



AURUM

Newsletter of the Ballarat Gold Museum Society

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JANUARY MEETING

The first meeting of the GMS for 2016 will be on Thursday February 11th at 1.30 pm when the speaker will be Edie Fry who is the Research Librarian for the Australiana Room at the Ballarat Library. She is guardian of some of Ballarat's earliest secrets and treasures. There will be a Committee Meeting at 11.30 am on the same day—please remember to bring lunch. Marj Luhrs and Bev Lacy are on the Tea Roster.

DECEMBER MEETING

Doug Bradby talked about the highly amusing—and informative—books he has written about Australian history and how he uses them in the sessions he has with numerous parties of school children who come through the Gold Museum. Quite a few members took advantage of the opportunity to buy copies of the books.

THE COMMITTEE OF THE GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY 2016



Bill McGregor (Past President), Helen Muir (Guiding), John Hamilton (Venue Organiser), Mary Clark, (Secretary) Joanne Gervasoni (Membership Co-ordinator), Vicki Moss (5 Minuter), Elaine Maberly (President/Editor), Lorraine Peterson (ex-Treasurer), Bill Llewelyn (Vice President), Roger Trudgeon (Retired Senior Curator), Vicky Lowe (Speaker Programme).

OUR NEW SENIOR CURATOR.....

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Michelle Smith as our next Senior Curator and Manager of the Gold Museum. Michelle comes to us with an extensive background of working in regional as well as major city museums. She is currently the Senior Curator of the National Wool Museum in Geelong leading the management of the exhibition program, collection development and general curatorial duties. Prior to this she was the Assistant Manager – Exhibitions and Outreach (Community Engagement) at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House in Canberra where she led a team in the areas of Exhibitions and Events. Before this Michelle spent 4 years working in museums in the Northern Territory including the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory where she was a Senior Curator and Deputy Director. Earlier in her career she worked in curatorial roles in museums in South Australia and Queensland.

Michelle will commence with us on February 8th 2016. Please welcome Michelle to Sovereign Hill.

Joanne Gervasoni

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Welcome back, Everyone—and a big Thank You to all those who managed the Children's Programme throughout the busy holiday period.

2016 is going to be a year of big changes and adaptations, I think; above is an introduction to our new Senior Curator. Those who enjoyed our bus trip last year will know that, for the first time, we did not have to cover the cost of the bus because, now that the Gold Museum Society is administratively combined with FOSH, we get the same benefits. This also results in the fact that we, our members, no longer have to contribute to the running costs of the Society—so no more \$10 payments! Ergo, we no longer need handle cash or need a bank account, or a Treasurer! Many thanks to Lorraine for doing such an excellent job for several years. The final details about these financial changes will be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

It will be an exciting year and I have insider information that our May bus trip will be another highlight so put the date in your diary! **May 12th 2016.**

Elaine Maberly

GUIDING NOTES

I hope your Christmas and New Year was everything that you wanted it to be, and that now you are all full of enthusiasm about being front-of-house volunteers for 2016. Many thanks to all who helped with the children's program as well as the Golden Treasures Tour during the school holidays.

I am looking forward to seeing the guides and touch trolley volunteers again and have scheduled **a morning tea for Tuesday 16th February**. This will be from 10 am to 12 noon and it will follow the usual system of tea/coffee and chat, followed by a workshop until noon. These sessions are intended as further training and it would be good to see as many of you as possible at the museum on that day. As yet I haven't completed the planning and haven't settled the program except that it will include one of our guides demonstrating how he/she handles part of the Golden Treasures Tour.

We are very fortunate in having two people training to be guides at present. They are likely to tag on to your Golden Treasures tour to develop their knowledge of how to do it so if you find that Brenda Robertson or Peter Bond join your group please make them welcome and show them your method of handling the tour.

Helen Muir

Many Congratulations to our member and Past President, David Pratt, on his Australia Day Honor's Award of the OAM.

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 - Impersonate a competitor or a guest.
 - Offer incentives in exchange for reviews, including discounts, upgrades or any special treatment.
 - Ask friends or relatives to write positive reviews.
 - Submit reviews on behalf of guests.
- Write reviews of direct competitors in an attempt to damage them, even if relaying a genuine experience

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NARMBOOL

After the terrible fire at Narnbool this message from CEO, Jeremy Johnson, is included to bring everyone up-to-date. Kelly Steegstra organized a trip for Sovereign Hill volunteers back in the Spring to tour the archeological site at Narnbool and it proved to be a marvelous outing—the group was sadly lacking in established volunteers and in retrospect I am SO very glad I went. Another trip is being organized to view the changes. I understand there is teaching material already being produced to cover disasterous fire damage in rural areas to be used with the many school groups who visit Narnbool each year.

Elaine Maberly

Narnbool update from Jeremy Johnson 3/1/2016

Happy New Year! The long task of replacing damaged and destroyed fencing is getting underway at Narnbool. At present the focus is on getting paddocks secured so that sheep can be fed and watered properly, then drafted, checked and separated into some semblance of order. This is backbreaking work for Peter Rooney and his helpers. There are still sheep turning up from all parts of the property and inadvertent cutting of fences or leaving of gates open by fire services still on site over the past week hasn't helped. Lambs are being prepared for market. Cleaning up work is progressing as the contract cleaners are engaged. Site access is still limited. Horsehill and Narnbool Roads are closed to all but local traffic. There will be many trees that are weakened from the fire and strong winds over the past two days and today will find some of these out, presenting another potential danger. This is especially so in the more heavily timbered areas to the north of the property. Cooler weather since New Year's Eve has been a respite and this coming week is likely to be the same. Keeping the garden watered is essential while the cleaning up of the burnt out section progresses. There is a wedding coming up on 16 January, so the Garden Room and the Homestead will get an early test out. The generosity of our supporters has been exemplary and is an inspiration. Recovery planning to handle the forthcoming school camp bookings is a priority for Brett Dunlop, Gill and Mick and the Education Officers. The New Year always brings new hope and Narnbool is well on the path to its reemergence from this natural disaster.

BALLARAT GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY

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A condensed version of Curator Peter Hiscock's report to the GMS's 1st AGM in 1992

The sad realization on reading this is how little of it has been realized and how it is needed!

The ebb and surge of museum development over the last 50 years is something which might be likened to that quote—"There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune".

The post World War History of Museums sees something like a succession of waves and troughs. It will be no revelation to you that we are now in a trough. The 1950's were something of a trough for museums but the 1960's saw a great impetus for the expansion of our art museums, both in Capital cities and in the regions. It also witnessed the burgeoning of historical societies in many places. The 1970's saw us looking at our national parks, and questioning the role of traditional museums with the success of historical parks or folk museums as many were called thenBut the 1980's was definitely a surge towards a crest. The completions of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, the expansion of the Australian Museum, the dedication of The Barracks in Sydney and the Mint, the construction of those wonderful museums in South Australia operated by the History Trust—The Constitutional Museum, The Museum of Immigration, The Maritime Museum and the Port Dock Railway Museum A completely new building for the Queensland Museum and the opening of its branch at Townsville, branch museums for the West Australian Museum at Kalgoorlie, Albany and Geraldton, plus the completion of the museum in Darwin.

Victoria did rather miss out—we were too busy building stadiums, but we did manage to get the Geelong Wool Museum by the Bicentenary wave. From the earliest days the Ballarat Historical Park Association had a notion of a museum—a museum within the Historical Park where things that were too precious to be left in crude building or tents could be displayed and where special donations might be featured. The idea was that this museum

within a museum might be somewhere near a Government Camp. The wonderfully generous Simon bequest provided the stimulus for the Gold Museum; wisely, the idea was not to build a museum on the Government Camp site but to place it squarely on this northern flank.

What would be the vision? It could take the full gambit of the history of this time from the Koorie occupation over those thousands upon thousands of years to the arrival of the pastoralists, the rape of the land by the gold seekers and the remarkably civilized city that grew up about the moonscape. There must be temporary exhibition space to attract exhibitions from other galleries and museums and in the Gold Pavilion there should be the mystery of the creek area by further illustrating the alluvial rush period, providing some interpretation of the peculiar geology of Ballarat.

The Gold Pavilion must uphold the allure of gold; Weston Bate suggested a thematic treatment based on alluvial gold as a democratic mineral; here was a prize to be won in a sort of lottery, which was more likely to be awarded to men of strength or of stamina who could slog it out. The Simon Pavilion might explore each major phase of mining and link with that the stories of the ethnic waves who came—only Chinese but the influence of the Italians and the Germans—particularly the Americans, and there are some great stories of the contribution of the Jews.

The coins definitely need re-interpretation and could be condensed, particularly the more recent ones.....that space could be used to interpret the 19th century industrialization of Ballarat and the development of its public institutions. Visitor enquiries about family and/or business will grow and accessibility of files on a fee-for-service basis offers some scope for investment.

