FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

With Christmas coming up we are just weeks away now from 2015 and the biggest year that Bathurst possibly has ever experienced. Already many Bathurstians have put up their hands to assist in making this year happen, rather than letting it happen or even worse, wondering what happened.

More and more activities are being planned and one project known as “Bathurst People in Time” is receiving plenty of attention.

This unique project will recognise 200 influential people who have helped define what Bathurst is today and have contributed to the first settlement that was established this side of the mountains after Governor Macquarie proclaimed the township of Bathurst in 1815. The results of the 200 ‘images’ will be on display on the lawns of the Bathurst Court House in Russell Street during May 2015.

The names put forward do not need to be famous or well known, they need not have held any significant position and can simply be alive today or no longer be with us. These, and even some unknown person, could have significantly contributed to Bathurst and are worthy nominations. It is preferred that the person nominated should have lived in Bathurst or district at some stage, however this is not essential.

The “Bathurst People In Time” project is a joint one between the Bathurst Arts Council and the Bathurst Regional Council and each will have their associated history as to what each person may have achieved. Jenny Barnes, President of the Bathurst Arts Council is the co-ordinator for this unique community project in which anyone can take part.

The idea is based on a project several years ago for the Centenary of Federation in Canberra and involves the addition of details of the person by decorating, drawing, painting, gluing or attaching all sorts of bits and pieces onto a life size 2-D symbolic shaped figure. The material used is really up to the imagination of the person, group, school, organisation, service club or business from Bathurst and district. Artistic ability is by no means essential and people can be as creative as they wish. (Photos from a similar project by Charles Sturt University students).

Why not make a contribution? Nomination forms can already be downloaded from the Bathurst Arts Council website www.bathurstartscouncil.org.au or also from www.bathurst200.com.au Further information can be obtained from info@bathurstartscouncil.org.au or phone (02) 63322825. Nominations for this event close on 28th February, 2015, so if you would like to bring one of these historic figures to life and be part of Bathurst’s bicentenary this is your chance.

The first function of the celebrations will take place on Wednesday 31st December, 2014, and there is no better way to start the Bicentenary Year and the Bathurst 200 celebrations than with a Party in the Park. Bring your picnic or choose from a great array of food vendors on the night while you listen to the live local entertainment. There will be plenty of activities for the kids with rides, jumping castles and free face painting.

It commences at 4pm with the fireworks at 9pm with the evening winding up around 9.30pm. It’s all happening at Victoria Park Adventure Playground in Durham Street and over from the Bathurst District Hospital.

An exciting evening is guaranteed when the Macquarie Philharmonia, Australia’s largest inland orchestra, performs at Mayfield Garden, 530 Mayfield Road, Oberon, on St Valentine’s Day, 14th February 2015. The event goes from 1.00 pm to around 8.15 pm. Make sure you go along for the Macquarie Philharmonia’s performance of Gavin Lockley’s “Symphony of Australia”. You will be swept along on a musical
journey through Australia’s history, in celebration of the Bathurst’s Bicentenary Year, 2015. Concert tickets are available online at Macquarie Philharmonia’s website: [http://www.macphil.org.au](http://www.macphil.org.au) Your ticket price will include entry to the expansive private family garden areas at Mayfield Garden from 1pm – 4.30pm on the day. The ‘Symphony of Australia’ concert commences at 6pm, finishing around 8.15pm. If you haven’t seen Mayfield Garden before click on their website at [http://www.mayfieldgarden.com.au/events/](http://www.mayfieldgarden.com.au/events/) and look under gallery for some superb images.

Left - Richard Cox, Great, Great, Grandson of William Cox, near Cox’s Road, who visited Bathurst - August 2012.

Greening Bathurst’s “Cox’s Road Dreaming” bicentennial project celebrating the naming of Bathurst in May 1815 as Australia’s first inland European settlement is progressing well for its launch in August 2015.

An 80 page booklet describing 120 sites that can be visited along sections of Cox’s Road and subsequent colonial roads will be produced. It will include 8 large maps which will identify where each site is located between Bathurst and the Nepean River. The booklet is richly supplied with photos and images including A4 reproductions of John William Lewin’s 1815 paintings. Lewin did a number of illustrations of his 1815 journey across the Blue Mountains with Governor Macquarie after he volunteered to accompany the expedition.

The Cox’s Road Dreaming Project story focuses on history, road building techniques, early explorations, geography, geology, flora and fauna, the three Aboriginal Nations through whose Country Cox’s Road traversed, what various travellers saw and experienced, myths about Cox’s Road, what and who came over Cox’s Road, humour and tragedy and much more. The package is supported by a web site and App including short film clips, images, and readings from diaries, poems and ballads from the colonial era and access to N.S.W. Globe.

The cost of the tour guide will be $20 plus p&p when applicable.

Contact them at coxsroaddreaming@gmail.com or on Facebook at ‘Cox’s Road Dreaming’ to find out more details there.

Above - Part of one of Cox’s original creek crossings showing some remaining stonework.

Already there are a number of unique educational displays booked in for BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History on 26th and 27th September as part of the year-long celebrations next year as Bathurst marks its 200th birthday.

BATHEX 2015 is being organised by the Bathurst Stamp, Coin, Collectables and Lapidary Club which was initially formed as the Bathurst Philatelic Society in May 1895. Thus Bathurst had the first Philatelic Society in country New South Wales and the second after the Sydney Philatelic Club.


To mark 2015 there will be a 200 page display covering ‘Cox’s Road’ built from Emu Ford to Bathurst and put together by a Sydney stamp collector. This display will incorporate stamps, first day covers, medals, medalettes, coins, postcards and other associated memorabilia.

Turning 200 means a big year for Bathurst so make sure you are part of the celebrations. Feel free to send these e-newsletters to your family, relations, work colleagues, acquaintances, friends, ex-Bathurst residents or simply those interested in history.

Alan McRae, FAIHA, Secretary Bathurst Stamp, Coin, Collectables & Lapidary Club Inc. & President, Bathurst District Historical Society.
BATHURST'S EARLIEST INHABITANTS

PART TWO

This is part two of the Wiradjuri people who lived around Bathurst. The first written historical facts on the tribe began with the arrival of the Europeans after the Blue Mountains were crossed and the road was built to the site where Bathurst would be established – the first inland settlement. Those used to recording information wrote up their observations of the local Wiradjuri such as Blaxland in May 1813 noting:-

“Traces of the natives presented themselves in the fires they had left the day before and in the flowers of the honeysuckle tree scattered around which had supplied them with food. From the shavings and pieces of sharp stones which they had left it was evident that they had been busily employed in sharpening their spears.”

Later in the year, in November, Assistant Surveyor George Evans, when surveying the road across the mountains, noted that ‘he saw no men but he had reason to think from the many distant columns of smoke, occasionally observed the inhabitants are numerous, and he frequently came upon their deserted camp grounds’.

Another who habitually wrote up a diary was Governor Macquarie and some others in his party who travelled over the ‘new’ road. It was observed that the aboriginal natives were dressed or covered with skin of different animals that were neatly sewn together, and wore the fur inwards, and on the skin side they had curious drawings. Later a small group comprising two women and four children near Mount Pleasant were surprised to find the white men fishing at dusk that “the poor creatures trembled and fell down with fright.”

Initially relations with the new arrivals and the aboriginals was one of wariness and distrust as they tried to work each other out. For one reason or another relations between the Europeans and Wiradjuri and other tribesmen soon became strained as hostility between the two worsened.

There had already been problems with the Darug tribe east of the Blue Mountains panicking settlers, so much so, that in 1800 Governor King had issued a proclamation – it permitted any aboriginal to be shot on sight west of Parramatta.

How settlers handled the local natives varied, some were violent towards them while others decided to “load natives with goods and kindness to cure their bad habits.” The latter had been advocated by Rev Marsden.

As clashes continued the local magistrates were instructed to pursue natives who committed outrages and speared Europeans. This invariably led to retaliation and natives would be wounded or killed. Some instances appeared in the Government Gazette such as in June 1804 - “ NATIVES – His Excellency instructed Thomas Arndell, Magistrate at Hawkes, to take a body of settlers, 14, and pursue natives that had committed numerous outrages in the area at Portland Head.”

The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser of Sunday, 28th April 1805, reported that after the most brutal murder of some defenceless settlers whose hospitality appears to have drawn upon them the most barbarous treatment and there being but little hope of the murderers being given up to justice, the Governor has judged it necessary for the preservation of lives and properties of the out-settlers and stockmen to distribute detachments from the New South Wales Corps among the out-settlements, for their protection against the uncivilised insurgents. By Command of His Excellency, C. Blaxcell, Acting Sec. Government House, Sydney, April 27, 1805.”

The Wiradjuri were certainly aware of the Europeans even before they crossed over the Blue Mountains. All the previous parties that had come through with George Evans and William Cox’s road builders were certainly aware that the local Wiradjuri warriors were around. Governor Lachlan Macquarie’s party in 1815 consisted of a large number, the main party comprising Captain Antill, Major-of-Brigade; Lieut. Watts, Aide-de-Camp; Mr. Campbell, Secretary; Mr. Meehan, Deputy Surveyor General; Mr. Redfern, Assistant Surgeon; Mr. George Evans, Deputy Surveyor of Lands and Mr. Lewin the expedition’s painter.

After the Governor’s arrival on Thursday 4th May, 1815, a site was prepared around the flag staff which was erected on the Latitude 330 24’ 30” South and Longitude 1490 37’ 45” East of Greenwich.

They encamped on the bank of the Macquarie River as it commanded “a beautiful and extensive prospect for many miles in every direction”. The Governor planned to stay for a week during which, on Sunday 7th May, he noted the completion of the road and proclaimed the site suitable for the erection of a town which he named Bathurst, after the Secretary of State for the Colonies in England.

The Governor noted that “We found here also three male natives and four boys. They are all clothed with mantles made of the skins of o’possoms which were very neatly sewn together and the outside of the skins were carved in a remarkably neat manner. They appear to be very inoffensive and cleanly in their persons.”

Before long land grants began and more and more land traditionally used by the Wiradjuri for hunting and the lifestyle that they were used to for thousands of years was taken away. Access to their sacred sites was denied as more and more Europeans arrived and areas were fenced off. This led to more and more violent clashes between the Wiradjuri and Europeans,
especially between 1821 and 1827 when the Wiradjuri responded with payback. This was traditionally instituted when they responded to someone being killed or an act of violence had taken place against them. Historians have named this period in the 1820s as the Bathurst Wars.

The Wiradjuri population went into decline, however one of the largest causes was the diseases brought by the Europeans which were previously unknown to the native population. Diseases and illnesses such as colds, smallpox, measles, chicken pox, tuberculosis, bronchitis, scarlet fever, influenza and chicken pox, many proving fatal and the downfall of many a man, woman and child.

In an attempt to assist the natives, Governor Macquarie introduced his annual feast idea which was to invite the natives to come to Parramatta where they would receive gifts of blankets, food stuffs and other items. This first took place in December 1816 and was continued in one form or another for many years. The Sydney Morning Herald noted on 13th June, 1849, “Blankets for the Blacks – The Government has lately sent to Bathurst and other places throughout the colony, an abundant supply of blankets for the aborigines. Many of our sable friends have applied at the Bathurst Police Office for the same, and have, of course, obtained them.”

MOLYBDENUM

Molybdenum occurs in many places around the world but in many cases in just small quantities that make it uneconomical to treat with large scale treatment plants. It has a silver appearance and breaks into flakes if not handled carefully so it is considered quite a soft mineral specimen. Visitors to the BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition on 26th and 27th September next year will be able to see some spectacular mineral specimens on display.

Molybdenum is to be found in a few localities around Australia but in particular in the New England area in northern New South Wales where I used to live before coming to Bathurst in places such as Kingsgate and at Deepwater. It is also located at Everton (close to Beechworth in Victoria) and in Queensland in the Chillagoe mineral fields some 200km west of Cairns. Molydenite has also been mined around the Moonta and Yelta areas in South Australia and in the Northern Territory at Yenberrie. Other countries mine deposits of this mineral and these are primarily in Canada, Norway and England.

Originally considered not that important, the mineral was given a reprieve when it was discovered that it gave tensile strength, increased hardness and added to the elasticity of metal so the price rose making it more valuable to mine. It has caused many problems in an effort to process it for sale as there is often differing methods needed which is determined by the grade of the Molydenite. It was also found that it was easier to process the higher grade ore which also took far less time. They soon learnt that poorer quality ore had to be processed in smaller batches, hence commercial companies now only work the richer deposits.

Up to some 100 years ago it was initially broken up by the miners themselves but then machines began to be developed to do it. Once the initial break-up took place it was tipped into a dry ball-mill in an attempt to reduce the size to what looks like the size of pollard that one feeds to the chooks. The powder was then passed through a series of screens so that if any bits are still too large they are returned to the ball-mill. These days it is treated by several floatation processes and, in one case, mixed with kerosene and later floated on water with the concentrate separated by a shaking method. It is usually found with bismuth and this is an unwanted mineral for steel-making so basically it has to be got rid of as it needs to be less than .5%.

The idea for an exhibition began in 1900 when Britain’s King Edward VII (1901-1910) visited the Paris Exhibition. The Prince of Wales was very impressed with what he saw at the time and became interested in holding a similar event in London. In 1904 Great Britain signed an agreement with the French called ‘Entente Cordiale’. The signing boosted the Prince’s enthusiasm to hold the exhibition with France’s cooperation, the idea being to exhibit the industry and products of the two great nations as well
as from British Commonwealth nations. It would also highlight and promote the newly signed agreement.

In 1905 a number of diplomats and dignitaries began a dialogue with the French. It would be called ‘The Franco-British Exhibition’ and would be held in 1908. If successful, it would be the first international exhibition sponsored and co-organised by two countries.

Work began in earnest in January 1907 with over 8,000 workers employed. It was sited at Shepherds Bush, west of London and the whole complex was to be painted white, hence it was later called ‘White City’. It involved around 140 acres of land and featured an artificial lake. The exhibition opened on 14th May, 1908, and cost 1/- for adults and 6d for children to enter the spectacle with over one hundred buildings and contents to see. When the exhibition finally closed down over 8,200,000 visitors had filed through the gates. Newspapers of the day certainly voted the Irish ‘Ballymaclinton Village’, along with its 150 Irish girls, and the ‘Senegalese Native Village’ with natives showing their day-to-day lifestyle, as two displays not to be missed when visiting. A massive generator was constructed and on display to supply the electricity for the many lightbulbs used.

This blue 1908 Franco-British Exhibition label was issued as part of the publicity for the expo, along with labels of other designs. They were used on envelopes and postcards posted from the exhibition Post Office. Proper postage stamps had to be attached to the posted item also.

Initially a machine cancel or a Shepherds Bush hand cancel was used on mail from 14th May, 1908, however the special Franco-British Exhibition hand stamp was introduced from 26th May, 1908, in the Irish ‘Ballymaclinton Village’ Post Office after the British monarch and France’s Prime Minister officially visited the exhibition. Two postal hand stamps were commissioned, the difference being in the size of the ‘08’ of the date. Postal staff applied the Franco-British Exhibition hand stamp at regular times - 11.30 am, 12.15 pm, 1.45 pm, 3 pm, 4.30 pm, 5.30 pm, 7 pm, 8 pm, 9 pm and 9.30 pm and the Post Office closed at 10pm. The special cancel was used until 31st October, 1908.

The British Post Office also installed special red post boxes inside a number of the larger exhibition buildings to collect the letters, postcards and packages. Hundreds of thousands of postcards were for sale, either singularly or in packets, especially images of the actual Franco-British exhibition exhibits and displays and sold very readily. Many posted them from the massive exhibition. You could even buy postcard albums on site to mount the postcards in.

The Exhibition Official Printers, Valentines, had the official postcard printing contract though other printers printed and issued their own postcards, however the latter could not sell them inside the exhibition grounds. Over 1,000 different postcards are known to have been printed for this event. Valentines produced their range of postcards in both black and white and colour and even a limited number in sepia. Packets (sets) of postcards were put together and numbered along with information sheets informing the public what was available to collect. Postcards were not only sold at the exhibition but also around London. Postcard collecting was quite popular in those days as young and old enjoyed the hobby.

GOOD LORD WHAT'S THIS!

Most readers would not have any idea what this is but it’s actually a coin from early Greece, from Thrace Olbia in fact, and was cast in the 5th century BC. It is the type known as the ‘dolphin with raised eye.’ Whilst this example is quite well produced, many were almost devoid of the dolphin shape or detail and are thus quite crude. Interesting coins and other collectables will be on display at the BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History being held on 26th and 27th September, 2015.

This type of bronze coinage would be one of the most unusual around the Black Sea area being made from 600 BC to 300 BC. They were made by casting the copper metal in this form as compared to circular coinage that others near them were doing at the time.

These early people of Thrace Olbia settled in the coastal regions of the Black Sea (now part of modern Bulgaria and the Ukraine) which originally were populated by the Greeks from Milos. The Black Sea was populated by bottle-nose dolphins which were revered in mythology and had associated religious
significance. Not only did dolphins help locate a mermaid named Amphitrite there were numerous instances where the dolphins helped rescue sailors in shipwrecks and in trouble!

These unusual pieces were cast in batches by the ‘tree’ method after which each dolphin would be broken off and the ‘stem’ would then be thrown back into the melting pot. Those which have been better cast exhibit more detail in their design such as eyes and dorsal fins and sometimes a middle fin is evident which runs along the dolphin’s body. The length of these ‘coins’ seem to generally vary from 20mm to 50mm with the shorter ones maybe having part of their tails broken off after the casting process. Some of the rarer issues can be found with legends on them.

BATHURST’S COLLIN’S TOKEN?

Bathurst has many unique claims to fame and the business that issued this tradesman’s copper penny token is the only business in the Central West to do so. Abraham Collins must have been an astute businessman at that time. The bushrangers in the late 1850s and 1860s basically avoided stealing any copper coins, being more interested in larger silver coins such as the crown along with the gold half and one sovereigns, guineas and half guineas, as well as the colonial paper banknotes so whilst these tokens were around they would be likely ignored.

Copper half farthings (above), farthings, half pennies and pennies were just unwanted weight to carry for the outlaws, however these small change denominations were the lifeblood of everyday life in the economy of Bathurst and the wider colony of New South Wales. From the arrival of the first fleet there was a need for small change and it wasn’t long before the local Governor was requesting to the British authorities that ‘small change’ coins be despatched to the Southern colony. Their response was basically that coins were not needed in a penal colony!

Slowly British coins were despatched though not in overwhelming quantities. The situation changed dramatically after the discovery of payable gold near Bathurst and prospectors headed to the goldfields in droves to make their fortune, or so they thought. Some were lucky but most were soon disappointed.

Bathurst has the honour of being the location where the first discovery of payable gold was made. On the 8th May, 1851, Edward Hargraves invited “some gentlemen” to meet him at Mr Arthur's Carrier’s Arms Inn in William Street to announce ‘his’ discovery of gold. In fact it was locals John Lister and William Tom who actually found the four ounces of gold near Yorkey’s Corner, at the junction of Lewis Ponds and Summer Hill creeks out from Bathurst and Orange.

As the nation’s population soared, specie (coins) was soon again in short supply and Bathurst was no exception. In an attempt to alleviate the situation, numbers of businessmen and merchants in the colonies had one penny and halfpenny tokens struck to help overcome the severe coin shortage. The tokens were unofficial and illegal, and although the Government of the day frowned on these copper or bronze issues, they had to turn their heads the other way as the tokens were helping the situation that the Government could not overcome. Most of these tokens, issued mainly in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, were issued from 1855 and over the following decade.

Abraham Collins and his three sons had set up their general business in William Street around 1860. They sold all manner of items from groceries, shoes, boots, drapery, household items, wines and spirits and clothing of every description “cheaper and better”. Other businesses in William Street at this same time included Mr. A.B. Rae's Edinburgh Book Depot, McMinn’s Jewellery, Pedrotta’s Gunsmith shop and Mrs Timble's Millinery Establishment.

Other than the usual difficulties of getting their goods up from Sydney, they too were constantly experiencing problems with the lack of small change. The local banks at the time, the Union Bank of Australia, Bank of New South Wales and the Australian Joint Stock Bank were experiencing similar problems. They could not help so the Collins family had to have copper farthings, halfpennies, pennies and silver threepences (above) sent up on the Perry, Elliot, Markwell & Co Mail Coach from Sydney. This coach
line had already been approached by Cobb & Co almost from when they arrived in Bathurst. So frustrated did they become that they inserted an advertisement on 30th July, 1864 - “Coaches on Bathurst line not to be bought off!”

Having to ship “small change” not only cost Collins the freight but also a premium on the change of one penny for every shilling’s worth sent up. Another problem was that bushrangers could, and sometimes did, hold up the coach.

One solution was to have tokens produced – it would give them more change and advertise their monster clothing bazaar. Collins and Co. contracted Thomas Stokes in East Melbourne to supply their tokens. Stokes had come to Australia in 1854 but washed very little gold so he went back to his old trade in 1856 – die sinking and metal button making which he learnt in England. In 1857 Stokes purchased some second-hand minting equipment and dies. Thomas agreed to “cut” the dies for Collins and Company – see token right. The obverse (front) features the words “COLLINS & CO” with “CHEAP CLOTHING BAZAAR : BATHURST :” around the border and a beaded rim around the edge of the token. The reverse (back) features an emu on the left and a kangaroo facing each other with “NEW SOUTH WALES” around the border at the top and the date “1864” under the two animals. In minute letters appears the words “T. STOKES” on the left and “MELBOURNE” on the right. The pair of native animals is of a similar design to that produced by his rival token maker, W.J. Taylor, the man from whom he had purchased his equipment. The Collin’s tokens are 34mm across and are considered a scarce token these days.

The tokens were shipped to Bathurst in wooden barrels on the mail coach arriving late in 1864 so Ben Hall may have seen some of these actual tokens in his travels. It is more than likely that they travelled at least part of the way on one of James Rutherford’s Cobb & Co coaches. James Rutherford had arrived in Bathurst on 26th June, 1862, after he decided to move from Victoria and establish himself in New South Wales. They travelled by road from Victoria to Bathurst to bring the coaches and two wagons loaded with baggage, harness and equipment. The coaches and wagons were pulled by teams of horses. On arrival it was found that there were no large commercial stables so the cavalcade set up camp for the night off the Sydney Road on the flat between the Denison and Vale Creek bridges.

It is believed that the tokens cost Abraham Collins 8 pence (7 cents) per dozen (12) giving a profit of fourpence in each shilling’s worth. The use of the Collin’s tokens was short-lived as the New South Wales Government declared tokens illegal in 1868. Ironically the Colony of Victoria had already banned tokens in 1863, the year before the Collin’s tokens arrived in Bathurst.

For those who plan to attend the BATEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History being held on 26th and 27th September, 2015, there will be displays that are rarely seen outside museums. This exhibition will be the largest of its type in New South Wales with a large number of keen collectors travelling from many states to assemble their variety of displays which will cover a range of different categories.

Many people collect coins, from Royalty, Sheiks, Presidents, Judges, teachers, down to the youngest collectors who find the hobby fascinating. Discerning collectors will specialise and one field is countermarked coinage though these coins are not overly common, however types from the Middle East can be. Issues of the region exist for Obock ca 1884-1892; Djibouti ca 1892 of Sheik Latif Ma’a al Fazah and Ras Bab al Mande ca 1890's of Sheik Sa’id. The coin below was issued on Austrian silver thaler.

These types of issues were produced under unusual circumstances and usually in an emergency. The countermark on this thaler states it is the silver Riyal
of Sheik Sa’id, the counterstamp reading “AL SHAYKH SA’ID FI RAS BAB AL MANDEB”. Another was issued in Ras Bab al Mandeb by Sheikh Sa’id and was issued for the invading forces from French Somaliland when they occupied a fort located at Ras Bab al Mande.

So why were many issued using thalers? – Basically they were an accepted silver trade coinage which continued into the 1900s. By 1911 the Austrians were producing over eight million of these coins per year. Most of these went across the Mediterranean to countries on both sides of the Red Sea. Some countries tried to circulate a similar coin, however few people would accept it - it was different and they did not trust it, so they failed - to the natives and Red Sea merchants, close enough was not good enough. The weight and design of the thaler was standardised because many of those using the coins could not read - money of unfamiliar appearance was distrusted. Certainly because of this the thaler soon became popular in the Colony of Aden and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

Minting of thalers stopped in Vienna from 1914 to 1919 during the First World War, recommencing in 1920 and understandably by this time the Maria Theresa thaler was getting somewhat scarce. With the deficiencies to make up, enormous numbers were again produced. During the war in 1915 or 1916 more supplies of the trade coins had been shipped into North and East Africa. These coins circulated alongside the primitive native money such as cowrie shells, trade beads or some other trade item.

Values placed on the thalers were highly variable and sometimes the natives were suspicious and needed to examine the coin. The price varied from two to six shillings or could be traded for a set number of trade beads. The natives often put a hole in the coins to wear around their neck so they would not lose them. Other native money included seeds, spearheads, throwing knives, copper rods and crosses, glass beads and armbands. This trade coin was accepted by the tribesmen though the cowrie was still traded at 100 shells and equal to one silver thaler. Again in this region coins featuring deceased sovereigns or monarchs are considered “dead” and not accepted, however this coin was somehow different.

In 1927 the Vienna Mint struck 15 million thalers, this proving to be the peak of the post-war production boom. Then in 1932, after some 178 years of production, the Viennese Mint ceased production of the Maria Theresa dollar - the depression was taking effect. Ironically, other countries soon realised they could not do without them and were forced to mint their own Maria Theresa thalers for themselves. The thaler had become a factor in international politics. As the Viennese monopoly of the coin's production had lapsed and so caused a serious shortage, the Royal Mint in London in 1936 was authorised to mint 150,000 of them to assist British Trade. The Mint went on to produce over nine million up until 1939.

Few people would have heard about this unusual mail service that has been unofficially called the ‘Tin Can Mail’. The island of Niuafoou in Tonga where it happens is located between Samoa and Fiji. The small volcanic island has always had a small population of less than 700. Not having a harbour or a wharf, it was difficult to land mail and supplies, in fact passing ships would throw goods and mail overboard for the natives in their canoes to hopefully retrieve. The special mail service would last over a century.

It all started in 1882 when William Travers, the Australian copra plantation manager, contacted the Tongan Post Office requesting his mail be sealed up in a ship’s biscuit tin and thrown over the side of the mail ship and he would arrange for one of the natives to swim out and get it. His request was granted and his letters were wrapped in grease-proof paper before inserting them into the tin which was then sealed.

The captain of the Union Steamship Company vessel also agreed and threw it over at the same time sounding the ship’s horn to let William know. These ships could be a mile or two off the island. Travers could also send out any mail from the island to the captain. It seems the currents were not always on the swimmer’s side, who could spend three to six hours in the shark-infested ocean. Sometimes the mail was lost and later a swimmer was attacked by a shark.

A local trader called Walter George Quensell arrived in 1928 and continued the “Tin Can Mail”. In order to make a few bob he applied numerous cachets onto the envelopes. These cachets were stamped inscriptions, other than a stamp cancellation, to make each unique. As they became collectors’ items, philatelists around the world would send him letters to get one of the interesting items. Walter began adding “TIN CAN MAIL” on letters, sent from the island initially with a
homemade rubber stamp. Later other rubber stamps were commercially made and shipped to the island.

Queen Salote, whose image appeared on the postage stamps on outward mail, stated that the ‘mailmen’ were to paddle out in a canoe, however there was no way of launching it except from a cliff. It didn’t happen and she was very upset and ordered that any future mail was to be collected by outrigger canoe. This was much more difficult because these boats had to be thrown from the cliff top. The crew had to then jump into the water and climb aboard.

Passing passenger ships would promote the service amongst passengers who would send their letters to the island postmaster at an added cost of sixpence. Quensell had rubber stamps made in different languages (see example above) for ships which visited, by now as many as ten times a month.

This volcanic island, well known by now as “Tin Can Island”, exploded in 1946 and the islanders were evacuated for twelve years during which time Walter Quensell died. In 1962 Quensell’s son, who was living in New Zealand, was asked to help re-start the service which again proved very popular. The Tongan Government built an airfield on the island finally in 1983 and the ‘Tin Can Mail” was discontinued.

When the British settlement initially in New South Wales was established, it was garrisoned by regular British troops. When the First Fleet arrived in 1788 the marines guarded the settlement at Sydney Cove and later at Norfolk Island. By 1790 Authorities decided to form units that were recruited to despatch south for “colonial service”. When the 73rd Regiment of Foot sailed into Sydney Harbour with Macquarie they were actually the first line regiment to serve in the Southern colonies.

Unlike most Armies today where the Government supplies all the uniforms and equipment, these early military regiments often had to buy much of their own uniforms and equipment depending on the time and the speed in which regiments were assembled.

Prior to a volunteer joining a Regiment they had to obtain an array of items which he or his Colonel paid for. At the time these items were known in the regulations as their “Regimental Necessaries”. If the soldier was to pay for an article he usually paid it out of his ‘Bounty’ which for Macquarie’s 73rd Regiment was three guineas (£3/3/0). Soldiers also needed a sea chest which they would generally buy themselves.

Generally one needed one Shako (hat) with tuft and plate, one forage cap, one coat, one waistcoat, two shirts, two pairs pantaloons (long pants) and one pair suspenders (braces), one greatcoat, one pair of yarn mitts (gloves), three pairs socks, one pair of short cloth gaiters and two pairs of leather boots. The men needed one knapsack along with one shoe brush, blacking or blacking ball, one button brush and stick, one clothing brush, one black stock, a sponge, one shaving brush and soap, a blade razor, one comb, a turn-screw - brush and worm, spare buttons and a pair of straps to carry their greatcoat.
fork and spoon along with a water canteen which would be purchased from the Regiment’s store. Often much of a soldier’s bounty would be spent on the nominated requirements.

Macquarie’s regiment were issued with muskets which really were not all that accurate, however as the weapon was used by a number of men at the one time, such as a regiment in line, they could make a deadly pattern of lead balls at a target up to 100 yards away or a bit more.

The British Army’s Board of Ordnance around 1800 had adopted the flintlock musket known as the Brown Bess (India Pattern) with its swan-necked cock for standard issue. It was considered a light model and it had a shorter barrel than previous models selected.

INTERNAL THREAD BOTTLES

The clear glass bottle to the right is an old Simpson & Sons from Eaglehawk in Victoria. They registered the ‘eagle’ as their trademark. In the 1880s Frederic George Riley’s company was located at 256 South Lambeth Road in London’s south west, had the patent on this specific bottle closure. The internal thread idea had become popular for nearly two decades with aerated cordial manufacturers.

The company was not the first to produce such a bottle with a screw stopper for mineral waters. After devising the stopper and securing a patent on it the company then decided to manufacture the internal thread bottles as well. This was followed by designing and making a machine that could fill the bottles – these Riley Screw Machines claimed to fill 150,000 bottles in an hour and referred to this being carried out by a Mr. R. White, aerated cordial manufacturer in London.

The first internal thread glass bottle (and there were stoneware internal threads also) appeared during the middle to late 1870s. Englishman, Frederic George Riley, had patented his specially designed “Riley Screw Closure” with the British Patent’s Office receiving the number 8198 for his invention. It is dated 7th July, 1885. Used around the world, the internal thread glass bottle continued its high popularity in the United Kingdom until the time of the Great War, however Australian Glass manufacturers continued to make the design well into the Great Depression of the 1930s and in some cases after the Second World War. It was particularly popular with some Australian aerated flavoured water manufacturers.

Blob top bottles, with the internal thread applied by hand, were the first type to be seen on the market and later a ‘machine top’ type was manufactured when machines made the glass bottles. Riley’s design was a modification of his ‘chisel’ top stopper. Various materials were used to make his first type of closure – the flat top, often fluted, stopper manufactured from materials such as ebonite, Vulcanite, rubber, Lignumvitae and hardwood. Sometimes the extended or protruded stoppers had Riley’s name on them as well. The protrusion made the process of opening the bottle easier.

The Riley Manufacturing Company’s “Patent Steam Screw Bottler” cost £60 to purchase and was known as the Riley’s “S.O.”. The Riley’s Syrup Supply Pan with its silver fittings cost an extra £3/10/0 when purchased with the “S.O.”. The company described it thus: - "It is the most perfect power machine for Thumb Screw Stoppers on the market. Fills and syrups 5oz to 25oz bottles equally well. It is the result of 20 years of experience with this type of filler. It is now being used in every important town in the United Kingdom and is being largely taken up in Germany, where millions of bottles and stoppers are in circulation. It is also extensively used throughout Africa and wherever introduced has proved a market success and has completely displaced every other form of bottle other than the screw. It is a combination of simplicity, safety and accuracy.”

The machine had many prominent features such as accessibility to moving parts, entire absence of breakage and its ease of starting and stopping. The machine stood 6 foot 8 inches high, 2 foot by 1 foot 6 inches and required a small space of only 3 foot 6 inches by 18 inches of space. The unit weighed 8 cwt. It could also be used by ‘juniors’.

The company advertised that the cost of the glass bottles to take the Riley patent screw stopper was for 26 ounce or quart bottles cost 20/6 per gross, a gross being 144. The 10 ounce bottles cost 15/6 for a gross and their smallest size was 5 ounce or 6 ounce at 14/6 per gross. The stoppers cost extra of course and were made of “solid Vulcanite and are fitted with the best rubber rings.” Riley’s also embossed “Riley’s Patent” onto the vulcanite stopper. The company also made the point that their stoppers did not suffer from shrinkage or swelling which is why they had selected Vulcanite to manufacture their stoppers. The company did however make two qualities – ‘Best’ or ‘First’ quality was 7/6 per gross whilst ‘second’ quality was just 7/- per gross, little difference really when we are looking at the price of a gross. Their reference to ‘shrinkage or swelling’ was probably made for the
benefit of some of their competitors who actually had their stoppers manufactured from wood which proved to be problem prone, especially as they aged.

The Melbourne Glass Bottle Works in Victoria manufactured the internal thread bottle design for Australian businesses under licence from Riley. This glass works was still doing so after World War One. As far as I’m aware no Bathurst cordial manufacturer used this form of bottle but Marchants, who at one time, railed their drinks to Bathurst for E. Webb and Company.

FLINTLOCK PISTOL ABOUT IN GOVERNOR MACQUARIE’S TIME

Whilst not a military issue flintlock pistol, many early settlers would have carried one of these depending on where they lived in the Colony of New South Wales. Within a decade of Governor Macquarie declaring the township of Bathurst on 7th May, 1815, numbers of firearms using the new next generation percussion-cap lock firing system were being shipped into the colony. In fact flintlock firearms were still being used after payable gold was discovered at Bathurst in the 1850s and 1860s. Both these types of firearms were superseded by arms using cartridges.

The flintlock mechanism utilised a piece of hand-trimmed rock – flint to make a spark and ignite the powder. Soldiers and shooters had to ensure they kept their flint correctly maintained. If the user failed to nap their flint properly it wouldn’t produce a suitable spark and the firearm could misfire.

The flintlock system had been developed by the beginning of the 17th century. Prior to this there had been a series of systems developed which included – matchlock, doglock and wheellock technology.

Around the middle of the 1600s many of the Armies in Europe had adopted flintlock muskets for their soldiers. The Army in England saw the benefits and the system was fitted for their “Brown Bess” musket. All were muzzle loaders as were the pistols with the mechanism. Pistols were used for closer up defence in conjunction with a sword in the hand.

The flintlock’s popularity soon came about as it was considered ‘reliable’ and was cheaper to operate than previous firearms. These firearms needed to be well cleaned after use or they could corrode as the black powder incorporated sulphur in the mix.

The designers and manufacturers of flintlock muskets invariably made them with a large calibre giving them an effective range around about 80 to 100 meters. The military muskets (about five or six feet in length) were deliberately kept to around ten pounds in weight as they would be too heavy especially when fitted with a bayonet as they usually were for battle. Bayonets could be some 18 to 22 inches long. Close hand to hand fighting meant that bayonets could be responsible for a third or even greater numbers of battlefield casualties. Muskets were loaded with a round lead ball however if it was used for hunting then they were usually loaded with shot. Well trained soldiers could fire their rifles 3 or 4 times each minute.

To load a flintlock one pulled back the pistol hammer to half-cock. Then the powder was poured on to the priming pan before the frizzen was pulled up to close off the pan. Powder was then poured into the barrel in a measured amount before dropping in the ball which was then rammed down and secured with a cartridge paper. The hammer would then be pulled backwards to full-cock. It was now ready to fire so that when the trigger was pulled the sparks from the piece of flint would set off the priming pan powder then the in-barrel charge and the lead ball would be propelled down the barrel towards what was being shot at…. well hopefully.

Unfortunately misfires were commonplace and there were accidental firings – one problem being any embers in the barrel from the previous firing could set off powder as the firearm was reloaded. The system had other problems especially in wet weather with moisture being an issue with the powder and with the frizzen reloading soldiers on the battlefield had to make sure sparks from their musket didn’t ignite the next soldier’s powder as he reloaded.

Early on musket manufacturers realised the necessity of making accessories out of brass so to avoid sparks or static electricity. Items such as funnels, powder flasks and measures were made. Later soldiers were issued with small pre-made paper packets containing the measured amount of powder and the lead ball which could be rammed down the barrel thus speeding up the loading procedure.

It was a Frenchman who designed the flintlock mechanism. Marin le Bourgeoys showed King Louis XIII his idea shortly after 1610.

One of the knapped flints from a flintlock found in Dunbar wreck.
The Bathurst City Council created a Heritage Wall located in the immediate vicinity of the Proclamation Cairn at the lower end of William Street, at the entrance to the Macquarie River Bicentennial Park, Bathurst in 1988.

Any family having connections with the Bathurst district may apply to have a plaque (example above) made and placed on the Heritage Wall. Wall plaques commemorate the pioneers and early settlers in the Bathurst district and also include more recent contributors to the development of the area. The Bathurst District Historical Society manages the wall plaque service.

Above – Western Stores plaque being unveiled.

Application forms are available from the Bathurst District Historical Society Museum or by phoning (02) 63308455 – best time is between 11am and 2pm Tuesday to Sunday or by emailing info@bathursthistory.org.au. You can also email amcrae@lisp.com.au. Applications should be lodged at least 12 weeks prior to the proposed unveiling date to allow for verification and manufacture of the plaque. Payment of currently $550.00 (includes GST) must accompany the application.

Why not consider planning a reunion and family plaque unveiling during 2015.

DID YOU KNOW?

# In 1828 Thomas Kite opened his “Dun Cow Inn” at Kelso and had a monopoly in the village until 1831.

# In 1836 the first local Methodist minister Rev. F. Lewis arrived in Bathurst to take up the position. Local Methodist parishioners had donated money to build a small Chapel and small it was, just 40 x 30 feet which was built for £800. Their new Chapel was opened on 10th October, 1837, by visiting Reverend John McKenny.

# One method of cooking used by the Wiradjuri was to wrap mud or clay around any birds, swans, duck and fish before putting on the coals of the fire. Once cooked the covering was broken off getting rid of most of the feathers or scales.

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

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For other information go to the following website at www.bathursthistory.org.au for the weekend programme and more information.

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