FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

It certainly appears that the idea of our e-newsletter has been received extremely well judging by all the requests from people wishing to get onto the email list. This is the second edition and I hope you enjoy reading the information in it. Feel free to send them along to your family, relations, work colleagues, acquaintances, friends, ex-Bathurst residents or simply those interested in history.

Bathurst’s 200th birthday is set to incorporate even more events throughout 2015 with organisations, clubs and groups applying for accreditation each month by the Council’s 2015 Committee. This anniversary marks an achievement for the first township west of the mountains which, as Governor Macquarie stated, could ‘become the food bowl of the nation’.

The Bathurst District Historical Society was the first to have an event approved by Council’s 2015 Committee. The Bathurst Regional Council staff have been working on their various 2015 activities since last year to ensure the outstanding success of the event and the continuity of activities.

This e-newsletter is to assist in promoting the BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History and other events taking place during the year-long celebrations next year as Bathurst marks its 200th birthday. Remember to book accommodation early if you’re travelling to Bathurst next year.

Already people from out of town are starting to think about what events they will be attending next year though there are already plans by some to be in Bathurst for Proclamation Day which is Thursday 7th May. The Bathurst Regional Council have plans in hand for the Flag Staff reinstatement and official opening after which there will be the Bathurst Bicentennial Colonial Fair, the latter being repeated all day on Saturday 9th May. In the evening there will be the spectacular Illumination Light Show Official Opening at the Court House in Russell Street.

PROPOSED 2015 FLAG STAFF DESIGN ON SHOW

Dr. Rob McLachlan, retired senior lecturer in history at Charles Sturt University, historian and member of the Bathurst District Historical Society has, for some time, been researching the facts and history of the original Flag Staff which was erected on the banks of the Macquarie River by Governor Lachlan Macquarie on his first and official visit in May 1815. A group of interested people saw an opportunity to come up with a suitable undertaking that would mark Bathurst’s 200th Anniversary long after the celebrations have been forgotten. Thus the “Flag Staff Bicentenary Project” evolved to the point where a model (above) is currently on display in the Bathurst Visitors Information Centre on Sydney Road ready for construction to begin.

The 200 year old story of Bathurst begins with the original Flag Staff and it was on the spot where the history of our city commences. The Flag Staff was erected two days before the Union Jack was raised during the official proceedings on the following Sunday morning, 7th May, when Bathurst was proclaimed a town by Governor Macquarie.

This Flag Staff was not only used to raise the flag but it was the official survey point which would be used to lay out the town of Bathurst as well as surveying beyond the township. The structure also marked the end of William Cox’s newly built road.

“Cox’s Road” as it was always referred to was an amazing feat in that it commenced from Emu Ford and...
ran 101½ miles to Bathurst. It was made a minimum of 12 feet wide and out to 20 feet wide. What makes it all the more remarkable is that Cox had 30 convicts, five other men and eight soldiers as his ‘team’. Work commenced at dawn on Monday 18th July, 1814, the weather being fine, clear and frosty and the road was completed on Sunday 14th January, 1815, after just six months on the job.

The wooden Flag Staff was also gazetted as such making it the first gazetted survey point in inland Australia. These facts make the Flag Staff the most important structure to tie in with our early inland settlement. Later it was also used as the base survey point when the 1833 survey took place for the layout of Bathurst after which town blocks were sold.

Today the original site of the Flag Staff is marked by a small stone monument just behind the lavatory block down at the Macquarie River Bicentennial Park. Images of the early Flag Staff appear often in documents such as the 1815 painting by artist John Lewin, along with several drawings and maps which Rob has located, all of which will be on display next year at a number of 2015 activities.

This worthwhile and appropriate project will be in place for its unveiling ceremony on Proclamation Day – Thursday 7th May, 2015.

THE STONE CURTAIN FINALLY CROSSED

The crossing of the Blue Mountains west of Sydney meant that the early colony could spread out as authorities were running out of land for grants around Sydney. Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth were not the first to attempt the crossing as records show that a convict tried to escape over them as early as 1790. The mountains were being crossed long before this as Aboriginal tribes such as the Darug (other spellings include Dharug, Daruk, Dharuk, Dharuck and Dharruk) and Wiradjuris were crossing them on well-known routes. Some early convicts would also have tried after escaping, to either return, perish or live with the aborigines. Of the others who tried many got lost in cavernous gorges or could not penetrate the thick undergrowth which forced them back. Another problem was that numerous tried conventional exploration ideas and kept near the rivers, following them upstream until they struck the sandstone cliffs or the streams became too shallow or they hit rapids.

Despite this, people were definitely thinking about the ‘blue stone curtain’ and wondering what may lay beyond. George Bass was officially asked to “attempt” to cross the mountains in 1796. He was a British Naval Surgeon who had arrived in the colony just a year previously but exploring this rugged mountainous area was new to him as he was used to exploring the oceans.

Another man was an “aide de camp” to Governor King, Francis Barrallier, who in 1801 led not one but two excursions up into the foothills of the Blue Mountains. He found the Burragorang Valley but failed to get any further.

Whilst others were not necessarily trying to cross, there were people like George Caley, a botanist who collected specimens on his outings to the Blue Mountains for Sir Joseph Banks.

Then a turn of events happened in May 1813 when three men, namely Gregory Blaxland, aged 35, Lieut. William Lawson, aged 39, and a much younger William Charles Wentworth, aged 21, decided to have a look for themselves. They agreed they would try to follow the ridges after seeking permission from Governor Macquarie.

Each man had their reason as to why they would like to see if there was more suitable land with Gregory Blaxland wanting more pastures for his sheep. Blaxland was 26 when he arrived in the colony where he took up land.

Once part of the New South Wales Corps, Lieut William Lawson had also been taught surveying which was handy to the group. William had sailed into Sydney Cove in 1799. The youngest participant had been born in the colony though he was sent to England by his father D’Arcy Wentworth to be educated. William Charles Wentworth had already been granted land by Governor Macquarie on the Nepean River.

Lawson, being the surveyor, wrote down notes of his compass readings along with the times various sections took and how far the group travelled. The two other explorers also kept journals noting the vegetation and how hard it was to move forward quickly.

The explorers left Mr. Blaxland’s farm with four extra men and four horses. They carried all their provisions such as tents, firearms and ammunition, axes and spades and a
supply of food. They also took along five dogs to help catch kangaroos or other animals for fresh meat.

So what other provisions did they take? Well we don’t really know but things like flour, cocoa, Hennessy’s brandy, gin, split peas, dried and salted beef and pork, dry biscuits, cabbage and candles could have been included.

The group took their departure on Tuesday 11th May, 1813, crossing the Nepean River in the late afternoon and setting up their first camp at 5pm.

The journals provide details of the day to day account of the men’s efforts. This crossing would enable the land westward of the Blue Mountains to eventually be opened up for land grants and settlers to use the land to increase the productivity of the colony. It also made possible the establishment of Australia’s first inland settlement at Bathurst.

The fact that Lieut Lawson kept such good notes would later make things easier for Surveyor George William Evans to retrace the trio’s path and to go on further as Governor Macquarie instructed. Evans would report on his journey which would eventually lead to the proclamation and later the settlement of Bathurst.

The Japanese Army as well as the Second Philippine Republic, the Japanese puppet Government, ordered any notes confiscated and the holder would be beaten, arrested or executed.

**THOSE WASKLEY WABBITS AND THEIR TRAPS**

Fred is a local Bathurstian with a fascination for old and antique farm equipment. Fred will have a display at BATHEX 2015 in September next year and is a local trap specialist.

This article gives a brief story on why rabbit traps came about. On Wednesday 6th March, 1879, newspapers reported that - “a plague of rabbits previously confined to Victoria has been reported on the NSW side of the Murray River opposite Swan Hill. The rabbits, which were believed to have been released 20 years ago from Thomas Austin’s property near Geelong in Victoria, have multiplied at an alarming rate.”

“Rabbits have been kept since the arrival of the First Fleet but up until 1859 they were domesticated and did not spread into the wild. In that year a small shipment of wild rabbits was imported on the clipper ‘Lightning’ and released in that part of Victoria which is most like their natural habitat. Their adaptation to the climate in Victoria is particularly worrying as their potential to damage farm produce is substantial.”

The 1886 a plan to rid the country of the rabbit menace

**WWII GUERRILLA BANKNOTES**

Few people would even be aware that during World War Two groups of men formed guerrilla groups to fight the occupational forces of the Imperial Japanese Army in the islands north of Australia. A display of these usually crudely made notes will be on show at BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition on 26th & 27th September, 2015.

Above is a One Peso Commonwealth of the Philippines guerrilla emergency certificate for the Mountain Province which comprised several sub-provinces such as Benguet or Apayao. It has the serial number B965658. These notes were issued under Japanese Occupation during World War Two. The note was, in theory - “one peso payable to the bearer in silver pesos or in legal tender currency of the United States or equivalent value – REDEEMABLE AFTER THE WAR.” At the time the Philippines President, Manuel Quezon, could give his authority to province Governors, Deputy Governors or Provincial Board to prepare and print emergency currency.

These “emergency circulating notes” were the underground currency to help pay the guerrilla forces fighting the hostile and barbaric Japanese Imperial Army. They were printed by or on behalf of the Philippine Commonwealth Government by banks and ‘local’ Government units. Often the notes were very crude and tended to fade or be easily torn due to the thin paper. Generally, crudely made metal printing plates were used or in some cases a mimeograph. Sometimes several series were printed with the majority commencing in late 1942, with other series following. Usually a ‘Currency Board’ was established with a chairman and treasurer along with one or two members. Many of the notes are hand-signed.
saw domestic cats released to kill them but they destroyed many small mammals instead of the rabbits. In the early 1890s there were reports of local trappers illegally releasing more rabbits to improve their prospects.

In December 1891 there were reports that there were 100 rabbits on every acre of the Australian outback and “causing extensive environmental damage, the rabbits are eating grass and mulga more quickly than it can replenish itself, and encouraging soil erosion as a consequence.” The government was keeping a sharp eye on overseas trials which were attempting to develop an infectious disease to destroy the rabbit population.

In 1897 one had no trouble selling rabbit skins to Bathurst’s skin buyers who placed advertisements instructing how the skins should be stretched - above.

By 1900 when rabbits crossed the Nullarbor the Western Australian Government decided to establish a rabbit-proof fence. It was commenced in 1901 when Mr. AW Canning started surveying the route from Starvation Boat Harbour, 60 miles west of Esperance, to a point on the southern end of Eighty Mile Beach, about 80 miles east to Port Headland. The fence was also envisaged to be handy for controlling dingoes and emus. Brooker and Kinsella in Bathurst were buying possum, koala, wild cat, kangaroo and any other skin by 1904 - above. Any skin was in demand.

In August 1927 the Queensland Government authorized the slaughter of 600,000 koalas and one million possums. The slaughter was met with public disapproval and concern of their possible extinction. Many stated that they did not spoil crops and their killing was allowed to support the skins and fur market.

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Rabbit traps were still being produced in large numbers and the Lanes flat-spring rabbit trap was still being sold during the depression of the 1930s. These were purchased by the dozen (12) for 20/6, however they were cheaper at 19/6 if purchased in a case quantity. The Lane’s rabbit trap was a popular brand, especially with the many commercial trappers by then. Other brands available at this time were “Ace” flat-spring traps and “Downee” rabbit traps along with many others, some of which are very collectable and can be seen at BATHEX 2015.

In early 1950 the new Rabbit Destruction Authority was set up by the NSW Minister for agriculture, Mr. E.H. Graham and met in Sydney. In co-operation with the Pastures Protection Board £500,000 was granted even though the CSIRO was still having problems getting myxomatosis to actually spread well.

PIioneer Bathurst Doctor 
& Citizen Lived in Exciting Times

Dr. Richard Machattie (left) was a doctor and surgeon in Bathurst in the second half of the 1800s as well as during the years of the Ben Hall Gang. He had been born in Scotland in 1813 and by 1836 had graduated in Edinburgh as a surgeon. In 1838 he arrived in Sydney having been employed as a ship’s surgeon to pay his way. Soon after he headed for Bathurst and travelled, with his baggage, over the rough man-made road through the Blue Mountains by coach. Here he took over Dr. Favill’s practice and became one of our town’s prominent doctors.

For 20 years he was an elder in the Presbyterian Church and also became a Magistrate and Coroner for the district. In 1856 he was appointed Bathurst’s Returning Officer at the first election for Responsible Government. He was an Alderman on the first Bathurst Municipal Council and Mayor four times. He died at his home in George Street in Bathurst in 1876.

He was known to travel great distances to see patients with one occasion being to treat Trooper Sutton who had been shot by some of Hall’s gang and was being looked after at McNamara’s Inn at Kings Plains.

The incident started when the Hall Gang raided the stables at Coombing Park near Carcoar, the property of Thomas Icely, Magistrate and wealthy landholder, during the evening of Sunday 2nd August, 1863. The gang was always in need of good horses and targeted Mr. Icely’s stables near the house. They were spotted but still headed off with some horses, shooting an employee known as Charley the German who was taken into Carcoar to see Dr. Rowland. Thomas Icely posted a £100 reward four days later ‘to any person who will give such information as will lead to the
conviction of the guilty parties.’ One horse from the raid on Thomas Icely’s stables was a grey colour and was claimed by O’Meally to ride.

Trooper Sutton was shot in the arm in a hold-up by the bushrangers – Gilbert, O’Meally and Vane, on the coach transferring three men suspected of helping the bushrangers in August 1863, en route to Bathurst. Sutton was put into the coach which proceeded to Kings Plains where he was left at McNamara’s Inn while the coach went on to Bathurst Gaol. Dr. Richard Machattie left Bathurst on the coach next morning to attend to the trooper. After dressing his wounds, the trooper and Dr. Machattie were driven into Bathurst, the former recovering over time.

Dr. Machattie was one of those men who had a vision for where he lived and thus was always proactive, both of public events and the beautification of Bathurst.

One of the spectacular attractions to visit whilst in Bathurst is our magnificent and beautifully kept Machattie Park (above c.1900). It was during the last decade of the reign of Queen Victoria that this magnificent park was created for people of that time and future generations like us today. The eight acre park itself was named after Dr. Richard Machattie.

Originally it was to be called “Dalley Park” but councillors did a back-flip after the newspaper story was printed and a large group of ratepayers attending the proceeding council meeting. In a vote 5 to 4, with Dr Richard Machattie’s son, Thomas, who was on council at the time, abstaining from the vote, the name was changed to Machattie Park.

The land for the park came about after the Bathurst Gaol, which was located beside the Court House, was relocated and a new gaol built. It is still in use on the Orange Road. After the crumbly old gaol was demolished, the vacant land was available for something else – and it luckily became a park.

The initial plans for the new park were submitted in a competition run by the Bathurst City Council and won by Mr. Hine, a local Bathurst architect. Whilst some changes were made to his design it went ahead almost as planned. In April 1890 Mr. Alfred Patterson, originally Head Gardener for Orange’s Cook Park, was announced as the new Head Gardener for the Bathurst City Council on a wage of £2-10-0 per week. Mr. Patterson took the project to heart and soon had the area closed to the public for about four months. This enabled the project to be laid out without onlookers getting in the way, the holes filled in and roadways constructed ready for the official opening on 20th November, 1890. This occasion was well reported in The National Advocate newspaper. Some 1,000 people attended with local school cadets formed up at the entrances as an honour guard. The Mayor, Alderman P.V. Ryan carried out the formalities a little after 4pm and told those assembled that their new park had cost just over £3,174.

The Bathurst Progress Association had been formed late in 1889. It was composed of a number of prominent local citizens frustrated with the Bathurst City Council and other Government institutions such as the gaol. They also wished to ‘assist’ the Bathurst City Council in the beautification of the township such as the park. Another aim was their wish to promote Bathurst as a ‘healthy destination’. In the early 1890s Bathurst was promoting the virtues of its healthy and invigorating climate. People with asthma and consumptive problems were encouraged to travel to Bathurst to “renew their health”. Some advertisements even claimed that Bathurst was “a Health Resort”!

By 1893 Bathurst’s population had increased to around 10,000 with many flocking to Machattie Park to check on the progress and to use the lawns for picnics. The Council had water extended to the main business area as well as numbers of homes via 23 miles of water mains and new waterworks at a cost of £48,319. The council was in the process of constructing a new reservoir to hold 750,000 gallons which they expected the cost to be around £5,000. At this time an estimated count of dwellings within the Borough of Bathurst was
1,780 which meant that the council had enough residents to justify its £1,500 per year operating costs.

Shade-giving trees traversed the eight acre Machattie Park. Gas lighting was installed in the park though some residents had written to the local newspaper editor to state that they thought more gas lamps were needed, especially on moonless nights.

The Bathurst Progress Association’s first ‘project’ seems to be Machattie Park seen in a Beavis Bros, photographers of Bathurst, black and white postcard - above, and their aim was to make suggestions and even provide some of the labour. They were certainly keen to turn the “gloomy and hideous gaol reserve into one of the most charming pleasure resorts of the colony.”

The park incorporated several areas, one being the fernery, the largest in the colony it was claimed after its construction contained a choice selection of native and intercolonial ferns. Within was a small fountain supplied by Lasseter and Company in Sydney for £30. The original size of the fernery, which architect Hine had envisaged, would have seen it about twice the size that we see today, however with the second plan he was asked to draw up it was to be 100 feet by 100 feet. As it turned out it was slightly smaller again. It was erected and painted at a cost of some £300.

In December 1892 the Bathurst Band was given formal permission by the Bathurst Council to play in Machattie Park. The band usually played during the early evenings during the summer months in either the ‘central pavilion’ or on the grass. The media reported that these musical programs “are greatly appreciated by a large concourse of promenaders”. Occasional Sunday concerts “always attracted a good attendance at which a collection may be taken to give to a suitable charity or project”.

Another feature is Spencer Lake, named after another doctor in Bathurst, William Walter Spencer. Dr. Spencer had served as a Bathurst Council Alderman for some six years as well as being Mayor in 1884, the latter being only eight years after he arrived in Bathurst to take up his practice.

This “ornamental lakelet” soon attracted numbers of species of aquatic native birds as well as being adorned with “smaller jets of sparkling water”. Dr. Spencer and Dr. Machattie were part of the Bathurst Progress Association and both doctors contributed financially towards the construction of the park to enable it to start immediately.

Various tenders were called for to construct the ‘S’ shaped ‘pond’ which workmen lined with crushed granite obtained from the Kelso crusher. Under the supervision of the head gardener, Mr. A.A. Patterson, the pond was constructed by pick and shovel along with a horse and cart owned by Mr. B. Henderson. The latter also helped with other areas of the park. Coarse river gravel was brought up and mixed with cement before it was applied.

Machattie Park relied on a good deal of water for all the fountains to be operational. Some 4,000 gallons an hour was required to keep all fountains functioning but the ‘used water’ initially created a problem. Mr. Patterson came up with the idea of putting in an underground irrigation system which he cleverly implemented using a series of ‘drains’.

A metal fence was also placed around the pond. The cost of the lake was also estimated at £300. Despite the work being done by hand Mr. Patterson was able to report to the Council meeting in November 1890 that the ‘lake’ was complete. The Bathurst Free Press and the Bathurst Daily Times covered the progress of each section of this Victorian era park as construction progressed over the months.

It must have been an honour for Dr. Spencer to have this feature named after him and his name was engraved on a small plaque. He attended the various openings as each park feature was completed. He also assisted with plantings in the park often working early in the morning or late in the afternoons. Unfortunately his association with the planning of the park stopped when he died in 1893.

The ‘duck pond’ soon became a popular location, especially with children. Its popularity remains today as hundreds of children each week descend on the pond, especially when there are baby ducklings or swans about.
**RAM’S HORN GYPSUM**

It’s quite amazing the shapes some mineral specimens are found in and there will be some impressive rock and mineral displays at BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition. This gypsum specimen is from Santa Eulalia, Chihuahua in Mexico and is in a shape called a ‘Ram’s Horn’. One shouldn’t be surprised however as gypsum has many interesting properties along with some very unique crystal habits. Its name is derived from the Greek language with the word “gypsos” meaning “plaster” or “chalk-like”.

This specimen is 18cm high with the surface described as glistening and looking a bit like wet sugar. The purer the gypsum the whiter it is though various other substances cause impurities and thus it may be found in a range of colours in special localities.

Gypsum is the commonest of all the sulphate minerals and ironically has also been located on the moon. It can be found on all continents. Some of it has been around for more than 450 million years. It can be quite soft and has a great deal of uses.

The Egyptians ground up the very white gypsum and used it to make sculptures. They also, along with the Chinese, used it as a base for some of their medicines. In the 1600s it was used in mead.

It is used these days to make plaster for the building industry with the French and other countries obtaining it from large quarries to make ‘Plaster of Paris’. Plaster impregnated cloth is used today to put a cast on one’s arm in hospital if a bone is broken. In the 1800s gardeners and farmers used it as a fertilizer and today you can buy it at Bunnings to change the pH level of your garden’s soil. It is also used in the manufacture of concrete and also to make a form of yeast for cooking breads and other baked items. Some cultures even ate it as a part of their diet. Commercial shampoos sometimes have gypsum in them, as can foot and hand creams.

From time to time we see the giant gypsum crystals in the caves near Chihuahua in Mexico where these 30 and 40 feet monster crystals have grown in ideal conditions of temperature and mineral rich waters.

**AN EARLY ACCOUNT OF JENOLAN CAVES**

Jenolan Caves is a series of caves excavated by water in a stratum of Silurian limestone about 500 feet thick that helps to form the core of the main range behind Port Jackson. At a point about 60 miles due west of Sydney the stratum has been exposed by the valleys of two converging streams which instead of cutting through it as they have through the neighbouring claystones, has burrowed into it by dissolving away the lime along natural fissures. This has created a series of narrow channels with occasional chambers as well as two large cavernous thoroughfares, one a low tunnel through a super incumbent hill, the other an enormous cavity in which the Tower of Sydney Post Office could stand upright. The now insignificant Camp Creek, coming from the south-west, thus in flood-time penetrates the Grand Arch, and below it joins the Jenolan River, a longer stream that has eroded a wider valley and passes in flood-time through the huge cavern known as the Devil’s Coach House. In ordinary seasons both these streams are subterranean. Camp Creek disappearing just above the Arch, Jenolan River a mile or two above the Coach House. The caves proper occur in three groups, one (Lucas and River) south of the arch, a second (Imperial, Elder and Nettle-and-Arch) in the main limestone block between the Arch and the Coach House, and a third (including Aladdin, Bow and several not yet properly explored) along the sides of the Jenolan River valley.

The history of their discovery is, according to the accepted version, as follows: In 1835-38 a convict escapee, MeKown by name, (it is also spelt McEwan), used to levy blackmail on settlers in the area around Oberon, killing their stock and holding up their teams – usually by stealing the ox-bows – unless he was bribed off. After many attempts, a settler, Charles Whalan, in 1836 managed to track him into the very heart of the main range and along a gully on its eastern side, in which his hut was found and he himself was captured in it. His captors, finding themselves in a pleasant and possibly fertile valley, followed the stream down until they entered the huge cavern afterwards called the Coach House. Other discoveries followed slowly, including those of the Elder (1848), and Lucas (1858) caves – the latter named after John Lucas, who in 1864 – 69 represented Hartley in the Legislative Assembly. On 2nd October, 1866, an area of 6½ square miles surrounding the caves was made a Government reserve. On 8th March, 1867, Jeremiah Wilson, a settler from Oberon who had spent a good deal of time in cave exploration, was made caretaker and chief guide. The reserve now became a tourist resort, but, as it could only be reached through Oberon – which was itself over 140 miles from Sydney and 20 miles from the caves – tourists were scarce, except...
from western districts.

In 1896 however, the government completed a more direct road from Hartley in the Vale of Clwydd, by which the caves are only 30 miles from the Blue Mountains tourist centre of Mount Victoria (77 miles from Sydney) and this shortening of the distance, coupled with the establishment of a Government hotel in the valley above the Arch, at once made Jenolan one of the principal tourist resorts of New South Wales.

The aboriginal name for the caves was Binomen, but for fifty years after their discovery they were known as the ‘Fish River’ caves, since they had been approached from the valley of the Fish River, which is a tributary of the Macquarie River flowing past Oberon. In the tangle of gullies thereabouts it was easy to mistake the direction in which the water of the two creeks flowed. So in the course of time men went astray in the lower gully, followed it down in the expectation of coming to settlements on the Fish River, but found themselves, after long wanderings, in the uninhabitable valley of the Cox. It was therefore decided to alter the official name so that the mistake would not be repeated and on 10 August, 1884, the caves were officially named after the parish of Jenolan, at the northern end of which they are situated.

One man who would make a difference to the access to the caves was Patrick Grady. He was an Irishman born in 1841 and later came to New South Wales. He married Mary Higgins on 27th November, 1875, at Oberon. He was a farmer as well as working on some road work projects which improved how horse-drawn vehicles and early motorists travelled to Jenolan Caves. He helped construct the limestone bridge and put through the roadway in the Grand Arch to link up with the back road to Oberon with the Mount Victoria Road. Patrick died on 18th July, 1905, at his property “Timberton” near Jenolan Caves at Hampton and was buried at Hazelgrove cemetery.

**EFFICIENCY MEDAL**

There are quite a large number of medal collectors out there and there will be some impressive medal displays in place for the BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History on 26th and 27th September, 2015, at Bathurst Showgrounds.

All displays will be very informative and often contain war-time information, photos and other personal items belonging to the recipient. Invariably the general public recognises similar medals which someone in their family may have been awarded.

One such medal of interest is the Efficiency Medal featuring King George V with the Commonwealth bar for “AUSTRALIA”. It also has the ‘stitch-on’ type second award ribbon bar being of the King’s crown type i.e. the King's crown has the convex top.

This oval medal was struck in silver and measures 39mm high by 32mm across. Its ornate fixed suspension bar has been cleverly designed from two branches of laurel leaves with a scrolled patinated bar across them on which the name of the relevant country appears, so in our case here it is “AUSTRALIA”.

The crowned effigy of King George V faces left with his various titles around the border on the front of the medal. The reverse is quite plain with the inscription being “FOR EFFICIENT SERVICE” and is common to all this type of medal. The ribbon is green with a yellow strip down each side. Each of these Efficiency Medals was named in sans-serif capitals.

With the death of King George V, his daughter’s effigy (H.M. Queen Elizabeth II) was featured on the medal. In 2000 the authorities decided to replace this medal with the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal so it was discontinued.

Commonwealth bars were authorised for countries such as S. Rhodesia, St Christopher Nevis, New Zealand, Hong Kong, British Guiana, Burma, Canada, Malaya, Antigua, Barbados, Gold Coast, India, Grenada, Guernsey, Mauritius, Fiji, Ceylon, Jersey, British Honduras and Gibraltar to name a few. Some countries with larger populations and opportunities issued these medals in large numbers as compared to smaller poorer countries, thus some Commonwealth bars can be quite hard to find. In some cases just one medal was issued.

**NELSON’S VICTORIES OVER NAPOLEON CELEBRATED WITH MEDALLIONS**

Historic medallions are very collectable items and those which relate to past history attract a buyer’s premium, such as those often associated with British history. Most medallion collectors research the history behind their medals and medallion collections.

On 21st October, 1805, a British fleet under Admiral Nelson defeated a combined French and Spanish fleet. Nelson’s victory ended the fear, verging on panic, that...
Napoleon would invade England and it then established Britain’s undisputed rule of the seas for the next 100 years.

The victory at Trafalgar was made poignant by the death of Nelson, shot in the left shoulder by a sniper. The hero who saved the country is still revered today as Britain’s, and possibly the worlds, greatest naval officer and most brilliant and innovative tactician. Horatio was the 6th of 11 children of Reverend Edmund Nelson and his wife Catherine, born at the parsonage at Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk on 29th September, 1758. Nelson joined the Royal Navy at the age of 12 and passed his lieutenant’s exam at 18. He was promoted to the rank of post captain. From 1780 to 1787, Nelson saw active service from San Juan in Nicaragua, where he became very ill, to the North Sea, the Baltic, Newfoundland, North America and the West Indies. In 1787 he married Frances Nisbet, a widow with a young son, Josiah. With Britain at peace, Captain Nelson spent five frustrating years unemployed, on shore leave at half-pay. In 1793 war broke out with France and Nelson was recalled to command HMS Agamemnon in the Mediterranean.

Nelson cornered the larger French fleet in Aboukir Bay near Alexandria, his ships attacking on the evening of 1st August, 1798. The Battle of the Nile was over by dawn. In Naples, Nelson began his scandalous affair with Emma Hamilton, the wife of the British Ambassador, Sir William Hamilton.

Following the wishes of his captains, Nelson appointed Alexander Davison as the sole prize agent for the French ships captured at the Nile. Davison sold the ships on behalf of Nelson, his captains, officers and sailors retaining a commission from which he paid £1,100 to Matthew Boulton to make a special Nile medal seen here for the 7,000 men who fought in the battle. Conrad Heinrich Küchler, working for the firm of Boulton & Watt at their Soho works in Birmingham, cut the die for the medal.

Right - The obverse of Davison’s copper Nile medal features the figure of Pax (Peace) holding an olive branch in her right hand and standing on a rocky headland overlooking an ocean void of any sailing vessels. Her left arm is supporting a large oval shield bearing a bust of Lord Nelson behind which is a large sea anchor. Around the edge of the shield is the inscription ‘EUROPE’S HOPE AND BRITAIN’S GLORY’. Around the circumference of the medal itself are the words ‘REAR-ADMIRAL LORD NELSON OF THE NILE’.

Right - The reverse has a view of the fleet sailing into Aboukir Bay with the inscription around the top ‘ALMIGHTY GOD HAS BLESSED HIS MAJESTY’S ARMS’. In the exergue at the bottom are the words ‘VICTORY OF THE NILE AUGUST 1 1798’. The donor’s name was impressed into the edge, the large capitals reading ‘FROM ALEXR DAVISON ESQR ST JAMES’ SQUARE A TRIBUTE OF REGARD’.

The medal was issued in gold, silver and bronze, with Admirals and Captains receiving a gold medal and other officers receiving silver. Gilt bronze was reserved for petty officers and ordinary seamen. Some recipients later had their name engraved on the reverse and some medals have a suspension loop soldered onto it.

The Battle of Trafalgar was fought off Cape Trafalgar in southern Spain on 21st October, 1805, when Vice Admiral Viscount Nelson was killed. His body was returned to England pickled in brandy and given a state funeral at St Paul’s Cathedral on 9th January, 1806. News of the death of Nelson and the defeat of Napoleon took nearly six months after the battle to reach the new colony of New South Wales. In Sydney, Governor King proclaimed a day of general thanksgiving on Sunday 20th April, 1806. In 1843 a statue of Nelson, the nation’s hero, was placed atop a 145-foot column in Trafalgar Square in London in honour of the great battle.

When collecting these types of medals which depict historical episodes one will often find out extra
information whilst researching them. Like many of the collections on display at BATHEX 200 some are rarely seen outside museums.

**Left - The Vigo Bay medal (obverse) with the portrait of Queen Anne, 1703.**

An earlier medal issued after a British naval battle is the ‘Expedition to Vigo Bay 1702’ medal. This silver medal, by John Croker, features the bust of Queen Anne while the reverse shows the British fleet attacking a fort and ships in the harbour. In July 1702 a Spanish treasure fleet had sailed from Havana in company with a French escort squadron. Nearing Spain, the fleet received news that Spain was now at war with the British and Dutch. Rather than risk the valuable cargo, the fleet put into Vigo Bay instead of Cadiz. On 23rd October, 1702, they came under attack by a combined English and Dutch fleet. Supported by a large land force, the attackers overwhelmed the Spanish and French, capturing or destroying the entire fleet.

**The Vigo Bay medal (reverse) was struck from some captured silver bullion in 1703.**

Although the greater part of the cargo had been taken ashore by the Spanish, the captured ship Tauro was taken back to England with her cargo of silver. This was melted down and coined into English currency, under the supervision of Sir Isaac Newton, with ‘VIGO’ placed beneath the Queen’s head.

**HORSE ACCIDENTS**

Ever heard someone say, “Gee I’d like to go back to the old days”. I think it would be good BUT it could have its drawbacks – no X-rays, penicillin, modern hospitals etc., and there could be other issues such as the one recorded in the Sydney Morning Herald of Saturday 27th March, 1852 – “PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE – A few days ago, as Mrs. Keele was driving a gig from Bathurst en route to Mudgee, containing in addition to herself, her infant, and a Miss Corry, Mr. Keele being in company on horseback. The horse she was driving being young and spirited, took fright at the jolting of the vehicle in crossing a rut as few miles beyond Diviack’s Inn and started off at full gallop. Mrs. Keele was thrown out and fell longitudinally into a rut and though the wheel of the gig went over her, she sustained no injury. The horse continued his flight, Miss Corry, with singular presence of mind dropped the infant out the back of the gig and was herself shortly after precipitated out and both she and the infant were providentially unhurt. The vehicle is so much damaged, we understand, that it cannot be mended.”

Stories such as this appear weekly in the early newspapers.

**FLIGHT COVER TO MARK THE FIRST AIR MAIL FLIGHT FROM AUSTRALIA TO BRITAIN**

People who collect postage stamps are called philatelists and whilst most are now the older generation they research their collections meticulously. At the BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History on 26th and 27th September, 2015, at Bathurst Showgrounds we are expecting philatelists from around the country to participate and display some interesting aspect of their collection.

The registered envelope, above, was issued to mark the first experimental official air mail flight from Australia to England in April 1931. The letter, marked ‘By first Australia-England Experimental Air Service’ addressed to Western Australian Airways Ltd, was posted from Perth in Western Australia and has a special Melbourne to London cachet in purple ink on the reverse. They were issued by the Postmaster-General’s Department. It has 2 shilling and two pence stamps attached and were flown by this nation’s most well-known of Australia’s fliers, Charles Kingsford Smith.

This man advanced our nation’s aviation industry and Sir Charles Edward Kingsford Smith (1897-1935) became one of Australia’s greatest aviation pioneers. He was an Aussie being born in 1897 at Hamilton in Queensland before travelling to Sydney. He attended school and enlisted in the A.I.F. in 1915 and was transported to the Dardanelles. The following year he sought a transfer to the Royal Flying Corps. He trained as a pilot and in 1917 was shot down by the Germans suffering a bruised ego and a foot wound.
Keen to further his flying interests he went to America followed by a stint in Perth with the newly formed Western Australian Airways. By 1927 Charles Kingsford Smith returned to Sydney and met a man named Charles Ulm which would change both their lives.

The two men were to make history in the ‘Southern Cross’ when they flew with Harry Lyon and James Warner in 1928 from America back to Australia across the gigantic Pacific Ocean. In the same year, not content with their Trans-Pacific Ocean flight 1928, Kingsford Smith and his cobber Ulm made the first flight across from Australia to New Zealand in their ‘Southern Cross’ plane over the Tasman Sea. The trip was planned with meticulous care. Their aircraft, a Fokker F.V11-3M three-engined monoplane, became as famous as the four men who flew it. Kingsford Smith and Ulm bought the body of the aircraft in America in 1927 from Sir Hubert Wilkins and then had to buy the engines and fit them. Newspapers of the day made Kingsford Smith into a national hero gaining him much publicity.

Confident in aircraft’s capabilities and with visions of what they could be used for (passengers and carrying mail) the two men set up late in 1928 what we know as Australian National Airways though with signs of the Great Depression already on the horizon the venture was doomed. It took the two men just over a year to get passengers into the air and with the crash in March 1931 of the ‘Southern Cloud’, Kingsford Smith and Ulm were in strife. For his work, the Australian Government granted Kingsford Smith the rank of Air Commodore in the R.A.A.F. in 1930 as well as being knighted in 1932, however the following year the dreams they had both held in Australian National Airways were no more but they had proved their point.

One such fossil to create interest will be this woolly mammoth’s (Mammuthus primigenius) molar tooth plate from under the North Sea off Holland. It dates from the Late Pleistocene period some 200,000 to 20,000 years ago. During the final centuries of the last Ice Age these giant hairy mammals, weighing from 6 to 8 tons when fully grown, co-existed with Neanderthal man who hunted and ate the woolly mammoth. In countries such as Spain and France interesting prehistoric cave paintings have been discovered which feature hunting scenes showing men with clubs and spears killing them. The remains of the woolly mammoth have been located in most northern regions of the hemisphere, namely in North America, Eurasia and Europe.

This spectacular tooth plate, with the chewing surface very much intact, is a fossilised relic of a family of massive beasts of the last Ice Age which palaeontologists feel initially emerged around 55,000,000 years ago. This type of woolly mammoth, known as the Mammuthus primigenius, first appeared far later only about 150,000 years ago.

Descended from the Russian steppes mammoth, the European mammoth evolved with smaller bodies, much larger tusks, smaller teeth plates and more body fur or wool. The reduction of body size (they stood about 10 to 12 feet high at the shoulder), accompanied by the reduction of the ears and trunk along with the development of a thicker pelt and body fat, enabled the mammoths to survive in the harshness of a frozen world. Their long dark body fur had a finer wool-like covering under the hair and these beasts most likely moulted in the warmer summer months.
These mammoths were herbiferous and needed good teeth to chew the tough vegetation. Many consider these teeth as quite bizarre as they look like a piano accordion when viewed from the side, from the top they look more like my grandma’s washing board. Despite their somewhat odd appearance, this grinding surface appears ideally suited to grinding up the tough grasses which were difficult for the mammoths to digest. These giant mammoths were equipped with four giant teeth plates in its head. A pair on the top or upper jaw and a pair on the lower jaw. Unlike humans these elephant-like mammals were blessed with six set of teeth plates. Over their life as one set wore out another came through from underneath and pushed the old one out. After the final sixth set the mammoth slowly wore them out until they were unable to eat properly and would starve to death. Scientists feel they lived from 60 to 80 years.

Both male and female mammoths had tusks though the latter’s were smaller in size. Both used their tusks for foraging with males using theirs for fighting territorial disputes and over females.

Mammoth teeth, along with bones and tusks from what is known as the European Ice Age, are occasionally still being pulled up in fishing nets from the North Sea. Complete and undamaged specimens are considered quite rare especially when compared to mammoth teeth from the Siberian tundra in Russia. Unfortunately most North Sea fossils crumble because of the damage done by the salt water. Specimens, I’m told, must be dried for over a year or preferably longer. Ideally they should be chemically treated with a suitable hardener. As the earth warmed up and the end of the last Ice Age emerged, the woolly mammoths slowly died out.

DID YOU KNOW?
# The current St Stephens Presbyterian Church in George Street in Bathurst was built on land specially purchased by the church elders. Mr. Norman Rowe from Sydney was the architect for the project. Local builder Mr. James Douglas was the successful tenderer who employed a number of specialised carpenters, bricklayer, stone masons and other tradesmen in building the church which cost around £5,415. The new building was opened on Sunday, 29th September, 1872, with dinner and refreshments after the official proceedings were over. There was still £1,500 owing to the bank which saw further fundraising activities carried on for a number of years.

# In 1872 Bathurst had 51 hotels for a population of 5,000 and the local Police Magistrate was very concerned about the number of drunkards brought before him at the very small Court House in Russell Street.

I hope you have enjoyed this September 2014 e-newsletter in conjunction with information for the bicentenary of Bathurst in 2015. For those Bathurst residents or intending visitors I hope you have found it interesting and beneficial. It will be great to meet some of you in person at the many events happening next year. Please enjoy yourself whilst in Bathurst and be sure to visit some of the many other attractions that historic Bathurst and district has to offer, there is certainly plenty to do.

Feel free to pass this e-newsletter along to family, friends, work colleagues and acquaintances. If you wish to receive this e-newsletter direct to you just email amcrae@lisp.com.au

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