FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Being my eighth e-newsletter this is the last before the Ben Hall Raid Weekend Festival and the second last in the series. The very last will be produced with a wrap-up covering the weekend’s event, though it may be several weeks before I get a chance to finish it as I have another major weekend to work on – this being the Collectables Swap Meet and Gem Expo being held at the Bathurst Showground on Saturday 30th November and Sunday 1st December, 2013.

It has been a long haul to get to where the committee is now with everything that has to be arranged. A massive amount of research has gone into ensuring that we have the information to be incorporated into the various site information signs.

The bookings for the various tours are receiving entries daily and will ultimately see some people miss out on taking the opportunity to visit the “Ben Hall” sites. Many sites will have numbered information boards to inform visitors and Bathurstians as to what took place there or what part the location played.

Already collectors have many of their displays labelled and ready to travel to Bathurst to put them out on display in front of the Bathurst Court House from 10am till 5pm on Saturday.

The organisers are encouraging anyone attending to wear any colonial or bushranging costume throughout the festival. Already we know that there will be a number of colonial ladies, bushrangers and troopers wandering around on the day. The Lithgow Living History group of re-enactors will keep many enthralled and provide a mirror into our colonial past.

Many collectors and volunteers will be participating to bring visitors and the general public an event to remember during the Ben Hall Raid Weekend Festival on Saturday 28th September. On behalf of the Bathurst District Historical Society and the Ben Hall Raid Weekend Festival Committee we would like to thank those who have given freely of their time to ensure a weekend to remember.

Lastly on behalf of the Bathurst District Historical Society I would like to acknowledge all the sponsors who have made generous donations in support of the weekend activities.

Alan McRae, FAIHA, President Bathurst District Historical Society

UPDATED BOOK

“The Dare – Second Edition”

Alan Cochrane’s fascination with Ben Hall and his gang’s raid on Bathurst has seen him, during his retirement, researching what actually happened on that Saturday night in October 1863. Several years ago he published his first edition but ever since then he has found more and more information, photos and documents. “The Dare – Second Edition”, gives you a fascinating insight into what took place on 3rd October, 1863, and how Ben Hall decided that they would defy the police and visit the first place of European settlement over the mountains on the Bathurst Plains. The unplanned meeting of two Bathurst lads who ‘dared the outlaws’ to visit (if they dared) would see changes in government, police structure and those who lived in Bathurst – they had a story to tell and so does Alan.

“The Dare” – Second Edition”, sells for just $20 and
is available for sale at the Bathurst District Historical Society museum in the east wing of Bathurst Court House.

BATHURST’S BEAU BROWN PAVILION HOSTS THE BEN HALL RAID DINNER AND A FINE MENU

The Beau Brown pavilion at the Bathurst Showground was the first pavilion on these historic grounds. It is the location of the special dinner to mark the Ben Hall raid in October 1863, some thirty years before the building was relocated to Bathurst in time for the 1892 annual show.

We have organised a scrumptious buffet menu with a wide selection. The evening is BYO and we have organised glasses.

The building began its life in Sydney around 1886 as a skating rink at the Ashfield Recreation Ground. Due to financial difficulties it came up for sale. The Bathurst Show Society heard about it after George Hudson of Bathurst, whose brother Robert was one of the trustees of the Ashfield operations, brought the sale to the attention of the Bathurst committee. They could purchase the pavilion and a grandstand and move them to Bathurst and re-erect them. For a cost of £800 they were dismantled and brought up by train. The 1967 Committee named it the ‘Beau Brown Pavilion’ in recognition of the work for the Show society of Mr. B.A. Brown.

Remember its BYO for the dinner.

FATHER McGUINN ENCOURAGES ANOTHER TO SURRENDER

In September 1864 James Dunleavy who had joined Ben Hall’s gang was having serious doubts about being a bushranger. He had been wounded in a gun battle with the police and one assumes that the lifestyle of always running and sleeping outdoors was taking a toll. Father L. McGuinn from Carcoar convinced him to surrender and that he could help with making it happen. On 16th November, accompanied by Father McGuinn, James Dunleavy rode to Bathurst to surrender to the authorities. He later appeared in Bathurst Court charged with ‘robbery under arms’. Found guilty of the offence he received a 15 year sentence.

CLAY PIPES SOLD IN INNS OR STOLEN BY BUSHRANGERS

It was a common practice for hotels to sell clay pipes (used for smoking tobacco) at the bar and one presumes that Mary Walsh at her Fitzroy Hotel in Bathurst was doing so when John Vane enjoyed breakfast there before he gave himself up. At the time the wholesale price for a gross of these smaller type clay pipes was around 7/6 (75 cents). The hotelier could either sell them singly for a halfpenny or from a general store for as little as six for a penny in the 1860's in Bathurst. Bulk lots were usually packed in wooden boxes filled with wood shavings. Bushrangers often helped themselves to these pipes also.

The old clay tobacco pipe with its fine white finish played a prominent part in the social life in the Australian Colonies from the late 1700's until the more sophisticated wooden, plastic and ceramic pipes came into vogue. Sizes of pipes vary, especially the length of the stem, from the longer stemmed line, sometimes up to 24 inches, known to many as ‘churchwardens’ to the much shorter thin stemmed ‘London straws.’ Some ‘churchwardens’ exhibit the characteristic twist in the stems to give the smoker some idea of the point of balance. Others were sold as ‘Smoke Room’ pipes. Some of the pipes had elaborate decorations on them such as figureheads and other decorations.

These clay pipes turn up from time to time and were on sale in many businesses when Ben Hall visited in early October 1863. Unfortunately they are usually found broken. Most are what we call ‘clean skins’ and don’t have any identification by way of stamps or marks on the shank to identify the maker. Early pipes were made by hand then as time went by moulds were made so that pipes could be made faster and in bigger quantities. Generally in England pipe maker’s workers were not well paid. Pipe makers generally established themselves in poorer areas of high unemployment to make the best of the situation. Larger factories could turn out 10,000 in a day to export to the colonies.
A small spur at the base of the bowl was added later to prevent its heat from damaging the furniture if the hot pipe was sat down. One man who manufactured pipes in New South Wales was Thomas Field, a Sydney potter who arrived as a free settler in the colony on 29th January, 1842. Field's pottery works was near the corner of Jones Street and Parramatta Road. His clay tobacco pipes, the ubiquitous salt glazed ginger beers bottles and other domestic containers were his bread and butter lines.

Field used a two piece mould to manufacture his pipes. The pipes, several thousand at a time, were baked in a wood fired up-draught kiln made of fire-clay bricks. A fine piercing wire was used to make the small hole down through the stem. The tops of the bowls were finished to remove any rough edges or marks by using a trimming knife to scrap off the imperfections. On completion of firing the stems mouthpiece was brushed over with spirit varnish.

On 28th May, 1864, Ben Hall held up a coach at Emu Flat about six miles from Binalong and various passengers had their money stolen along with other items. During the robbery Ben Hall swapped his clay pipe like one of these with one of the passengers and took his Meerschaum pipe.

**BUSHRANGERS USED MANY HORSES**

All bushrangers stole horses often during their years they operated. They were continually on the lookout for racehorses as they were faster than most of the horses purchased by the Police Force for their troopers. The draught horse was the workhorse in colonial times. The lives of humans and horses were bound together until the advent of the steam train and later the petroleum driven motor vehicles.

The Clydesdale and the Belgium were the strongest horses able to pull almost a metric ton in many cases. They were descended from the great War Horses that carried heavily armoured knights into battle. Draft horses are usually gentle animals.

On 18th March, 1864, after the wounding of Gilbert, Ben Hall and Dunn found a shepherd on McDonald’s station where they made the shepherd dress Gilbert’s right arm. Hall and Dunn then left to find new horses. They ended up stealing three horses along with bridles and saddles from Beggan Beggan station. A day later they returned to the same station and stole revolvers, a shotgun, ammunition, blankets, camping gear and food. They loaded it all onto a packhorse which may well have been a draught horse. It seems the gang would use these ‘pack’ animals to their next destination then leave them behind.

**MEDICINES AROUND IN BEN HALL’S TIME**

Today we take medicines for granted and simply call into the local chemist. Whilst chemists were in almost every large town most medicines had to be made up. Some of the items typically found in one’s home ‘medicine chest’ in the 1860s were - Holloway’s pills per box 1 shilling, Holloway’s ointments per box 1 shilling, Bristol’s sugar-coated pills 1 shilling, Cockles antibilious pills, 1 shilling, Australian ointment 1 shilling per pot, Continental ointment 1 shilling per pot, Seiditz powders 1 shilling per box, Soothing powders 1 shilling per packet, Linseed meal sixpence per pound, Chlorodyne 1 shilling per bottle, Powell’s Balsam Aniseed 1 shilling per bottle, Cherry Pectoral four shillings and sixpence per bottle, Jayne’s Expectorant four shillings and sixpence per bottle, Jayne’s Alternative four shillings and sixpence per bottle, Farmer’s Friend at two shillings and eleven pence per bottle, Perry Davis’ Pain Killer at one shilling and three pence per bottle and Western’s Wizard Oil for two shillings and a penny per bottle.

**SCHOOL OF ARTS RAID TURNING POINT**
Our photo shows the School of Arts building which unfortunately exists no longer. The two storey building was located on the corner of William and Howick Streets where two of Ben Hall’s gang turned the corner in William Street to go up to Mr. De Clouet's Inn where they intended to rob his hostelry and steal “Pasha”, his race horse. Two other gang members kept on going down William Street towards the Police Barracks until a shot was fired to indicate they were going the wrong way.

Land for a School of Arts, was selected in 1844 but this location didn’t please the committee and land on the corner of Howick and William Street was sought and later gazetted on 1st March, 1853. The local gentry considered such an institution was essential to ‘cultural, social and intellectual development’ of the town and an ideal establishment for the ‘improvement of young men.’

After several attempts the School of Arts got underway on 12th June, 1855, with Dr. Busby taking the chair and becoming President but it was 1857 before a committee was formed. A small library was soon set up in rented premises in Durham Street. By 1859 the building was too small so was removed to the Bathurst Free Press newspaper offices but they needed their own premises.

Their new School of Arts building began in 1860 with President Dr. George Busby after local Bathurst architect, Mr. M. Saddleir was asked to submit a design based on the committee’s rough drawings and ideas. Whilst the School of Arts was being constructed William Nixon, the successful tenderer for the New South Wales Government, built the telegraph station and office next door facing Howick Street. The telegraph station, complete with its wooden picket fence, was finished in late November 1861. Imagine how proud Dr Busby was at the Annual General Meeting in February, 1862, to report to the gathering that the Bathurst School of Arts now had their own building, this being for their permanent library. The committee intended to have a tenant downstairs to get regular income.

A large kerosene light was erected outside on the front of the building to illuminate the street and allow members to see at night when using the building. It would have been lit already when Ben Hall’s gang visited Bathurst on Saturday evening of 3rd October, 1863, almost 150 years ago.

The School of Arts also arranged and sponsored public lectures, discussions, debates and magic lantern shows inviting doctors, teachers, clergymen and distinguished scholars to talk about varying subjects. Some lectures were free whilst many attracted a charge such as ‘half a gold sovereign’ (left) whilst others were two shillings or a shilling. The theatre and lecture hall at the rear of the School of Arts library was commenced in 1873 and completed in 1874 with Edward Gell, a local architect, designing the building. Mr. James Rutherford was on hand to lay the foundation stone on 26th March, 1873.

EX-BATHURST MAN PRESIDES OVER BEN HALL’S INQUEST AT FORBES

The Police Magistrate at Forbes who presided over the inquest of Ben Hall after his shooting was Mr. William Farrand, J.P., who originally came from Bathurst. Along with a number of respected gentlemen of Forbes a verdict was returned “That the deceased died from the effects of gunshot wounds received from the Police in the execution of their duty.”

In early January 1851 Mr. William Farrand became the secretary, as well as the treasurer, of the Bathurst Branch of the Anti Transportation Association during a meeting held at Mrs. Black’s Commercial Inn in Howick Street in Bathurst. The meeting wanted the transportation of convicts to continue from England.

Towards the end of 1849 an opportunity came up that saw Mr. William Ferrand decide to purchase a printing press and newspaper business from Mr. Benjamin Isaacs. He became the editor and printer of the ‘Bathurst Free Press’, produced weekly, with
the first issue on Saturday, 6th October, 1849. After the discovery of payable gold at Bathurst Mr. Farrand changed the name to ‘The Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal’ which was first published on 28th May, 1851, and produced 3 times weekly.

Mr. William Farrand was obviously well educated having been a school teacher for a number of years in England before coming to the colony of New South Wales. He was to set his hand to a number of businesses in Bathurst during his time in Bathurst. Early in February 1854 William entered into a partnership with Mr. B.F. Hughes to operate the businesses of the Union Steam Flour Mills as well as the Bathurst Free Press newspaper though the agreement for the flour mill came to an end in September 1855.

Late 1858 Mr. Ferrand purchased the Bathurst Grammar School which he conducted at Rose Tree Cottage in Keppel Street. It had been previously carried on by Mr. Rupert Ewen. He must have decided he needed to concentrate on his pupils as he sold his newspaper just after Christmas to Mr. John C. White.

In 1861 Farrand was appointed a Commission of the Peace (they were called a Justice of the Peace after 1923). On 12th December, 1861, Mr. Farrand attended a public meeting in Bathurst called to discuss the actions required to establish Bathurst as a Municipality. Again William Farrand accepted the job as Honorary Secretary of this important movement whose efforts were rewarded on 13th November, 1862, when Bathurst was proclaimed a Municipality in the New South Wales Government Gazette. The Municipality of Bathurst could now elect a Council which was formed early in 1863, the same year Ben Hall and his gang raided Bathurst.

By April 1862 William Farrand had moved to Forbes and established the Lachlan Observer and Miner’s Advocate newspaper in partnership with Mr. Edward Wilton, though it was unsustainable due to the short-lived Lachlan goldfields. By the end of the decade he was the Police Magistrate at Wentworth where he died on 31st January, 1871.

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**FLORIN TO BE CHARGED TO VIEW HALL’S PORTRAIT**

After the death of Ben Hall an artist supposedly did a pencil sketch of the deceased. The Western Examiner newspaper reported the fact and that the artist had ideas of travelling with the sketch to show the general public at two shillings per head. It was supposedly a tinted side portrait that was faithfully reproduced and was a work of art and worth inspection.

The intended charge of two shillings was involving a coin that was relatively new on the scene. With the British Government keen to bring in a decimal currency system in 1847 there was a fair amount of debate on the subject by which time Queen Victoria had been married seven years. Officials had proposed that a new silver coin be struck that would be worth one tenth of a pound. Keen not to upset the general public it was decided to test public opinion and do a limited trial strike. Several names were put forward but it was finally decided that it would be called a ‘florin’. The London Mint geared up and produced a small number of ‘patterns’ in 1848 before releasing them to the public in 1849. They made one big mistake – they didn’t include the traditional reference to God. The coin was shunned because two letters ‘D.G.’ were omitted and this issue became known as the ‘Godless florin’. Mint officials scurried to fix the next issue.

The result was that the ‘D.G.’ was restored in the design from 1852 for the general public. The design continued with the Gothic font. Queen Victoria’s image was very ornate, wearing a crown, something that hadn’t been done since King Charles II’s time. The elaborate reverse features a “Celtic” type cross incorporating four shields. It seems the public definitely loved them when one looks at the numbers struck and it received Queen Victoria’s tick of approval also. This design is the one that would have been mainly in circulation when Ben Hall and his gang were marauding around the region.

This design remained on florins until 1887 after which the Queen Victoria “Jubilee” design was introduced.

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**ELEY’S AMMUNITION AND CAPS**

Numerous times in newspapers during Ben Halls time percussion caps are mentioned, either being purchased or most often stolen. Many of these would have the name ‘Eley’ on them. The history of the business that made them began in 1827 when two brothers named William and Charles Eley began planning and establishing their concern to manufacture a range of cartridges and later percussion caps. Cartridges had been developed to help the military and others to speed up their process of loading. After establishing the factory in
London Mr. Charles Eley placed an advertisement in the London Morning Chronicle on 10th July, 1828. The men had a keen interest in shooting and experimented when making their ammunition. Many shooters appreciated their early patented cartridges. They were also on the lookout for good ideas with the earliest patent acquisition by Charles Eley being the rights to manufacture the “wire cartridge”, an invention that held the shot pellets together till after it left the barrel basically. It seems that the idea wasn’t very popular, so much so Charles decided to quit.

William struggled on and by the mid 1830s he began to make and sell an improved version of the wire cartridge. In 1837 the factory began making percussion caps as did other manufacturers. Percussion caps for muzzle loaders were usually purchased in metal tins, though later they were marketed by some manufacturers in small circular cardboard boxes. Each container held lots of 250 or 100, though occasionally in lots of 50. These tins of caps were often rolled in brown paper in lots of a dozen for transportation. Most containers in collections seem to be made in Britain, France and America. All have paper labels with words such as “Waterproof”, “Elastic Lined Waterproof”, “Metal-Lined Percussion Caps”, “Percussion Caps Warranted”, “High Explosive”, “Military Percussion Caps”, “Stout Metal Lined Caps” and “Japanned metal”. They also exhibited a number such as No 6, 10, 18, 21, 24, 26, 56, etc.

In 1842 after William Snr, then aged just 46, had been killed in an explosion involving mercury the previous year his three sons took over changing the business’s name to Eley Brothers. They had been working in the explosives and cartridge manufactory. The men exhibited their products in a number of British, Colonial and French Exhibitions and through careful quality controls their products became well known world-wide. In 1855 the eldest son, William T. Eley, saw an opportunity and collaborated with Samuel Colt. The duo developed a joint patent between them for special Colt revolver cartridges. During the early 1860s this British firearm ammunition manufacturer supplied a large amount to the Confederacy. In the mid 1870s they substantially enlarged the factory by public shares, the company was Incorporated and made a limited liability company. The death of William T. Eley in 1881 was a blow to the business. By 1882 the company was assembling completely waterproof shotgun cartridges in thin brass shells. The two remaining brothers struggled with the business including problems with quality. Supplies of .303 ammunition bound for the Boer War was returned as ‘useless’. The company changed locations as the business expanded but the lack of foresight meant that the manufactory lacked essential machinery to make components. The 1900s heralded in numerous problems such as worker unrest, accidents and poor factory design. By 1921 due to changes and lack of a ready market their main factory was closed and transferred. Several years later amalgamation saw the business known as Eley-Kynoch.

**BEN HALL RAID SITE SIGNS**

Throughout Bathurst over the weekend of the Festival there will be a series of numbered signs (600 x 900mm) which tell of the significance of each site associated with the Ben Hall raid. They relate to a self drive tour - you need to buy the booklet from the Bathurst District Historical Society Museum in Russell Street. Each sign has an image of the original building if we have one.

For example where John Vane breakfasted at Mrs. Mary Walsh’s hotel before he gave himself up is site number 17. Later, in early December, 1863, John Vane was arraigned in the small Court House in Bathurst – site number 4.

**COBB & CO IN BATHURST WHEN BEN HALL RAILED**

In 1854 an event took place that would make a small business into a household name and pioneer company. Bathurst would become part of this momentous history that saw Cobb & Co traverse great distances with coaches and teams of horses. On Saturday 28th September there will be a Cobb & Co coach on display in front of the Bathurst Court House.

Cobb and Co became one of the largest coaching companies in the world – by 1870 they were
harnessing 6,000 horses a day. At the time they owned in excess of 30,000 horses. There were usually five or seven horses to pull each coach – each horse had its own set of reigns.

Cobb and Co started their coach line to the Victorian Goldfields with the business going on to eventually acquire many mail contracts carrying letters, parcels for the postal authorities of New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

Cobb and Co history in Bathurst covers the period 1862 to 1911. Their arrival in Bathurst was well documented in the Bathurst Free Press & Mining Journal with James Rutherford at the reigns of one of the coaches. Bathurst became the head office for Cobb and Co for five decades.

In their first full year of operation, James Rutherford established services to Sydney, Orange, Hill End, Mudgee, Sofala, Forbes, Young, Rylstone, Wellington and places in between. During this year another contract was added this being Orange to Forbes 6 days a week for £1325 with Hanrahan’s Hotel in Orange as the pickup point. Bathurst to Carcoar was also added at £348. It did not always go Cobb and Co’s way because when the Forbes to Young mail tender came up the company lost it to the lower tender by Mr H. Creig.

In the year that Ben Hall was to die in 1865 a good coach horse, bred from both a cross between draft and saddle horses, was worth £65 to £70. Horses needed to maintain 6 to 8 miles per hour.

James Rutherford used American Concord type coaches, these being sprung on thick leather straps made from 14 thicknesses of leather. Most New South Wales Cobb & Co coaches were painted bright red.

Rutherford expected the horse team to be changed around every 20 miles. Tired and worn out horses would be a liability as he prided his organisation on punctuality and reliability. Within two years a coach making factory was completed in Howick Street.

In 1876 Mr. Rutherford constructed his new factory on land in lower William Street, below Durham Street, below the now Bathurst Community Club. Nearly thirty were permanently employed at this site and included blacksmiths, wheelwrights, trimmers, painters and leather harness makers.

Several young men were always doing apprenticeships to learn the various trades.

As the Cobb & Co empire expanded Rutherford decided to move his ticket office over the road to corner of Howick and William into the lower floor of the School of Arts building in 1876 and remained there until 1911.

James Rutherford married Ada Nicholson at Taradale in Victoria in late 1863. They lived at the “The Lindens” which is located at 277 William Street on the corner William and Brilliant Streets. Later the Rutherford family moved into “Hereford” at Kelso.

The photo above shows the Rutherford family at Hereford at Kelso around 1890.

Well-known Bathurstian Les Wardman will be on hand at the Ben Hall Raid Festival on Saturday 28th September to give several talks on the history of Cobb & Co. He will be speaking near the Cobb & Co coach on display out the front of the Bathurst Court House.

The photo above shows the Rutherford family at Hereford at Kelso around 1890.

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BEN HALL’S GANG VISITED POPULAR BATHURST GUNSMITH

When Ben Hall and his gang made their brazen raid on Bathurst on Saturday 3rd October, 1863, almost 150 years ago Mr. Bartholomew Pedrotta’s two
storey gunshop was still located in William Street but he was in a new shop which he had moved into in December 1861. It was located beside Rachel Leed’s Great Western Hotel, seen here on the right and is now the ANZ Bank. Mr. Pedrotta was a gunsmith and had previously established himself in Bathurst 1858 in rented premises further up William Street next door to Jane Sadler’s Carrier’s Arms Inn.

Upon moving to his new establishment Mr. Pedrotta arranged for his business name and occupation to be signwritten on the upper storey of his newly rented premises. It stated “B. PEDROTTA – GUNMAKER & DRESSING CUTLER. ESTABLISHED 1858”.

Ironically the two storey building next door had initially been constructed for the Bathurst branch of the Bank of Australasia around 1842. Henry Rotten, along with his new wife Mary Ann, nee Ford, in 1844, relocated their Queen Victoria Inn to the building after the bank closed. Late in 1852 Henry changed his mind about operating his hotel, sold up the contents and closed it. By 1861 Rachel Leeds reopened it as the Great Western Hotel for two years. Some time later the building would be used for the Australian Joint Stock Bank’s Bathurst branch.

Later Mr. Rotten would arrange for a £500 ransom for his daughter’s husband, Gold Commissioner Mr. Keightley as Ben Hall and his mates waited its return.

Born on New Years Day 1830 in the Canton of Zug in Switzerland Bartholomew Pedrotta received his early education locally before moving to Italy to become an apprentice to a gunsmith in Rome. He was just thirteen. Apprenticed for six years he had a great understanding of making and repairing firearms, loading ammunition, calculating power and shot loads. He also learnt the trade of a cutler.

When the war broke out between the province of Piedmont in Italy and Austria, Pedrotta took up arms. After he returned to his native town before going back to Piedmont and opened his own gunsmith business for two years. When he heard of the discovery of gold in the southern colonies Pedrotta left Europe to try his luck in Victoria. In 1853 he sailed for Sydney and went south to the goldfields. While he had some success it was hard work.

In 1855 he returned to Sydney and entered into partnership with Mr. Modini - gunmakers and cutters. In 1858 they decided to open a branch of their profession in Bathurst. After dissolving the partnership in 1861 Mr. Pedrotta decided to move down the street. In the same year he married Jane McDonald and had eight children – all daughters, with his eldest daughter later marrying Mr. Thomas Rhode Matthews who would take over the business in 1888.

By the time Mr. Pedrotta relocated he had a good reputation for quality firearms and other necessary supplies. He advertised that repairs could be done on the shortest notice. He sold the “very best powder” and would reload cartridges for his customers boasting that magnificent shooting was obtained with the bullets. In June 1862 Mr. Pedrotta made it known that he had stocks of the Lancaster elliptical bullet that were being made in the colony. It was claimed that they were made to fit the bore of the rifle to one-thousand parts of an inch, thus eliminating windage.

Ben Hall, by now one of New South Wales’s well-known bushrangers, and members of his gang walked into Mr. Pedrotta’s shop trying to obtain revolving rifles and Tranter’s patent revolvers first during their famous “raid” on Bathurst. Unfortunately, for them at least, he had none but he did offer to show his other models.

In November 1877 Pedrotta moved to his newly erected premises adjoining the Joint Stock Bank in William Street. He was a noted live pigeon shooter even taking part in Intercolonial Pigeon Shoots. He donated shooting trophies and prizes for many local competitions. After Mr. Pedrotta’s son-in-law took over he also sold tobacco and cigars and operated the business until 1906.

Bartholomew Pedrotta died at 6.30 pm on 18th January, 1893, aged 63. He was highly thought of by the citizens of Bathurst. He had been in poor health for some time and after quite a battle he suffered yet another stroke and passed away. Mr. Pedrotta taught many people how to handle and use firearms correctly over the years. The site of Mr. Pedrotta’s second gunshop will be visited during the Ben Hall re-enactment to be held on Saturday afternoon 28th September this year.

THE KIGHTLEYS & PECHEYS

Gold Commissioner, Henry McCrummin Keightley, who was the one blamed for the fatal wound that was inflicted to Micky Burke when the Keightley’s home was raided at Dunn’s Plains at Rockley. The Commissioner’s wife had a sister Sarah who had married William Pechey of Langham, Essex in England.
Alfred John Pechey had made his way to Bathurst to stay at his uncle Henry Rotton’s home at Blackdown near Kelso arriving around 1861. He was a licensed surveyor and worked around the Bathurst district. John later married Henry Rotton’s daughter Antonia Jane. The couple made their home on the property “Gestingthorpe” near George’s Plains.

Henry Rotton (left) was the Returning Officer for the electoral District of West Macquarie. On his retirement in 1874 John Pechey was appointed to the position. His retirement was due to Henry Rotton’s seeking to run as the local candidate.

Mr Pechey later went into partnership in 1881 when he was in partnership as an auctioneer with Mr. Richard Mutton trading as Pechey, Mutton and Company. Soon after the business had also taken in Mr. Thomas M. Sloman though this arrangement had been dissolved by 1st April, 1882.

Life would take an unfortunate turn for John Pechey who at his father in law’s encouragement became a candidate for the seat of East Macquarie. He was elected to the seat on 19th January, 1882, but before he had a chance to take his Parliamentary seat he was accidentally killed whilst returning to his residence at “Gestingthorpe”. He died in an accident in his horse gig on 5th June, 1882. He was 42 years of age.

The accident was caused by a dog that ran out and attacked the horse hoofs, which upset the horse and gig. It occurred in Piper Street near the intersection of Bentinck Street and Mr. Pechey was thrown violently out of his gig and hit the ground with great force. The injured man was then taken to Joseph Bardsley’s Bentinck and Piper Inn where he died from severe concussion.

Ironically Mr. Pechey was taken to the same inn where Ben and Biddy Hall had their wedding breakfast back in 1856.

Alfred Pechey’s brother was Dr Pechey who attended the bushranger Micky Burke as he lay dying after being shot at Dunns Plains in 1863.

Billy Dargin was a very capable tracker. He could keep tracking someone when everyone else had lost the track. He had one close incident which commenced on 28th February, 1863 when Ben Hall, Patrick Daley, usually know as Patsy, John O’Meally and John Gilbert had robbed Meyers Solomon’s store at Big Wombat goldfields at Young. The next day on 1st March Sub-Inspector John Oxley and black tracker William Dargin were attacked by Ben Hall, Patsy Daley and John O’Meally near McGuire’s at Wheogo. After Sub-Inspector John Oxley ran out of ammunition he gave himself up after which Ben Hall moved in on his horse and fired his pistol at point blank range at him. Fortunately it missed and in the melee William Dargin who had dropped his revolver took to the scrub to get away. Soon Ben Hall and Patsy Daley were in pursuit. Trooper Dargin got back to Forbes and reported the incident. After robbing Sub-Inspector Oxley the bushrangers set him free. William Dargin went back with other police several days later and found the ball, which had been fired so close to Sub-Inspector Oxley, lodged in a tree.

Black tracker Dargin was there assisting in the capture of Ben Hall which ended with the death of the bushranger. Later upon inspection and searching of Ben Hall’s dead body by Sub-Inspector James Henry Davidson some £74 worth of bank notes were found and included twenty three £1 notes of the Oriental Bank Corporation, along with one £10 and four £5 notes of this same bank.

The largest cache of bank notes from three mail coaches which Ben Hall’s gang held up around Yass were buried in Strickland’s paddock at Bundaburra. They were hidden for later collection and these were found later by black tracker Billy Dargin. After news that John Dunn had been seen in the area trying to locate them a Sub-Inspector, a constable and Billy Dargin headed out to the paddock on 24th August, 1864. The aboriginal
tracker soon found the loot – £783 in bank notes that had been cut in half with many of them from the Sydney and Melbourne branches of the Oriental Bank Corporation. Other banks represented were the Bank of New South Wales with notes from Sydney, Bathurst, Goulburn, Albury, Orange and Melbourne branches. The Union Bank branches of Sydney and Ballarat; the Australasia Bank of Ballarat; the Joint Stock Bank of Wagga Wagga, Yass, Goulburn, Sydney and Bathurst and the Commercial Bank Sydney branch were in the find.

Later Superintendent Lydiard stated in his report on the Strickland’s paddock find that any reward paid out by the banks should go to Billy Dargin for his recovery of their money.

Initially established in India in 1842 the bank was first called the Bank of Western India though most of its shareholders were English. By 1845 their head office was transferred from Bombay to London. The bank underwent a name change to the “Oriental Bank Corporation”.

By 1847 the Oriental Bank Corporation was competing with nine other banks throughout India which had branches or agencies in places such as Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Dacca, Madras, Simla, Agra, Cawnpore and Benares. It bought out the Bank of Ceylon in 1849. Fortunately they survived the crash of 1848-1849 by prudent management. Thus they continued instructing managers to carry out any business on a sound basis. They spread their capital base, invested safely as they expanded.

In order to allow it to cater for the unpopular opium trade in the orient it received a Royal Charter in October 1851 though their application was strongly opposed by the British East India Company but their objections were overruled by the Lord Commissioners of the Treasury. After which and in ensuing years branches were opened in several trading ports such as India, Hong Kong, in the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, Japan, Mauritius and other treaty ports. They extended their business to tap into the gold discoveries in Australia where they opened branches in Melbourne and Sydney. With a trading boom in India and the benefits of gold in Australia the shareholders were happy with their returns. They also felt that the ever growing indentured Chinese population working in Australia especially in the agricultural industries would help the bank.

At the annual general meeting of the Oriental Bank Corporation on 29th May, 1852, the shareholders were informed that they would receive a dividend of 12% and the news improved as the dividend a decade later was 16%. There were concerns arising as to the increased numbers of other exchange type banks as well as joint stock banks being established and this was extra competition.

The American Civil War broke out in America in April 1861 and lasted until 1866 giving banks a boost as the north had to source their cotton from elsewhere. The alternative supplier for cotton primarily came from India and the Oriental Banking Corporation did the financial transfers as well as backed growers. It failed to predict the slump at wars end though.

The bank invested heavily into the Ceylonese coffee plantations in the 1860s and lost heavily when the crops were hit by disease. Despite this the bank survived. In the 1870s a world crisis saw many commodities falling, foreign trade slumped and unstable international currencies. The Oriental Bank Corporation continued to grow until 1872, thereafter it increasingly came under pressure.

By 1884 the bank was in financial trouble with the great land crash and ceased issuing bank notes. It was reconstituted becoming the “New Oriental Bank Corporation”. The financial crisis of the early 1890s the bank was put into liquidation and closed in 1892 along with many other private banking companies.

Bank notes of The Oriental Banking Corporation circulated widely though it only had two branches. As the number of bushrangers increased so did the hold-ups and the number of bank notes stolen. The directors of The Oriental Banking Corporation followed the direction of other banks and cut their notes in half to transfer them. When the first half arrived and the sender informed the other half was sent. When both arrived
The serial numbers were matched up and the bank notes halves were stuck back together.

“TEN DEAD MEN”
Oberon resident and prominent local Architect Henry Bialowas, who received a prestigious Award from the Australian Institute of Architects Country Division for his design of the All Saints’ Cathedral Bell Tower in Bathurst, has written a book called “Ten Dead Men” a speculative history of the Ribbon Gang.

The book was officially launched at 1 Ribbon Gang Lane by the then Mayor of Bathurst, Councillor Paul Toole and the event was conducted by Marie Sullivan. Marie, who was the Architect of the Macquarie 2010 bicentenary commemorations for Governor Lachlan and Mrs Elizabeth Macquarie and as chair, influenced the NSW Government to endorse the programme as well as securing the patronage of Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO Governor of NSW.

In his introductory remarks at the book launch, internationally renowned filmmaker the late Allan Bardsley, said:

“Ten Dead Men” probes into the facts and fictions that feed the story which in part feels uncompromisingly bleak; a sunburned, grimmie-nailed saga wrung from the on-going process of civilising a largely untamed and often brutal 1830s Australia. There’s an engaging ebb and flow to Henry’s narrative style and a sense of foreboding that tragedy is inevitable. The book pulls no punches. Importantly, it doesn’t resort to shock tactics. Instead it provides a well-researched analysis of a truly remarkable story by examining and developing several central themes.

The story explores the overlooked details of events and circumstances that occurred in the district in the late 1820s which culminated in a convict uprising. Henry puts forward a new interpretation of the tragedy and reveals the misuse of power, the cover-ups and injustices that were prevalent at the time.”

NEW BEN HALL BOOK
A new book hot off the press on Ben Hall will be available on the weekend of the Ben Hall Festival at the BDHS Museum. You can also order from the author Peter Bradley. The book retails for $65 plus postage if you have it posted. Look at Peter’s website at http://www.benhallbushranger.com.au/

“Ben Hall - Stories from the hard road” is a fully illustrated hardcover book chronicling the life and bushranging career of Ben Hall with many full colour maps and photographs never before published. The book is the result of three years of academic research and dispels many of the myths concerning the life of Ben Hall.

RESTORED WORLD WWII MERRY-GO-ROUND

Peter Naylor, President of the Orange Show Society has for a number of years been restoring a World War II merry-go-round. Peter will have it all set up to provide rides to youngsters on Saturday 28th September in King’s Parade.

WHAT’S ON IN TOWN – R.S.L. CLUB

On Friday 27th September at 7pm “The Nodding Thistles” will be performing at the Bathurst R.S.L. Club at 114 Rankin Street, Bathurst. Phone 63332999 for more information if required. “The Nodding Thistles”, one of Australia’s best traditional bush music bands will be playing a free concert at the Bathurst R.S.L. Club. Enjoy a night of well-known songs about shearers, bushrangers and drovers, creating an atmosphere of old woolshed dances. Come by yourself or grab a group of friends, come along and enjoy a meal from the bistro and kick up your heels to “The Nodding Thistles”. Doors open from 7.00pm and the cost is free. Get in early for the best seats in the house!

PHOTOGRAPHS & DRAWINGS

The photographs included in all these series of Ben Hall Raid Weekend e-newsletters have come from either the Edgar and Megan Penzig Collection at the Bathurst District Historical Society, the Bathurst District Historical Society photographic archives, the newsletter editor’s collection as well as private family collections for which we are most indebted. The line drawings are my own. I would like to thank photographic archivist Mary Fletcher for her assistance.
BEN HALL RAID DINNER UPDATE

- Remember those who are attending the dinner it is BYO.
- All attendees will receive a special collectable souvenir programme to take home.
- A 25 seater bus will be available at the end of the dinner to return guests to their motels.

BATHURST HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHONE NUMBER
The Society’s phone number in the phone book is not correct. The working phone number is:

6330 8455

BEN & BIDDY HALL CYCLING EVENTS
The week before the Ben Hall Raid Festival the Bathurst Cycling Club will be holding the inaugural Ben & Biddy Hall Cycling Events. Racing gets underway at Perthville at 1.30pm with the presentation in the Bridge Hotel, Perthville after the event. The event travels roads to Caloola (30km south-west of Bathurst) and back on Saturday 21st September, 2013. The Ben Hall Festival starts the following weekend – 26th – 29th September.

The men will race for the Ben Hall Raid Trophy and the women the Bridge Hotel Biddy Walsh title. There will also be the King and Queen of Caloola. For further information or to take part contact Mark Windsor at mawindsor5@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW
- Bridget Hall did finally get married to James Taylor, after the couple had four children together, though one male child died. Bridget and James married in Forbes on 1st June, 1876, just about two months after James’s first wife passed away. James, some nine years older than Bridget, died some thirteen years later, he was 46.
- For all the effort Mr. De Clouet put in to hide his prospective racehorse “Pasha” from Ben Hall and his gang when they raided Bathurst and visited the Sportsman’s Arms in Piper Street the horse proved it had some ability. Of his first race he ran second at Randwick “having pushed the winner to the utmost.” In the Prince of Wales Stakes he also came second however there were many on the field who thought it was a tie.
- Henry Keightley, the Assistant Gold Commissioner, after he was held for ransom at Dunns Plains at Bathurst was later appointed a magistrate at Rockley in 1867. In 1869 he moved to Wellington to take up the appointment of Police Magistrate in that village till 1880. He then moved to Albury where he became a Gold Warden.
- Constable Frederick Sutton, the constable shot by John O’Meally on 6th August, 1863, did recover from his wounds and continued on in the Police Force. He finally retired on 31st December, 1900.
- Bridget Taylor, once Ben Hall’s wife, died on 18th February, 1923, at Cobargo, she was 83 years old.
- In mid August 1864 around 4 o’clock Ben Hall and gang held up the Gundagai Mail coach ordering the driver to drive it into the bush. They robbed the driver of his gold watch and ring and a one pound note before they went through the mail. Inside were a number of cheques and half banknotes. Later on 30th October Hall held up the Gundagai-Yass mail coach and again stole more banknotes that had been cut in half though unfortunately, and probably erroneously sent in the same shipment. See the story in e-newsletter no 3 in May.
- What we now know as the Vale Road was called the Dunn’s Plains Road in Ben Hall’s days.

BEN HALL RAID WEEKEND FESTIVAL CONTACTS
Alan McRae, President, Bathurst District Historical Society. Phone 63315404 evening is best or email amcrae@lisp.com.au

Publicity & e-newsletter email amcrae@lisp.com.au or phone 63315404 - evening is best.

Dinner Bookings
Bathurst District Historical Society, P.O. Box 237, Bathurst NSW 2795 or personally to the BDHS Museum. East Wing, Bathurst Court House, Russell Street, Bathurst. Phone 63308455 – Best times 11am – 2pm Tuesday to Sunday.
info@bathursthistory.org.au

Russion Street Activities & Space Co-Ordinator
Samantha Friend, Phone 63294233
samantha.friend@hotmail.com
For other information go to our website at www.bathursthistory.org.au for the weekend program and more information.