



Newsletter of the Gold Museum Society
Volume 27 No. 5 2016

AURUM

THERE IS NO JULY MEETING

Due to the fact that so many members are away and many of the combined volunteer force are helping with the *Christmas in July* programs, it was decided at the last Committee meeting that there will not be a formal monthly meeting this month. Guides are doing extra sessions and others are running the younger visitor programs. The Committee is meeting with Snjez Cosic on July 12th to discuss new content to be added to the Gold Pavilion.

JUNE MEETING

'The speakers at the June meeting were Bill McGregor and Kierce O'loughlin and their topic was 'The Changing Face of the Law'

Bill. Bill studied Law at Melbourne University and completed his Articles with Ken Baird in Lydiard St. At the time, 1960, there were only 10 legal firms in Ballarat. Now there are many. The firm is now Baird and McGregor, and focuses on commercial work for businesses including Sovereign Hill, and legal work involving property disputes. People still call him 'Mr McGregor'.

Kierce. Kierce moved around Victoria working in law for some years but eventually bought a practice in Euroa where he worked for 23 years. There were not many lawyers in country areas then, so you did everything including much travelling. There were no adding machines, there were manual typewriters, primitive photocopiers. Members of many committees and people generally were called 'Mr and 'Miss'

Elaine thanked Bill and Kierce, and presented them with a gift.

Mary Clark



Sovereign Hill's Davidson's Cottage's dining room prepared for Christmas by FOSH

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

I spent a considerable amount of time in the run up to the Grand Opening of Sovereign Hill's Festival of Lights helping with the decorations—I really enjoyed the floristry work—and the results were worth every ounce of effort everyone put into the project. Do try and see it—preferably sooner rather than later because the greenery will dry out! For your added encouragement, the extra sheet in this month's Aurum has the full programme to help with your planning. There are also the detailed entry arrangements for volunteers and their visitors.

With so many members fleeing from the Ballarat winter cold and others working more to fill their places the decision to cancel the July meeting seemed sensible. Our August meeting is already organised so we will meet up again then—and report back on the committee meeting with Snjez Cosic.

Elaine Maberly

GUIDING NOTES

A number of our guides are not available for July and/or August so I am having to ask those who remain available to take extra guiding shifts. So far the roster is working so a big thank you to all who are taking those extra shifts. (I'll own up that I am one of those guides who is disappearing for July – Queensland here I come!).

Vicky Lowe has very kindly agreed to take on my job while I am away so if you are unable to cover a shift and haven't found a replacement or some other problem comes up, Vicky is the person to contact (phone 040835 1588).

I hope that all guides have realized that our guiding time for arrival is at 10 a.m. for the duration of the *Christmas in July* program at Sovereign Hill, which includes activities at the Gold Museum. We assist with the *Christmas in July* activities from 10 a.m. then at 10-30 we give our usual tour which we normally do at 4-30 p.m.

There will be another morning tea followed by a workshop session in late August. This will start at 10 a.m. and finish at 12 noon. The actual date is not settled yet so check with the next Aurum and turn up if you possibly can. The ideas and information that comes out of these sessions is so very useful for our guiding skills.

Helen Muir

WELCOME AURIFEROUS WHOPPER

The date of our last meeting was June 9th which corresponded with the finding of the Welcome Nugget. Doug Bradby used the 5 minuter to produce the following quotation from the satirical magazine Melbourne Punch of June 17th, 1858.

Welcome Auriferous Whopper

We believe it is not unusual, upon interesting occasions, to stud a pin cushion with pins so as to make them manifest the words—

WELCOME LITTLE STRANGER.

We understand that when the big nugget was recently bought “to grass”, The finders were presented with a testimonial—fortunate people always get testimonials—Consisting of a suitable address, framed and glassed and headed “WELCOME AURIFEROUS WHOPPER”.

This pleasing circumstance suggested the name subsequently given to the
WELCOME NUGGET

EXCURSION TO 'BLING' EXHIBITION AT M.A.D.E.

On June 17th a group of Sovereign Hill volunteers, both Gold Museum Society and FOSH, met at M.A.D.E to view the new exhibition of Victorian Jewellery called BLING. Their new Curator, Cash Brown, welcomed the group and spent the entire visit with us explaining, demonstrating and even opening show cases and allowing some lucky people to handle the odd items. She explained that the onomatopoeic word BLING came from the sound of light hitting diamonds!

The Gold Museum has contributed to the exhibition with the Mayoral Chains and quite a few of our pieces of jewellery. The surprising thing to me was the large size of some the broaches which were worn at the neck of dresses & blouses; huge cameos, thick, ornate gold surrounding large pieces of semi-precious stone and groups of gold objects/people/animals. Ballarat was wealthy and this jewellery demonstrated that fact. Cash Brown pointed out that while most of the displayed items belonged to women it is a known fact that men flaunted their wealth just as readily. They wore heavy watch chains, gold watches, cravat and lapel pins etc. It was suggested that when the need arose it was the men's gold that was sold whereas that of the women was kept.

It is an excellent display and if you haven't been able to visit so far do make the effort—it is well worth the time.....and the café is very good as well!

Elaine Maberly



Just one of the opulent pieces of jewellery on show in the BLING exhibition.

NOTES FROM THE SENIOR CURATOR

As previously noted, it was agreed that a reproduction of the Eugene von Guerard (Ballarat in the early times; as it appeared in the summer of 1853-54) artwork depicting Mt Warrenheip should be displayed in the Eureka Walkway so visitors can look straight out to the mountain in question. A further piece of signage, at the start of the walkway, interpreting the Selkirk sculpture in the garden was also planned. Both of these have now been installed and are discreet but well placed additions to the walkway.

The Gold Museum has made a number of key acquisitions over the past couple of months. These include two wonderful engravings depicting gold buying in Australia and an 1877 engraving of the Chinese in Australia shows the complex nature of the relationship with the Chinese in the late 19th century. At the recent Bolte Luncheon held in Queen's Hall, Parliament House in Melbourne, I displayed a small selection of objects with the sole purpose of illustrating to our audience just how diverse the Gold Museum collection is, including Chinese textiles, mineral samples, educational banners and a surfing trophy gifted to Henry Bolte in 1970! It's a cliché, but the Museum's collection really is more than just gold!

Accessibility is a passion of mine and these days technology provides so many platforms to provide access to the collection. If you are a

facebook or twitter user then please like our facebook page and follow our twitter feed. Curator Snjez Cosic has done a great job in choosing objects and images from our collection and linking them with quirky facts or trending topics. As such we have added over 150 likes to our facebook page in the last four months and the number is growing fast. This is a great way of letting the wider world know about our fabulous collection – hmm, perhaps the Museum is more than just gold??!

On the topic of accessibility you might also notice the new film now showing in the Theatrette. The content, Federation University students reading letters from First World War soldiers, is compelling and linked with the current temporary exhibitions in the Clark Galleries. Most importantly the material has been sub-titled, providing our visitors with access to the content regardless of any hearing impairments. The Museum will always endeavour to provide sub-titles in the future for all audio visual material in keeping with the Sovereign Hill Museums Association Access and Inclusion Policy.

All for now, enjoy the joy that is Winter Wonderlights and Christmas in July, the only upside to a Ballarat winter (says the native Queenslander!!).

Michelle Smith

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