



# AURUM

Newsletter of the Ballarat Gold Museum Society

Vol. 26 No 4 2015

## MAY MEETING—MELBOURNE BUS TRIP

The next meeting on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> will be the annual bus trip, leaving the Gold Museum car park at 9 am and returning by 5pm. The first destination will be a mystery visit, with a break for lunch, followed by a guided visit to the Shrine of Remembrance. (There is a possibility of a return visit to the Gold Museum by the Shrine guides). It is suggested that everyone bring their own lunch and refreshments will be served on the bus. If you have not signed up already **PLEASE DO SO NOW** ; the cost is only \$15 per person as Sovereign Hill is covering the cost of the bus and if the Gold Museum members do not fill it the intention is to invite FOSH members to join us.

## APRIL MEETING

Rev Professor Robert Gribben, gave a brief outline of Methodism in Goldfields Ballarat. The Methodist Church was the first to have a church and resident minister. John and Charles Wesley were very different as brothers but they preached to the poor and were quite radical for their times.

Bill McGregor thanked Robert for such an informative talk and presented him with a gift.



Do you recognise this venue?  
See the back page for more details.

Have you any idea what this area is now?

Thanks to Roger Trudgeon for this photograph.

**Once again Sovereign Hill is holding a breakfast for Volunteer Week and it is to be held on Monday 11th May from 8.30 to 10 at the Sovereign Hill cafeteria. All of the Gold Museum volunteers are welcome to attend so can you please let Joanne know if you would like to go on 53292319.**

## GUIDING NOTES from Helen Muir

### The Second Gold Museum Society Morning Tea for 2015.

**When:-** Monday 18th May-

**Time:-** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Where:-** Not decided yet but turn up at the Gold Museum and you will be directed.

**Program:-** 10.00 a.m. Tea, coffee, nibbles and conversation.

10.30 a.m. A powerpoint presentation by James O'Callaghan who is the Native Title Co-ordinator/Earth Resources Regulation for the Ballarat area.. His role as Native Title Coordinator involves ensuring that all mineral licences issued in Victoria that include Crown Land comply with the requirements of the Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth) and the Traditional Owners Settlement Act 2010 (Victoria). The position is part Of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources; Government of Victoria.

If you have ever wondered about the rights/responsibilities of mining Companies this is your opportunity to find answers.

11.30 am. Interview with Elizabeth Marsden. GM Collection Curator

Noon:- Lunch. Front-of-house volunteers are asked to bring their lunch.

1.0 p.m. Interview with Snjezana Cosic. GM Curator

When this interview finishes there will be a forum for FOH volunteers.

3.00 p.m. Finish.

**Early days of the Sovereign Hill development** Thanks to Roger Trudgeon for the Kevin Williams image.



## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

When Doug Cowles was President of Ballarat Apex in 1966 and planning the formation of an Historical Park Committee, he was looking for someone with experience in public life. Apex members were all aged under 40 years . John Trevenen was at that time the Colonel of the local militia and a past President of the Victorian Motor Trade body. He was aged 48. Not very old really but to me, as a 29 year old, he was worldly. John was born in Ballarat and attended Ballarat High School.

His Army experience made it comparatively easy for him to set out the procedures necessary to start a totally new venture and for the committee members to focus on what to have represented in the Park. Not just that but where it would be situated, how it would be financed and what sort of constitution it would have. John and his wife Phil hosted most early meetings at their home in Creswick Road with a warm welcome and refreshments.

Once the Park began to emerge out of the mullock heaps and bush Opening Day began to loom. That was when John became critical to having a successful event. He produced a running sheet rivalling the staff of Buckingham Palace, with an attention to detail which caused many heads to spin. And it was strictly adhered to.

The result of this leadership was that on the day (29<sup>th</sup> November 1970) things went like clockwork and with a flourish. The Premier, the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, the Lieutenant Governor, the Mayor, leaders of mining companies and VIPs galore were all present together with a large slice of Ballarat citizens.

The Opening Day excited national interest through the media and began the start of Ballarat's love affair with Sovereign Hill. JLT, as he was affectionately known, was surely the hero of the day. He became the first President of Sovereign Hill and served for four years, and then again in the 80's. Doug Cowles was the second President.

**Bill McGregor**

*Editor's Note; Bill was the third President.....*

### ***From the Archive.....Suggested Reading***

A book that will interest many readers is *Letters from our Heart* edited by Jennifer Campbell. This is a collection of 100 Australian letters dating from 1792, some of which were printed in *The Australian* in 2001. Others have never been published and come from personal files and national archives.

In this book you will read letters written by people from many different backgrounds and from all periods of Australian history. There are touching letters, such as that written by Ken Murray to his young son just days before his death. Letters from well-known Australians include Alfred Deakin's letter to his young wife and 6 yrs old Patrick White's letter to Father Christmas. Many letters are accompanied by photographs all have historical information, making it a useful resource for those interested in Australian social history

## **BALLARAT GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY**

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### **Notes from the Senior Curator**

The Gold Museum has been rapidly moving into the digitised world over recent years, especially following the launch online of our collection catalogue. The Museum currently has over 67,000 records online which are linked to 16,500 images. The other aspect of digitisation that has been changing in recent times is the arrival in our collection of images that only exist in digital form. Up to now we have not been cataloguing these into our system, but with the increasing number of “digital only” images we have it is necessary now to catalogue these images in the same way we catalogue “real” photographs, documents and objects. The information content of a “digital” only image can be just as important to us and to future researchers as an actual photograph. The conservation issues for a digital only image are very real too as we need to analyse carefully the safest long-term way to store digital files.

A digital image on a CD can deteriorate or disappear in a few years and computer technology changes so fast that methods used to store images now will be obsolete in a few years. You just need to think of the old floppy discs and external storage drives that we used five to ten years ago that are no longer compatible with new computer systems. The key to preserving our digital files is to keep the files “live” on the current technology available, always backed up and upgraded to the next generation of technology as it emerges.

Two examples of digital only material coming to the museum have arrived in recent weeks. We were very pleased to receive from Ballarat photographer, Kevin Williams, a collection of 550 digital copies of early photographs taken by Kevin at Sovereign Hill through the 1970s and

1980s. These were images commissioned for media and publicity purposes and include shots taken at all the major events or when celebrities called into Sovereign Hill. Kevin has done high resolution copies as well as lower resolution ones more suitable for website use. Amongst the images are some aerial photos taken from a light plane flying around the site with Kevin taking shots through an open door of the aircraft.

Another much smaller group of photos arrived this week featuring six images of Craig’s Hotel from a copy of the early hotel building through to mid-twentieth century views of the exterior, the dining room, public bar and bedrooms. The original photos have been loaned for copying and they provide wonderful documentation of how the hotel looked in previous eras.

Since 2006, the Ballarat Historical Society has been running its *Capture the Vision* project which supports the scanning of old photographs of Ballarat from any era, but also encourages members of the Society to photograph Ballarat now for future generations to be able to see the changing face of the city and suburbs. The project has seen many important collections of photographs coming in, including 9,000 Ballarat News photographs from the 1980s and 1990s. Around 25,000 images have come in under the program since it started and it fills what was a very real gap in our photographic record of the city. The aim will be to get these images online in the years to come so that broad public access to this resource can be provided. The process of effectively recording and indexing these images is an important challenge ahead for the Museum.

In the increasingly digital world it is not necessary to always “own” the original photograph, but it is much easier to get high quality images that can be readily found online by those interested. It is a case of “watch this space” for future development of the digital photographic archive held at the Gold Museum.

**Roger Trudgeon**

