



AURUM

Newsletter of the Ballarat Gold Museum Society

Vol. 27 No 2 2016

MARCH MEETING

The next meeting of the GMS will be on Thursday March 10th at 1.30 pm when the speaker will be Alan Walker who will speak about his grandfather, Peter Laidler. Peter was a boy from the Goldfields of Corindhap who became one of the most well known political radicals of the early twentieth century. 5-Minuter will be William Stone. Carmel Robins and Joan McMillan are on the Tea Roster.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Edith Fry is the researcher located in the Australiana Room at the Ballarat Library where collections of Ballarat family history, Churches, Schools, Industries, photographs, maps, genealogical archives and special interest are housed. She told the meeting of some interesting projects she has undertaken for people researching family stories and also spoke about Henry Lewis Bullen, his work establishing printing in Ballarat and his world wide reputation.

Mary Clark

STOP PRESS.....

A lot has happened very quickly over the past month! As I am sure many will remember, I have wanted to up-date the overall appearance of Aurum for some time and this has now happened. Enclosed you will find a mock-up of the new look Newsletter with last month's copy. There is now a banner at the top of each page, which echoes the FOSH newsletter, but in this case Kelly Steegstra has used images of the Gold Museum. The new lettering has had input from the Design Department; ages ago we tried to use a gold ink but it didn't work in black and white—which bring me to the next change! At the last General Meeting it was suggested that the newsletter be sent out by email, as is the FOSH newsletter, which makes a lot of sense and will save money so this is the last Aurum which will reach most of you by snail mail. **If you have an email address which Joanne does not have will you please let her have it as soon as possible.** The other BIG advantage is that all illustrations, and the top banner, will be in colour which we were unable to do before due to the cost of printing.

Elaine Maberly Ed

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Before the last Meeting the GMS Committee had their first meeting of the year; one of the issues that I really wanted to address whilst in the Chair is the fact that although our members, especially the Guides, have regular face-to-face contact with the Museum visitors, and therefore KNOW the questions they ask and the extra information they want. I brought this up with the Committee and had their approval to take the issue to the Gold Museum Committee. If you read the back page of last month's Aurum you will know EXACTLY what the issues are. I suggested that we ask our members to provide me with their information regarding what is needed; what you think is good, what needs to be drastically revised, even scrapped, and what is desperately needed. So far I have received four such emails. My intention is the gather the information together and then produce a document which I can give to the Gold Museum Committee in April, and which Brett has welcomed. SO PLEASE LET ME HAVE YOUR IN-PUT.

Elaine Maberly

GUIDING NOTES

A morning tea and workshop was held at the Gold Museum on Tuesday February 16th from 10 a.m. to midday. Our Senior Curator, Michelle Smith, was able to attend for a short time and she spoke of her

background and some of the goals she has for the Gold Museum. Snjez spoke about the school holiday program and this became quite a lively session as most of the 16 guides in attendance contributed suggestions about the timing and content of the program.

Next on the program was an interview of our president, Elaine Maberly. Here we discovered a great deal more than most of us previously knew about our widely travelled English president, including the story of her catastrophic fall from a horse, and the loss of a child.

Then we went out into the public areas of the museum and observed Vicki Moss give the short session about the menorah that she includes in her Golden Treasures tour. This generated much useful discussion and similar segments will be given by guides at future workshops. Helen Muir gave a similar short session about the Canadian Valley being known as "the richest patch of dirt on Earth".

The guides voted to have 4 morning tea/workshops i.e. 1 per school term with two being 10 am to noon, and two being 10 am to 3 pm.

The next morning tea/workshop will be on Friday 29th April. It will be one of the longer sessions i.e. from 10 am to 3 pm. Note it in your diary and on your calendar. There will be more about it in the April Aurum.

Helen Muir

The one fact of my life which has bearing on my ability to fill the role of President of this excellent Society is the fact that I was instrumental in raising 3/4million pounds sterling, and doing the initial plans, for an environmentally controlled allergy assessment unit. We ran the clinic for over 15 years, with 25 staff, and worked with "fat file" patients to discover WHY they were unwell by looking at their reaction to their environment ie foods, chemicals and inhalants. Fascinating and rewarding work which was WAY ahead of it's time—but we got very good results and gave many people their lives back.

EM

The 7 Year War 1966 – 1973

Recently I was watching a documentary about the United States founding fathers who spent four months in the late 18th Century in Philadelphia discussing the framing on the American Constitution. Apparently, when they first met, they didn't know each other, but by the end they knew each other very well. This is largely because, being far from home (and all male), they spent most evenings together at local taverns. Over many beers and whiskeys they argued and eventually compromised in a document which would, in the fullness of time, be adopted by all of the States and by the American people.

Hearing this story lit a fire in my Sovereign Hill recollections. In the 1960s' and 70s' I, and the small band of mostly older historical park committee members, had many meetings. Firstly the meetings were in private homes, usually that of John Trevenan, and after about 1969 in buildings in the park. After these exciting meetings, many of us were too animated and excited to go straight home to bed. On countless evenings we would head to the Ballarat Club in Dana Street for a drink or two. The reason for going there was that so long as there were members and quests present, the bar would remain open. Mostly the discussion and debates were sanguine, measured and convivial. But there were some who were labelled the history police and others seen as commercialists. Consequently robust debate bubbled up from time to time.

One of our few female committee members, Nina Valentine, much later humorously commented that the early days of the historical park as better described as "The 7 Years War". Eventually as is evident in Sovereign Hill's and the Gold Museums fame and commercial success, the wisdom of those enjoying convivial conversations led to a happy compromises and a brilliant egg was hatched.

Bill McGregor

Well Behaved Women Seldom Make History.....

On Sunday afternoon there was a series of talks about women who made their mark, despite the conventions of their times. A wonderfully thought provoking experience. Thanks to Snjez Cosic for bringing it all together. Run under the auspice of the Professional Historians Association, four speakers gave accounts of

three, very different, strong women who ‘made the grade’ against considerable odds. Michelle Rayner from ABC Radio National was Moderator.

Anna Kyi gave an account of Lola Montez; not really the wonderful actress and dancer of her fame but a charismatic women who knew what she wanted and how to get it, going against convention whenever the need arose. She became a comfortable, wealthy woman.

Alicia Cereteto told the story of Alicia Meyer von Forell, a German National who fled Nazi domination and came to Australia with her beloved Jewish husband, and who became the ‘most dangerous aliens interned in Australia’ during World War II. Initially, all went well and they established a popular dance and elocution studio, however, as World War II progressed prejudice and jealousy prevailed and they were interned in separate camps. Alicia worked tirelessly to get them both released and eventually they were able to re-establish their lives. She lived a ripe old age, amidst considerable comfort and with the company of her wonderful Great Dane dog. It was a cautionary tale about shining too brightly in war-time Australia.

The third speaker, Dr Richard Trembath, was unable to attend and Michelle Rayner gave his talk, with some of her own input. Their subject was New Zealander, Kate Web, who challenged the then accepted, peripatetic method of journalist war zone reporting. She felt ‘flitting about like mosquitoes on the surface of a pond’ was not the way to collect meaningful information. She preferred to stay in one place and get in-depth material and by doing so changed those attitudes. She worked in Cambodia.

The penultimate speaker was Rachael Buchanan who’s subject was Etti Roul, a female who was passionate about sexual health and worked with many soldiers during World War I. Encountering tremendous opposition, she put together a Safe Sex Pack, made up of calamine lotion, condoms and ‘purple crystals’ (presumably potassium permanganate) to use before and after activity. She was much appreciated by the Diggers and was known as ‘the Angel of the ANZAC’s’; however, she was not welcomed by the authorities—the NZ Government went so far as to issue the safe sex packs to their troops with the result that they were the healthiest in the force—but never acknowledged Etti Roul.

Liana Skewes bought the whole afternoon into a modern perspective with a personal account of her experiences running a fashion blog; she daily faces challenging, ‘conventional’, deep-seated male reaction to the attractive female and the back-lash from their women. She is daily in her own war-zone and fighting similar battles to the other independent women we had heard about—not a lot seems to have changed and in many ways seems even more immediate and damaging.



Kate Webb



Alicia Meyer von Forell
NB The dog in the back!



Etti Roul

Elaine Maberly
Thanks to Snjez for input



The Stupa outside Bendigo at the time of our visit 2 years ago.



A similar shot a week or two ago—thanks to Bill Llewellyn for the images. Note the differences.. A lot more building, a lower entrance with windows—but the poor trees & Shrubs!!!

BALLARAT GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY

President: Elaine Maberly; 53428307; PO Scarsdale Vic 3351 egm154@me.com

Secretary: Mary Clark; 53324363; 8 Queen St Nth, Ballarat East 3350 email mlclark@vic.chariot.net.au

Editor of Aurum: Elaine Maberly, 53428307; PO Box Scarsdale,3351 egm154@me.com

