



AURUM

Newsletter of the Ballarat Gold Museum Society

Vol. 25 No 7 2014

AUGUST MEETING

The next meeting will be on Thursday, August 14th at 1.30pm when a visit has been arranged to see the recently renovated accommodation at the Sovereign Hill Comfort Inn. Details of the visit are overleaf in the Presidents Notes. Afternoon Tea will be back at the Gold Museum and Val Tudball, Terry O'Brian and Ted Maidment are on the Tea Roster. Please let Joanne know if you can't cover.

JULY MEETING

Dennis Spielvogel spoke very entertainingly about his Grandfather, Nathan Spielvogel whose notebook is presently being transcribed. Working as a teacher in places like the wilds of Dimboola presented many challenges and eventually he became the Head of Dana Street School. The quiz at the end and the peppermint rewards were much appreciated.

The image below is of an unknown school group which is one of the many postcards to have recently been given to the Gold Museum. If any of our readers recognise it or have any information about it please let would you pass it on to Roger Trudgeon. The size of the lady teacher's waist is impressive!



Just to ensure that you have noted the website:

www.goldmuseum.com.au

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Following the recent success of the Bendigo trip and Helen Muir's morning tea, the committee has decided to make each alternate meeting an informal one. Meeting procedure will be kept to a minimum.

As usual the August meeting will start in the Gold Museum reception area at 1-30. We will walk as a group into Sovereign Hill itself and be given a behind the scenes tour of the Government Camp complex by Richard Berman-Hardman. We meet him at 1-45. This will be an opportunity for even our members who are FOSH to experience what it is like to stay overnight in Sovereign Hill.

When the tour ends we will return to the Gold Museum to enjoy our usual afternoon tea. Any interested spouses will be welcome at this meeting.

Bill McGregor

GUIDING NOTES

The next Morning Tea will be held ;

On Monday 11th August..... At the Gold Museum.....From 10 am to 3 pm.

PROGRAMME

10 am Coffee and chatting. All members of the Gold Museum Society and Staff are welcome.

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11 am -12 noon ; - A presentation by either Kurtis Noyce (Senior Sustainability Officer) or Lance Faulkner (General Manager), of the Castlemaine Goldfield mine, which is a working mine under Ballarat.

Again, all members and staff are very welcome. The information should be particularly useful for front-of-house volunteers.

Noon approx. Lunchtime. Bring your lunch.

1 pm approx. to 3 pm. Activities for front-of-house volunteers.

Helen Muir

<p>Note from Joanne Gervasoni.....Would all members who have access to email to please forward me their email address jgervasoni@sovereignhill.com.au</p>

Stop Press From Roger Trudgeon

Memories of Wartime Ballarat - Gold Museum Local History Day - Saturday, September 6th

Gold Museum Society members are invited to participate in our special open day on September 6th from 10.00am to 4.00pm. We will be presenting tours of the new Collections Centre, displaying collection items relating to World War 1 and World War 2, having cars of the 1930s and 1940s outside from the Vintage and Classic Car Club Ballarat, a Ballarat Historical society stand and a Gold Museum society stand to promote the work of both groups, plus lots more. If you are willing to help as support crew for the "Behind the Scenes" tours (not give them, but keep watch as groups go through), chat with visitors or take tours in the galleries and so on, please contact Roger Trudgeon on 5337 1122 or by email on rtrudgeon@sovereignhill.com.au

NOTES FROM THE INTERVIEW with IAN SMITH

A Foundation Member of THE GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY, on 24th JUNE, 2014

Ian was born in Camberwell in 1933. He was educated at Canterbury, Camberwell and Box Hill North Primary schools, and then at Box Hill High School and left school in December, 1949. The next month, January, he commenced his working career by entering the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney at the Temple Court branch in Melbourne.

In 1953, at his own request, he was transferred to Horsham and a year later he started his career in Local Government, serving as Rate Collector for Horsham. It was while he was at Horsham that he married Nancy Davies and they set up their first home in that town. Their first two children were born after leaving Horsham. Ian decided that he would study for a Local Government qualification so he returned to Melbourne where he was Chief Clerk and later Accountant at Camberwell before going to Croydon as a Rate Collector.

Back to the country at Boort (Shire Secretary) where a third daughter was born and the family went to Castlemaine (Town Clerk) where the fourth and final daughter arrived; result – this branch of the Smith family came to an end!

By now it was 1969 and Ian became Deputy Town Clerk of the City of Ballarat, stepping up to Town Clerk in 1977, a position he filled until his retirement in October 1988.

Ian was a Civil Marriage Celebrant and in his 38 years in this capacity he performed about 1,100 weddings, including those of two of his daughters. He also was the official organist for several Ballarat churches, and became the Financial Director of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia.

Ian was part of a working party established by Peter Hiscock (then Director of Sovereign Hill) to look at establishing a voluntary support group for the Gold Museum; other members of the working party included Frank Nolan, George Lance, possibly Jack Netherway and Ken Clements, and the then Museum director, Barbara Cooper. It was proposed to call the group “Friends of the Gold Museum” but Ian suggested that, as it was a body which would be undertaking “hands on” tasks allotted by the director and conducting tours and talks about the museum—and to avoid confusion with the similar voluntary “Friends of Sovereign Hill,” a more upmarket title should be chosen.

And so the Gold Museum Society was born.

Helen Muir

The origin of the Pound Sterling from Aurum October 2008

The Hanse merchants played an important part in establishing London’s commercial greatness, and were known to the English as ‘Easterlings, due to the fact that they came from a country to the east of London. Their money was of the purest quality and was so sought after for that good quality that it became known as a ‘pound Easterling’ or later ‘sterling, which eventually became the recognised standard for gold coinage.

*This was taken from **The Great fire of London** by William George Bell*

BALLARAT GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY

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Notes from the Curator

Besemeres Postcard Collection Presented to Gold Museum

On Wednesday, July 16, the Gold Museum officially announced the acquisition of a major new collection of postcards and travel ephemera. The collection has been acquired from the collection of Dr. John Besemeres, a Ballarat born, Canberra based academic and a long time collector. The collection was officially handed over by Dr. Besemeres in the presence of Sovereign Hill President, Prof. Emeritus Terry Lloyd, Sovereign Hill CEO, Dr. Jeremy Johnson and Gold Museum Manager/Curator, Roger Trudgeon.

So far, 110 boxes of postcards, travel booklets, guidebooks and other related items are included in the collection. At the core of it is the largest range of Ballarat and district postcards held by any public museum or archive in Australia. The Besemeres Collection includes Ballarat related cards not previously seen by the Gold Museum before. Beyond this, the collection includes extensive numbers of cards covering the history of the wider goldfields region, Victoria and beyond to all the states and territories of Australia.

The collection then expands to include cards from the United Kingdom, Europe, the Americas and many other locations. Included in the collection are hundreds of cards related to World War 1, again adding to existing collections in this important area. The cards can be used to explore how nations on different sides of the conflict presented the war to their own people. There is a series of cards that features well-known film and theatre personalities in Australia around the 1940s, whilst another features the remarkable range of novelty cards.

Since the 1980s John has been consistently searching for postcards, all of them acquired within Australia and many purchased on visits down from his home base in Canberra to his family contacts in Victoria. He is well known amongst the collecting community and his knowledge of the cards is encyclopaedic. The possibility of the collection coming to the museum has been discussed since John first mentioned the idea to the museum in 2001. The process of getting to know the scope of this huge collection and for John to get to know how the museum would cope with the material were important elements to be worked through.

In total, there are estimated to be over 50,000 cards represented in the collection. Cataloguing and documenting this huge collection will take years, but the aim is to make this collection available to researchers and the wider public as it is recorded.

This collection represents a rare opportunity for a regional museum to acquire material of national significance which builds on the existing strengths of the museum and presents unique opportunities for preserving the images of the region and beyond for future generations. John Besemeres' family connections to Ballarat go back generations and it is wonderful that John has seen fit to entrust his magnificent collection to the care of the Gold Museum.

Roger Trudgeon

