regional history of mining and community in south-east New South Wales 1850-1914', which consolidated his exhaustive work on mining and community over the previous years.

I know Barry was immensely happy that he was able to work on a series of studies of the history of Chinese communities in southern NSW over the past few years, under the title 'Tracking the Dragon', commissioned by the Museum of the Riverina in Wagga, the reports of which are now available online. Barry was awarded a well-deserved Medal in the Order of Australia (OAM) for his services to community history in June 2018. The Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, conferred the medal on Barry at his hospital bedside. Barry was touched – 'I'll send him a book!'

Barry was active till the end – he always had plans. The last time we had a long talk was earlier this year when he was planning a trip to Nagasaki for an International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas meeting. Barry had been negotiating prostate cancer for twenty years with characteristic determination and unconventional methods, but it came back with unexpected virulence over the last few months, and on 1st of September 2018,

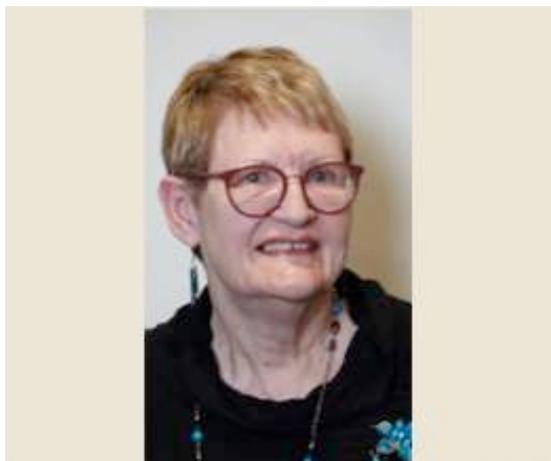
Barry lost the battle and passed away peacefully with his loved ones by his side. He is survived by his wife Chong and sons Andrew and Douglas and step children Sean and Genie, brother Chris, and his much-loved grandchildren.

Ave atque vale Barry

*Michael Pearson  
Canberra 7/9/18*

### **Vale Dr Joan Elizabeth Hunt, PhD, FRHSV, 1944-2018**

Joan would have met many of our members when presenting papers at our recent conferences: at the 2014 Beechworth conference, a paper '*The discovery of the Springdallah goldfields*'; At the 2015 Darwin Conference '*Experiences of a working miner on a Victorian deep-lead goldfield in the 1860s*'; and another '*Springdallah: A Mining Community*', presented at the Cobar conference in 2016.



Joan's interests went much further than mining history and as reported in the ebulletin put out by the Federation of Australian Historical Societies she was 'endlessly supportive and full of vitality, playing a major role in Victorian community history for 37 years. She was an RHSV Councillor for many years and as vice-president and convenor of the History Society Support Group, she organized history workshops across the state. As a Churchill Fellow, Joan studied local History groups in the UK; was past President of the Ballarat and Woody Yaloak historical societies and co-founder

of the Central Highlands Historical Association. An author of a number of books and papers, she recently became a judge of the Victorian Community History awards, and in 2014 she received a FAHS Merit Award.'

In Joan, we have lost a valuable and well-respected member. Our condolences to Gary and family.

### **Vale Zelda Martin, 1932-2018**

Zelda was a long-time supporter and member of the AMHA, and over the years attended many conferences, contributing on two occasions with papers on the social history of mining communities. Perhaps this is not surprising as her address was located at Bakery Hill in the heart of Victoria's gold mining country. Thanks to Nina Netherway for the following information on Zelda:

Zelda Jean Martin was born on the 16 November 1932 at Stawell to Alice and Alan Martin, and died on 30 July 2018 in Ballarat.

The family later shifted from Stawell to Warrnambool due to her father's work with the Country Roads Board. Zelda remained there until 1964. She attended school until she obtained her Leaving Certificate, then went to work in the ES & A Bank – which later became the ANZ Bank. The big overseas trip was taken in 1957 when, with three friends she left for a year abroad. Although based in England they travelled through Europe – hitchhiking mainly, but also cycling through England, Scotland and Ireland by bicycle, and came home via USA. To relieve the boredom of bread and cheese, she worked at Selfridges for a short time selling gloves and coats. The fact that she made more sales than the manager did not help her!!!

On her return home she settled back to life in Warrnambool until her father decided to retire. He purchased a house in Ballarat but unfortunately passed away on the eve of his retirement, so Zelda and her mother moved to Ballarat by themselves.

Their house in Warrnambool belonged to the Country Roads Board.

Zelda has always had an enquiring mind open to ideas, always planning and thinking outside the square. Her father used to take her on his country trips during holidays and was always pointing things out and discussing politics etc. with her. In Ballarat she met my father who also had an enquiring mind and on our excursions around the countryside grew to love the goldfields area and the history of it. This led to her doing further study – first matriculations, then a shift to Melbourne to complete a B. Comm, - the bank giving her a shift to their Economics department and paying her fees. As she was tutoring at RMIT in Economics after work, she decided to do a Diploma of Education, then it was a Masters degree in the School of Political Science. The title of her thesis being: *‘Australia’s relations with the Third World in the context of negotiations for a new International Commodity Order in the 1970’s – Continuity or Change?’*



She had been dabbling in her family history – much of which revolved around Ballarat and the goldfields of Amehurst, Castlemaine, Maldon areas. She was absolutely fascinated by the goldfields – the history - social, geological and economic. So she decided to do her Phd in the History Department at Melbourne University based on the population changes of the central goldfields towns. This was when she joined the Mining History Association and began going to conferences during her holidays. Unfortunately illness prevented her from

completing the thesis (*I have found chapters of the unfinished thesis in my clearing up and was going to ask Joan Hunt what to do with them! Too late!*)

Before she retired in 1990 she completed a Graduate Diploma in Education Administration to assist her in her position of ‘Manager Training System’ in the bank where she was developing the training for the Hogan computer system that tellers would use. At the time this involved the revolutionary idea of setting up a training bank in which all the functions of a normal bank could be emulated by the trainees.

On retirement she set up her own business doing mainly computer training for schools and business. After some years we moved to Ballarat where Zelda became very involved with U3A – editing the monthly Bulletin and in the last few years taking an Australian History Class. In fact, on the day before she passed away I was visiting her at John Curtin Aged Care facility at Creswick where she had been living for the previous 8 months. I was trying to install a laser printer for her to use in her research and to print articles she was working on. It was also to be used for the transcribing she was doing for the Gold Museum (she had been a back room volunteer every since we shifted to Ballarat).

She loved writing - she wrote a whimsical editorial each month for the U3A Bulletin, which many people still talk about years after we passed the responsibility over. She also wrote articles for the Friends of the Ballarat Gardens journal – she could make a story out of anything! The editor of that journal said that the ‘tone’ of the journal would be lowered without Zelda’s articles!

I have received some lovely words describing her, including comments such as:

- She was such a bright spirit, intelligent, down to earth, a no nonsense, loyal and caring person.
- She was a very good conversationalist to the end.

- We will remember her as a tenacious fighter for what she believed in, with an incisive mind and a strong commitment to U3A.
- I found her to be a truly lovely person with a great sense of humour.
- All I can say was that her mind was forever young and that was what I loved about her.

*Nina Netherway*

## **JOURNAL**

Journal Volume 16 is on track to be printed at the end of October but the wheel still goes around and its time for people to start thinking about contributing to Volume 17. The earlier the submissions, the better.

As noted in the previous newsletter, early copies of the journal can now be found and downloaded from our webpages. Note however that hard copies apart from the out-of-print Vol. 1, 2003, are still available from the Secretary. Orders would greatly benefit the Association's coffers and help me get into my bedroom which is currently cluttered with boxes of past volumes.

*The Ed.*

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

Following the last reminder to non-financial members, the renewals came in fast and furious. However, that flow has now decreased to a very slow trickle. With the publication of the next journal in the offing, it would pay people who enjoy the articles to put pen to paper, or to go on-line, to register with the Association. The process is painless especially if registering on line, which can be done with a simple click on the following address (though if you have trouble just copy and paste directly into a search engine).

<https://www.registernow.com.au/secure/Register.aspx?E=28349>

## **WEB PAGE**

We have recently refurbished the web page, but with a few hiccups. Therefore

this message from our good President, Ken McQueen:

'We are doing a review of the new AMHA Website to suggest improvements to the site host. If you are having any difficulty with the site, particularly finding/logging in, please email Ken McQueen:

[Ken.McQueen@canberra.edu.au](mailto:Ken.McQueen@canberra.edu.au).

If you are having problems logging on to the site it would help if you could describe how you do your log in (e.g. by search engine, bookmark, typing in the URL address directly etc)'

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given to financial members, of the Annual General Meeting of the Association, which will be held on **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October** at the Cromwell Memorial Town Hall, New Zealand, commencing at 9.00am.

Among items to be determined are changes to the Constitution. A copy of the current Constitution along with proposed changes was circulated last month and as a result there have been one or two minor changes. At the AGM, members will be asked by 'Special Resolution' (by a 2/3rds majority) to consider passing the revised Rules. The reason for the changes is associated with an instruction from the Western Australian Department of Consumer Affairs to adopt mandatory rules as determined by the West Australian Associations Incorporation Act 2015.

A copy of the Agenda can be viewed in another document.

MJD/September'18