



AURUM

Newsletter of the Ballarat Gold Museum Society

Vol. 25 No 10 2014

NOVEMBER MEETING

The Thank-you Christmas lunch will be the next meeting on Thursday, November 13th; it will be held in the Charlie Napier, Sovereign Hill, assembling at 12 noon for 12.30pm start. Please RSVP Joanne no later than November 7th.

OCTOBER AGM MEETING

Sovereign Hill's original official architect, Ewan Jones, was guest speaker at the AGM. He spoke about the building of the Gold Museum's first three stages.

Few of us knew what an innovation the structure was at the time. Indeed it won the Master Builders architectural award the year it was completed. Ewan spoke with passion about his vision for the contemporary museum. And the keeping of it's integrity. Like some of us older members of the population he was not afraid to be controversial and make critical remarks about recent additions to the outdoor museum. In saying so a few of us nodded in agreement.

We had a large attendance on the day and were pleased to have with us the President and Vice President of the Board, the Chair of the Museum Committee and the director of Museums. The Service Awards were presented by ex-Ballararat Mayor, Judy Verlin.

Bill McGregor.

Committee for 2014/15 are:

President; Bill McGregor.

Past President; David Pratt.

Vice President; Bill Ilewellyn.

Hon Secretary; Mary Clark.

Hon Treasurer; Lorraine Peterson.

Members; John Hamilton Ian Smith, Dennis Spielvogel.

Co opted Members; Trevor Kent. Elaine Maberly, Helen Muir.

This was quoted by Ewan Jones at the end of his talk. It is headed as follows;

Peroration on "GOLD IN AUSTRALIA" by H. J. Stacpoole, in Ballarat on August 10th 1962.

Gold, more than any other industry, pioneered this Continent.....It populated it with the cream of the world's youth.....It was gold that built many of our great cities; it was gold that hastened the construction of, and determined the pattern of, our road and railway systems; it was gold that converted our sparsely populated grazing lands into closely settled agricultural lands.....It was the needs of gold mines that established our engineering industry; it was to supply the needs of gold mining population that flour milling, clothing, furniture making and countless other secondary industries were set up.....It was gold that opened up and populated our mountain fastness and our inland areas, and, by doing so, paved the way for the utilization of forest resources, and the discovery and exploitation of our base metal and iron deposits.....IT WAS THE INDEPENDENCE OF SPIRIT AND THE COURAGE OF OUR GOLD MINING PIONEERS THAT ESTABLISHED AUSTRALIA'S DEMONCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT.....

THE HONOUR BOARD At its WW1 Open Day on 6th September 2014, the Gold Museum had on display a WW1 Honour Board (See below). The origin of the board is not indicated. The unusual shape of the board suggests that it was possibly originally mounted around a window, or perhaps a portrait of the King. While a number of the men (and woman) listed on the board do not have Service Records, indicating that they did not serve overseas, records of the rest of the men show that they were born in Ballarat, or more specifically East Ballarat.

There is a mixture of religions among the men with Methodist being the most popular, indicating that the board did not come from a Church. There is a wide spread of occupations among the men suggesting that the board did not come from a workplace and between ages suggesting that the board may have come from a sporting club.

If you can identify where this Honour Board came from, please advise Roger Trudgeon at the Gold Museum. Any information on Nurse Ion, C & J Artha, R Berryman, K Dunstan, L & W Hartman, E Henley, H Robertson, C & H Johnstone and G Westberry would be appreciated.



Neil Leckie Manager.

Ballarat Ranger Military Museum 0400 573 802

GUIDING NOTES

The Morning Tea on Tuesday 14th October.

The morning tea started, as usual, with our Gold Museum Society members having the opportunity to catch up with each other over a cup of tea/coffee, something which those of us who are front-of-house volunteers particularly appreciate as we don't get to see each other very often.

An interview with our member, David Manning, followed. A precis of his story is included in this Aurum. We were fascinated by the story and thank David for giving us some insight into his life from childhood and his war years.

Trevor Kent showed us a copy of a very old photograph of the finding of the Welcome Stranger nugget with John Deason and Richard Oates levering it out of the ground. However, things are not quite as they appear- it is a re-enactment and the lump of "gold" they are working on is actually a lump of stone. The real nugget was in pieces by the time this photo was taken.

New Guides we have five people who are training to become guides. This is wonderful news because we have been in dire need of more guides for the past few months. The morning tea was a great opportunity to introduce them to various members of the Gold Museum Society.

Copies of Articles Front-of-house volunteers who wanted copies of articles that they saw at the morning tea can collect them from the top shelf of the guides cupboard. They will be in named envelope

Helen Muir

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID MANNING at the morning tea on 14th October.

David was born in 1923 in the Melbourne suburb of Kew. The Depression had an influence on his primary school days with his parents having to move in the course of their work with the result that David attended seven different primary schools. He won a scholarship to University High School which he attended for three years.

His father suggested that joining the navy could be a good career move. David sat for and passed entry exams for the Royal Australian Naval College so, aged 13, he left University High and entered the navy. After the initial shock of leaving home and entering an entirely different culture, he came to enjoy the life and it came as an unwelcome shock when his father changed his mind about the navy and persuaded the boy to leave after a year. David regretted that decision. He subsequently joined the commercial world.

David joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1941 and was assigned to HMAS Perth, which saw much action in the next few months. David had about 6 weeks at sea before the battle of Sunda Strait which resulted in the Perth being sunk. (David is one of 6 survivors who are still alive.) The Japanese army and navy eventually captured all of the survivors who ended up working on the Burma railway. David was working on a section of the railway where Albert Coates was one of the medical team trying to care for the POWs.

When the war ended the Australian navy POWs had to endure further problems before they arrived home. Most of the POWs were flown to Singapore. The Americans collected the Australian navy POWs and delivered them to Rangoon, but no-one then came for them. The Australians lost patience and commandeered space on a ship which was going to Singapore with other POWs. There was an argument but the Australians were not getting off that ship – they won!

David settled back into the commercial world of insurance and then into family life with Audrey whom he married in 1949 (their 65th anniversary is in November) and their children. Jill was born in 1952, Greg in 1953 and Dawn in 1958. The family moved around to various parts of Australia. David's last posting was to Ballarat where they have stayed ever since.

Helen Muir

Unexpected News.....

It was recently announced that The Gold Museum's excellent Assistant Curator, Claire Muir, will be moving on to greener pastures in the near future and, while we all wish her well in all her new ventures, we shall surely miss her. Claire has been with the museum for over 7 years and has done sterling work; so much has happened during her time with us and with each new challenge she has so willingly accomplished much. We shall miss and send her all our good wishes for her future. Travel safely and remember to enjoy everything and let us know about your new life.



Ewan Jones addressing the AGM



Members gathering for the AGM

Roger Trudgeon is away so there are no Curator's Notes this month

BALLARAT GOLD MUSEUM SOCIETY

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