



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

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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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From the President

The AMHA has concluded another exciting year, with more to come in 2018.

The 23rd AMHA Conference in Traralgon was a great success, with many thanks due to the conference organising team and all participants. Our conferences are typically a highlight of the year for many of our members, but we understand that not all members are able to participate. For this reason, the Executive is exploring ways to provide conference information through the website and via facebook for those unable to attend, such as access to proceedings and the powerpoint presentations. Other ideas are most welcome.

Early in the year the Executive and Advisory Committee launched a membership drive with some new initiatives. We have had partial success, attracting 11 new members, but overall our total membership has decreased slightly, due to the sad passing of several members and others not renewing their annual subscription. Maintaining & increasing membership, particularly of younger recruits, is critical to the survival and future of the AMHA. All members can help by spreading the word about the great benefits of being a member of the AMHA.

This year the Association published the 15th volume of the Journal of Australasian Mining History. Many

thanks to our hardworking and dedicated Editor, as well as the reviewers and contributing authors. Our journal is the second pillar of the Association so please support it by continuing to send in your articles. Mel is always on the lookout for keen new authors!

During the year the host for the AMHA website became 'non-functional' and we were required to seek a new host and to set up a new website. This has been in progress since mid-November and you have probably noticed that the old website has disappeared. The new and improved website should be up and running early in the New Year.

In October, I wrote a letter on behalf of AMHA supporting the Milparinka Heritage and Tourism Association in their application for funding from the NSW State Government to establish a high-quality facility for the interpretation of the mining and related cultural heritage of the Milparinka-Tibooburra region in far northwestern NSW. The group is hoping for a positive decision in the new year.

Organisation of the 24th AMHA Conference, to be held at Cromwell in the Otago region of New Zealand, is well under way led by Lloyd Carpenter and assisted by other members of the organising team including Philip Hart and Brian Hill. You should have already

received the first notice by email from Mel giving the program details and information about accommodation and travel. This will be our third conference in Aotearoa and like the others promises to be an outstanding experience.

Wishing all a happy and safe festive season and a great New Year.

Ken McQueen

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AMHA 24th Annual Conference, Cromwell, New Zealand, 7-12 October 2018

Save you pennies, as we're off to the scenic South Island of New Zealand for the 24th Annual conference. Organiser is Lloyd Carpenter of Lincoln University, aided by long-retired Brian Hill and Philip Hart. They promise visitors an attractive venue, with lots of opportunities to look at mining and heritage sites.

The preliminary programme was recently emailed to members but you can also read what is in store in the programme reiterated at the end of this newsletter.

Please note that abstracts of papers should be sent to reach me (the AMHA Secretary) by **30 July 2018**. It would be appreciated if contributors would use the abstract template that can be found on our webpage. Or which can be supplied by contacting the Secretary. Registration forms will be emailed, and will be placed on our webpage when the registration and tour costings have been finalized.

Chinese Heritage in North Australia Incorporated (China Inc.) The 7th "no fuss" Conference: "Northern Links: Protecting Their Interests and Pushing Back", Townsville, North Queensland, 3-4 March 2018.

The organisers call for abstracts on papers that should be broad based and which reflect on Chinese in northern Australia, and the theme "Northern Links: Protecting Their Interests and Pushing Back". The conference hopes to explore the themes of settlement, adaption, integration, solutions and creative responses to institutional impediments

imposed on the Chinese community. A broad interpretation of the theme, as well as creative fringe ideas will be considered. While not limited to northern Australia, the organisers state that papers must reflect a link to the deep north.

Abstracts (300 to 500 words) should have been submitted using email, by 20 December 2017, but there's always a chance that late applications will be accepted. Emerging scholars are particularly welcome and the event should prove a great opportunity for Family Historians and genealogists to whom the organisers have dedicated a session on Chinese families and Chinese family history. Expressions of interest should be sent to: china_nth@yahoo.com.au

For general enquiries contact, Secretary Dr David Rains, 5 Railway Street, East Ipswich, Qld 4305: or President, Sandi Robb: robsandi@gmail.com.

See also website at:

<http://Chinalnc.yolasite.com>

AMHA Contribution to the AHA conference in Canberra, July 2018

The AMHA has been invited to contribute to the Australian Historical Association's conference to be held in Canberra 2-6 July 2018. If at least six presentations are offered we can have a panel component on mining history. Barry McGowan has offered to co-ordinate the exercise so please contact him if you are interested: barry.mcgowan@bigpond.com

The conference theme is 'The Scale of History', and the deadline for abstracts is Wednesday **28 February 2018**. For further details on the Conference see:

<https://www.theaha.org.au/aha->

AMHA Conference 2019 – Cairns, Queensland

Hot off the press is that the Executive and Advisory Committee have approved the offer of Jan Wegner to organise the 2019 conference at Cairns. Jan has identified a large number of interesting mining and heritage sites within striking distance of the town, and with a plentiful supply of accommodation and proximity to the

Great Barrier Reef there should be lots of attractions for everyone.

PUBLICATIONS:

Robert W. Vernon, John Taylor and Sons and their three “Drops of Comfort” – their lead mines at Linares, Jaén, Southern Spain, 2017. Pp. 250; Illustrations, ISBN-13: 978-0-901450-73-9. Price £12.

Those members who attended the International Mining History Congress in Linares, Spain in 2016 will not doubt be interested to get hold of Robert Vernon's informative book on the history of mining in that area of many mining chimneys and vales of Olive Oil trees

To get hold of a copy, click in the following link:

<http://www.nmrs.org.uk/publication/britis-h-mining-no-103/>

Martin Summons, *Mandarins & Mavericks: Remembering Western Mining 1933-2005*, 2017. Cost \$59.95, plus the following postage: Aus \$12,50; New Zealand \$20; Rest of the World \$35 per book).

Mandarin and Mavericks tells a story of the drive and endeavour on the part of the people who built and sustained the company Western Mining Corporation from its origins in 1933. Drawing on meticulously kept archives as well as the voices of many of the individual involved, the book traces the company's progress throughout its seventy-two years – from its humble start in a corporate world very different from the one we know today to its eventual ranking as one of Australia's leading exploration, mining and processing conglomerates.

The publication is complemented by an online archive available through the National Library of Australia, which grants access and insight into the company's activities that would otherwise be unavailable. The book was launched in November 2017.

James Lerk, *On the Tail End: Chinese Working Mine Tailings on the Bendigo Goldfield*, JA & ERS Lerk, 8 Mackenzie Street West, Golden Square, Victoria

3555. 78 pages. Size, 250mm x 180mm. \$25.00 postage extra.

ISBN 9780646978598.

Those attending the recent Traralgon conference will have been apprised of some of the content of the latest book to be published by member, James Lerk. Thanks to Robert Ashley for providing the following review:

‘The inside of the cover reads in part: “This small monograph explores a little of the trials and tribulations that the Chinese had to face”. Indeed these matters are well discussed throughout the text. The book is very well designed and illustrated. The Appendices showing gold deposits for two banks reveal the names of Gold Mining Companies, the names of the Chinese contractors, and the amounts deposited. A bibliography, endnotes and index are included. The cover is exemplary in its design and presentation, which includes a Chinese translation of the title in Chinese calligraphy by Wenbo XIA, of Liaoning, China. One word has been deliberately changed from working to washing in the Chinese version. Only 100 copies of the monograph have been printed.

It is obvious that the author has approached the subject with considerable empathy and this has resulted in exploring the hard-working lives of the Chinese at Bendigo when employed in processing the tailings and slimes that issued from the various large batteries. A good number of Mining Company records have been consulted and James includes some interesting quotes from minute books. James has diligently, not only consulted with present day Chinese, but also retired mine managers to uncover a wealth of information. Included are interesting and rare photographs showing the buildings known as ‘Tin Houses’, as used by the Chinese, and the once prominent tailings stacks of Bendigo that have now disappeared. James has endeavoured to get behind the negativity of newspaper reporting to present a more factual account of the Chinese in Bendigo. He leaves the reader with a mystery as to what Tac Yow did after he was released

from jail in 1915, but in the last chapter kindly reflects upon Willie Why (Ah Kwong) who died in 1963, the last Chinese man to have stacked tailings at Bendigo. James has called for further research on the subject and pays tribute to others who have contributed. This very acceptable work by James Lerk will indeed stand the test of time’.

Robert Ashley *Ballarat*

BITS & PIECES

Mining History in the Making

Members who attended the Cobar conference last year may be interested in the following news. Aurelia Metals Ltd, owner of the operating Hera mine and nearby Nymagee deposit (visited on the one day field trip), recently purchased the Peak Gold mine operation just south of Cobar for US\$58M. Aurelia CEO, Jim Simpson, has described this as a ‘Transformational Acquisition’ that will give Aurelia two operating mines and a dominant land holding (1,385 km²) in the Cobar basin for ongoing exploration. The increased gold production from the two mines will see Aurelia become a mid-tier gold producer. Copper, produced from the Peak, will also be added to the mix of commodities, including silver, lead and zinc, currently produced by Aurelia.

Details of the acquisition can be seen at:
[http://www.aureliametals.com/uploads/5/8/AMI%20-%20Acquisition%20of%20Peak%20Mines%20for%20US\\$58million.pdf](http://www.aureliametals.com/uploads/5/8/AMI%20-%20Acquisition%20of%20Peak%20Mines%20for%20US$58million.pdf)

Mining history goes on!

Ken McQueen

RESEARCH APPLICATIONS

AHA/Copyright Agency Postgraduate Conference Bursaries

Following on from the launch of the AHA 2018 conference Call for Papers (see Calls for Papers, below), the AHA is delighted to announce that applications are now open for the 2018 Postgraduate Conference Bursaries. The bursaries will support ten postgraduate scholars to attend the conference in Canberra, present papers within the overall conference program and participate in follow-up mentoring which will be held during the conference. The bursary, valued at \$800

per applicant, provides financial assistance to conference participants. The bursary is to be used to cover travel and accommodation; the conference registration fee will be waived. Applications close **Monday 12 March 2018**. For information click on the following:

<http://www.theaha.org.au/awards-and-prizes/ahacopyright-agency-travel-and-writing-bursaries/>

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

It's that time of year again my appeal goes out to all aspiring and current members to send in their annual registrations. To save me the bother of sending out reminders it would be greatly appreciated if you could delve into your meagre savings to do this asap. Registration is at your fingertips through the on-line pages of ‘Register Now’. For a painless exercise and to abide by your New Year’s resolution to pay your bills on time, just click on the following address:

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

If you are one of the few who would prefer old-fashioned pen and paper, see the attached application form.

WEB PAGE

As already noted by our illustrious President the web pages have been down for a while, because our provider disappeared from the face of the earth. The pages should be up and running very shortly. Once re-established, we will also be able to send out digital copies of the 2017 journal to all those who ordered the publication in this form.

JOURNAL

The Editor’s usual appeal to would-be authors to submit article for Vol. 16 of the Journal. For further details, contact the Secretary.

FINALLY

A belated Ho! Ho! Ho! And best wishes for 2018.

MJD/ December 2017

