



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

Newsletter No. 4 DECEMBER 2018

Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC

ABN 96 220 329 754

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

ISSUE 95

CONFERENCE REPORT – Cromwell New Zealand, October 2018.

The following report on the conference is provided by one of our venerable members from New Zealand, Philip Hart:

The AMHA's 2018 conference attracted 64 people, mostly Australians and Kiwis but also people from Japan and Britain, to Cromwell, in Central Otago, in the South Island of New Zealand. For most visitors to the region, Cromwell is a town they travel through en route to better-known tourist destinations, but it was an ideal site for our conference. Situated beside a beautiful lake it has dramatic hills surrounding it on all sides, bare of trees but with fresh snow adorning them on most mornings we were there (the temperature was invigorating!). Lloyd Carpenter, whose knowledge of the district is encyclopaedic, provided a variety of trips to mining sites and provided a variety of climatic experiences, giving everyone a taste of what it must have been like to mine in conditions ranging from very hot to very bleak. Fortunately the visit to the Bendigo goldfield (yes, named after the Australian one) was held on the sunniest and warmest day, with magnificent views to the distant snow-covered mountains. Lloyd, whose doctoral research examined this field, guided us through its main features, notably the remains of

magnificently constructed stone dwellings. Because of the lack of timber these were constructed using the local schist, and clearly there were some skilled stonemasons on hand.

One of the remains and intrepid AMHA members at 'Welsh town', Bendigo GF's.



Source: The Ed.

The most dramatic visit, weather-wise, was to the Bannockburn sluicings: Lloyd had wisely cancelled the bus because of the ominous weather forecast, but some people with cars explored the area by themselves and experienced a brief snow storm! These excursions showed the lasting impact of mining, especially sluicing, on this landscape; sometimes creating a striking feature such as the lake at St Bathans but more commonly leaving a mess (interesting in its own way, of course) that, unlike in areas where the bush regrows, will remain a blot on the landscape forever.

As usual, presentations covered a wide variety of topics relating to mining in Australia and New Zealand and occasionally beyond. And as usual there were several papers about local mining and the history of the region to set the scene; what was not usual but was an excellent way to start each day of presentations were video presentations by a local, Rex Johnson, showing areas we were not able to visit, notably the batteries and other mining remains still in situ in places like the long-abandoned settlement of Macetown. We were also fortunate that Neville Ritchie, the archaeologist who preserved the Chinese mining sites (some now under the hydro lake) to guide us through what remains.

Dwellings at Cromwell's 'Chinatown'



Source: The Ed.

Great credit is due to Lloyd for organizing the conference largely on his own, and mention should be made of his mother, who slaved away in the kitchen to keep us well fed and watered. Oh, and the wine tasting was a much-appreciated extra.

Philip Hart

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AMHA 25th Annual Conference, Atherton, QLD, 6th to 13th July 2019.

Organizer Jan Wegner has supplied the following details for our next conference:

The location for the conference will be at Atherton, 80 km from Cairns, and accommodation should be booked in the town or the nearby localities of Yungaburra or Tolga. Accommodation addresses will be forwarded soon, but a warning, you will have to book that accommodation well in advance. A

minibus can collect you from more distant accommodation each day.

Transport will be laid on from Cairns to Atherton, and return transport at the end of the event. There is also a regular bus service Cairns-Atherton, see: <http://www.transnorthbus.com/cairnsatherton.asp>

The programme starts with a one-day conference tour on 7 July and ends with a two-day tour on 13 and 14 July with a mid-conference tour on 8 July. We will be visiting mining areas at Mt Mulligan, Herberton, Irvinebank and Chillagoe.

Registration forms and details of accommodation will be sent out soon.

International Mining History Association

For those who like to plan ahead, note that arrangements are well under way for the 12th meeting of the International Mining History Congress, which will meet at Laurentian University in Sudbury Ontario, between **18-22 June 2020**. As is usual, we hope to see the AMHA well represented at the meeting.

BITS & PIECES

Seeking Information

We have received the following request for verification of a mining first, from Nicole Griffiths, regarding her mother, Anne Maree Zanettee who worked at the Nannine Mine in Western Australia. Any information would be gratefully received.

'I believe that my mother was the first female hoist operator, tested and officially registered in WA at the age of 29 in March 1980. We have her certificate and I'm hoping to make contact with someone who can help acknowledge my mum's efforts.

I am extremely proud of her determination because it was no easy process for her, being female in the mining industry and I feel that this is a significant achievement in WA mining history. Sadly, I cannot find any information about my mother, so I wonder if you could point me in the right direction or can offer me any advice please?'

Nicole can be contacted at:
Tel: 0405021047.
Email: nikkigee82@hotmail.com

Cobar Miner's Memorial

Members who attended the 22nd AMHA Conference in Cobar 2016, would remember the presentation given by Barry Knight and Kay Stingemore on the plan to build a memorial to miners killed in the Cobar mines. The Cobar Miner's Memorial Project group recently received some good news, with funding support from the State and Federal governments to help build the memorial. They still need to raise some additional funds, but work can now begin on construction of the memorial, which will feature a recreated mine decline and stope.

Ken McQueen was recently invited to Cobar for the annual Miner's Memorial Service, at which he presented a talk on behalf of the AMHA, entitled 'The Great Cobar Explosion of 1908'.

For further information on the memorial see:

<http://cobarweekly.com.au/?tag=miners-memorial>

<https://cobarweekly.com.au/?tag=cobar-miners-memorial>

Well-deserved Award

On Tuesday 30th October, I had the pleasure of being present in the magnificent Bendigo Town Hall for a short ceremony at the invitation of the City of Bendigo. The special occasion was the presentation of an Award of Merit from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria to fellow member James Lerk.

The Mayor, Cr Margaret O'Rourke addressed the gathering and the certificate was presented by Dr Don Garden, Associate Professor in history at Melbourne University and president of the Royal Historical Society.

It was pointed out that over the past 20 years James had prepared well over 1,000 articles for the *Bendigo Weekly*, on a wide range of topics dealing with Bendigo and its people, but the newspaper decided to end the series during October

this year. James has written and published a number of histories relating to Bendigo all of which have been well received. He has also contributed to various journals with articles relating to Bendigo. Along with the late Daryl McClure OAM, James was responsible for reprinting George Mackay's *History of Bendigo*. James was a close friend of another AMHA member, the late Dr Ralph Birrell and in 2001 together they produced the superbly illustrated *Bendigo's Gold Story*. It was pleasing to see Mrs Birrell in the gathering among members of the Bendigo Historical Society.

James then addressed the gathering and gave a stirring speech in which he called on Bendigonians to continue the fight to preserve Bendigo's historic infrastructure. It was pointed out that the Town Hall was threatened by a Council Engineer during the early 1970s with demolition. James then spearheaded a campaign which letter-boxed ratepayers, printed car stickers and formed a poll of ratepayers, which resulted in a tied vote in the Council chamber. It was the casting vote of the Mayor that saved the historic Town Hall. One has to see the splendid hall with its painted murals and golden decorations to appreciate what a marvellous asset it is for Bendigo. James forcefully pointed out that the award was for all Bendigonians especially those who fought in the various battles to save the Courthouse, the Tramways system, the Town Hall, the archaeology of the Victoria Hill and a host of other projects. The Central Debra Gold Mine and its placement on the Heritage Register along with the establishment of the Bendigo Trust are also among his claims to fame.

This was an achievement for a young boy who came to Australia in 1952 from war-torn Holland with his parents and brother and who grew up with an intense love of his adopted city. He has since travelled widely and met his wife Etty in Indonesia. They have a daughter and son who are both married with children of their own. Various family members were present at the presentation

which was followed by a pleasant morning tea. It was the first time such a celebration was held in Bendigo and James certainly merited the award.

Robert Ashley

JOURNAL

As noted in the previous newsletter, early editions 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, wardrobes, etc., and raise my popularity with my good wife Sharon.

This is also my opportunity to request submissions for either the refereed or un-refereed sections of Volume 17. The earlier your submission is received, the better for authors, referees and the editing process. *The Ed.*

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Surprising how quickly the years go by, and once more the appeal is going out for renewal of your memberships. To save yourself from annoying reminders, please nominate asap, and preferably on-line. This can be done by copying and inserting the link into your search engine: <https://www.registernow.com.au/secure/Rregister.aspx?E=33012>

WEB PAGE

Our now ex-President, Ken McQueen is still working hard to improve the webpage. If you have any suggestions, or if you are experiencing any problems in gaining access, please contact Ken at: Ken.McQueen@canberra.edu.au

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held at Cromwell, New Zealand on **12th October**.

Among items determined was the acceptance of the revised constitution. This has since been accepted by the WA Department of Business Affairs (note that **anyone requiring a copy** can obtain one by emailing a request to the Secretary).

There were a few changes to the list of committee members and officers, including Nic Haygarth who took over as President from Ken McQueen who had served the two years allowed by the constitution. Also, replacing Nic as Vice-President was Nick Williams. May their reign bring joy and enlightenment.

The full list of elected members is as follows:

Patron: Professor Geoffrey Blainey AC

President: Dr Ken McQueen

Vice-President: Dr Nic Haygarth

Sec/Treasurer: Mel Davies OAM

Advisory Committee

ACT Aert Driessen and Ken McQueen.

SA Peter Bell, Ross Both.

NSW Greg Knapman and Ed Zbik.

NT David Carment and Bev Phelts.

QLD Ruth Kerr OAM and Jan Wegner.

VIC Matthew Churchward and Ian Scott.

TAS Chris Boron, Greg Dickens.

WA Wendy Carter and Howard Tew.

NZ Philip Hart and Nic McArthur.

Journal Editor: Mel Davies

Assistant Journal Editor: Nick Williams.

Editor in waiting: Matthew Churchward.

Webmaster: Stephen Imrie.

Auditor: Chris Peniston.

Facebook co-ordinator: Robert Barnes.

Early Career representative: Alissa Flatley

Ken McQueen reported that following unexpected problems with the provider, the webpage was now active, though there were still improvements to be made that were currently being worked on. He and Nick Haygarth also noted that heritage matters had become an area of interest and that there was a push to encourage members to become members of a team that could follow up and possibly promote heritage matters associated with mining

The Treasurer reported that we were in a healthy financial position and following a motion it was agreed that the fees for 2019 should remain at the same level as 2018. The Treasurer did mention, however, that his appeal to various mining industry organisations for help to finance the printing and mailing of the

journal had fallen on deaf ears. He hoped that some of our members with influence in mining circles would approach possible sponsors.

In a written report regarding the facebook, Rob Barnes reported that at the end of September the group had 259 members, and that a substantial amount of material had been posted, mainly of photographs, but stated he would like to see more technical and academic material. He and Stephen Imrie acted as administrators of the Facebook Group and hoped that more members would join This could be done at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/720189911426071/>

A number of venues were suggested for location of the 2020 national conference, including Northampton or Kalgoorlie in WA, and Bathurst, Lightning Ridge and Glen Innes in NSW. Juanita Kwok volunteered to look at the Bathurst option, while Ed Zbik would be following up with the Glen Innes option.

A progress report was also made on the 2019 conference venue centred near Cairns, at Atherton.

The meeting ended with Ken McQueen thanking the organisers for an excellent conference at Cromwell, with special mention being made to Lloyd Carpenter for organising and officiating at the many fascinating tours, and for Lloyd's mother for preparing most of the catering at the conference centre and for supplying packed meals for tours.

Further Cromwell Scenes

The land of Oz might have its Big Banana, Water Melon, Lobster and Big Sheep but NZ's Cromwell has its own basket of magnificence as seen below:



Source: The Ed.

Another scenic shot taken near Cromwell, NZ, showing lake and snow capped mountains



Source: The Ed.