



AURUM

Newsletter of the Ballarat Gold Museum Society

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FEBRUARY MEETING

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 12th at 1.30pm when the speaker will be Professor Jan Croggan. Her topic will be *Academic Discipline applied to authenticity and interpretation in depicting Ballarat during the Gold Rush period*. Joan Mcmillan, Marj Luhrs and Bev Lacey are on the Tea Roster.

PLEASE NOTE; there will be a Committee Meeting, starting at 11.30am in the old staff room, on the same day. Would members please bring their lunch with them.

DECEMBER MEETING

The visit to the recently up-dated version of the Hidden Chamber mine tour went well and a very pleasant tea break was enjoyed at the cafeteria at Sovereign Hill.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

I am looking forward to another year's activities at the gold museum. Many of us will have been on holiday or spent the Christmas period with their extended family. Rosie and I spent the week leading to Christmas on our daughter's farm in South Australia. As a relative newcomer to grandparent hood I did my share of babysitting.

But most of the time I was labouring as assistant gardener in a large, rambling century old garden as Christmas lunch was to be held alfresco.

The new committee has only met once since the AGM and has, for me, the potential to be one of the best group of individuals I have worked with for many years. Many exciting ideas for our meetings have been canvassed. However the plans are still in the early planning stages. AURUM will give you "further and better particulars" in future editions.

Bill McGregor

GUIDING NOTES

Thank you to all our front-of-house volunteers who were on duty at the museum during the holiday season. There seemed to be a constant stream of visitors coming through with some guides having groups of about 20 to manage on the Golden Treasures tour.

Our five new guides have all been on duty during the past 2 months and have found that it is not as terrifying as they imagined; in fact they are really enjoying working with our visitors. There is a new permanent roster which includes the new guides. It is available for all front-of-house volunteers and is to be found in the guides' wardrobe, on the left hand side of the top shelf. If you have already collected one of these please check that Vicki Moss' phone number is 5333 5792 - I made a mistake with her number and have corrected it on most copies. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you again.

MORNING TES SCHEDULE FOR 2015

These morning teas are designed to provide opportunities for volunteers to meet and socialise. This is particularly useful for the front-of-house volunteers who have limited interaction with other members of the Gold Museum Society, especially the backroom people. It is also an opportunity to provide further training for our guides and touch trolley operators so each morning tea includes at least one session where front-of-house issues are involved.

The morning teas usually start at 10 a.m. and finish at noon. At least twice a year the morning tea extends to 3 p.m. This allows for speakers and other activities to take place. The schedule for this year is:-

Tuesday 24th March	10 a.m. to noon.
Monday 18th May	10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Monday 13th July	10 a.m. to noon
Tuesday 22nd September	10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Monday 23rd November	10 a.m. to noon.

Please put these dates into your diaries.

Helen Muir

Editor's Note These are very enjoyable and informative so well worth attending.....

INTRODUCING THE NEW CURATOR AT THE GOLD MUSEUM.....

Snjezana Cosic (Snez)

I have been employed in the museum and history field for nearly 10 years. I have worked at a range of museums and heritage bodies including Native Title Services Victoria, the Jewish Museum, Chinese Museum and, most recently, Melbourne Museum.

I love working with historical collections to uncover hidden stories about communities, places and events from the past. I find central Victorian history especially interesting. My areas of historical interest include immigration, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations, leisure, youth culture, music, working life and women's contributions to society.

In my role as the Gold Museum Curator I look forward to exploring the diverse range of stories and objects about Ballarat in our collection that is yet to see the light of day.

Outside of work I enjoy the outdoors, Pilates, movies and going to live music events. As a new resident of Ballarat I can't wait to explore my new hometown and nearby areas too.

Members of the Gold Museum Society attending the monthly meeting in June last year will remember Snez because she gave a fascinating talk about H. V. McKay who developed and manufactured the Sunshine Harvester and built the worker's village for his staff.

Worth it's weight in gold....from 'The Age' 11.07.07

A selection of gold nuggets is usually included in the postal auctions run by Australian Numismatics, based appropriately enough in the gold rush city of Ballarat. A particularly impressive specimen is listed in today's sale—"hard to describe the shape of this lovely paperweight" says the catalogue. Paperweight?? Only if you like leaving something values at \$4500 on your desk!

From the archive; part of an article published in 'The Age' on 13.09.04 written by Clare Wright who was the a postdoctoral research fellow in history at La Trobe University.

My deep and abiding love affair with the State Library of Victoria has just received another of Cupid's darts with the announcement of the library's purchase of Samuel Lazarus' diary. This important piece of cultural heritage is a glistening nugget in the library's already rich collection of original material relating to the gold field's era. Lazarus was an 18 yr old school teacher who ran an entertainment tent on the diggings. We can be grateful to him for the most delicate, detailed chronicle of the tense months leading up to the miner's rebellion of 1854 and the bitter mopping-up exercise that followed the storming of the Eureka Stockade. "It is a dark, indelible stain on a British Government" concluded the young Liverpudlian. Surely, he reflected, a man must have a "stony heart" if he did not view the military action as anything but 'savage wanton barbarity'.

Lazarus provides a human face to an historical event that has been intensely politicized—by both sides of the stockade—for the past 150 years. As an historian writing a book about women's role at Eureka, my special debt to him is in revealing the fact that there were female casualties on the bloody Sunday morning. On Monday, December 4, Lazarus penned an elegant description of the funeral procession of a woman "who was mercilessly butchered by a mounted trooper"; her coffin, "trimmed with white, was followed by a respectable and sorrowing group". Without Lazarus' account, this nameless woman would be utterly forgotten, given the tide of history that so quickly turned Eureka into a hyper-masculine episode of heroic martyrs to the cause of liberty and justice.

The significant expense and effort of the State Library expended to secure the original diary (it has previously held a pallid photocopy) is a reminder that historians are beholden in their trade to primary sources. Historians ask questions of the past and look to oral and documentary records to find the answers. They don't always find the answers they are looking for; sometimes they get more than they bargained for.

Editor's note; Given the title of this month's talk this article has added resonance.

Notes from the Curator

As the New Year gets moving, the Gold Museum will be working with new staff members and some changes to the organisational structure that we operate within. Positions have been changed and reporting arrangements modified to fit the new structure. Most Society members will not notice a great deal perhaps other than the four upstairs offices in the Gold Museum Collection Centre being fully occupied again!

On January 12th, Snjez Cosic started work as our new Curator. This role is modified from earlier times, with a greater emphasis on the development and programming of exhibitions, including in-house researched shows featuring our collections, community based exhibitions and touring shows. Snjez has worked in the cultural heritage field for ten years. She has worked at Museum Victoria in various roles over the years, most recently as a

researcher on the award-winning First Peoples exhibition. Snjez managed the collections at Native Title Service Victoria over several years and also worked at the Chinese Museum, the Jewish Museum and the Traveller's Aid Society of Victoria. These jobs primarily were focussed on exhibition related research and development, giving her very broad awareness of so many of the challenges facing museums in presenting exhibitions, developing an online presence, building collections, and engaging with the community. We welcome Snjez to the team.

In the changes put in place, my own role has changed somewhat. I report to Brett Dunlop who as Museums Director has overall responsibility for all of us. My title has changed to that of Senior Curator and I am now heading up a Collections and Research Department which includes existing and new staff located in the Outdoor Museum as well as the Gold Museum. The Historian at Sovereign Hill, Dr Jan Croggon, is a member of the Collections and Research department and reports to me. Jan has already been researching and writing the text for the upcoming World War 1 exhibition and will have similar potential in future to be involved with in-house exhibitions and research projects as well as her responsibilities in the Outdoor Museum.

A completely new position in the department is the new Collections Manager, a position filled by Elizabeth Marsden who commenced duty on January 28th. This role is responsible for maintaining the museum's Vernon collection management system and the online database that is allied to that. Other duties include overseeing our collection storage activities, and establishing procedures and documentation for loans

etc. Liz also manages the Exhibit Cleaning Team, a hard-working group of three (including Bernie Lee and Kim Stowe) who ensure Sovereign Hill presents itself at its best at all times. Liz has most recently worked as Manager of the Museum Accreditation Program at Museums Australia (Victoria). Prior to this she worked for several years as Collection Manager at the Victoria Police Museum. Liz worked in museums in the Netherlands before this and began her museum career in regional New South Wales, including Sydney. Liz brings a wealth of experience to the new role and we welcome her to the museum also.

Joanne Gervasoni continues in her role as Volunteer Coordinator, managing the work program of the volunteers at the Gold Museum and working on the administration of the collections. Joanne supervises over thirty different projects that are worked on by the volunteers, as well as liaising with the society committee on operational and other issues that arise. The new structure has seen an organisation-wide Volunteer Department established to ensure all volunteers are operating under consistent guidelines and procedures. This is headed up by Kelly Steegstra who reports to Brett Dunlop also.

Please join me in welcoming the new staff and bearing with us all us the new ways of doing things settle into place. I hope everyone had a good break from duty over the Christmas at some point and heartily thank all out guides and touch trolley operators for staying on duty over the summer period. Your work is vital and at such a busy time all the more important for ensuring a good experience for visitors.

Roger Trudgeon

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