

The LampLight

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLARAT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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James Oddie
The Father of Ballarat

The President's Word



This year has begun on a much more positive note. It seems we might finally have the pandemic under control and as a result life has begun to return to pre-covid normal.

We have launched into 2022 with two successful events. In January, Doug Bradby led us on a most informative city walk pointing out the locations of the numerous gold mines which used to be such a feature of our city.

Members who attended our February meeting were treated to a most entertaining and informative evening. Raymo Shaw, our guest speaker from the Victorian Historical Mine Shaft Chasers group took us on a virtual underground adventure as he showed some of the photos his group has taken as they explore abandoned gold mines.

The group's motto is "we only take photos" and Raymo explained how they take great care to leave everything where they find it – even litter which as he explained also tells a story.

Can I take this opportunity to formally welcome Lauren Bourke as the new Head of Collections and Curatorial at Sovereign Hill? I have had several meetings with Lauren and we are looking forward to continuing our close relationship with her and the team in the Gold Museum. Lauren has submitted an article introducing herself and explaining current changes at the Gold Museum which appears in this issue.

Marion



The life and work of James Oddie

It seems fitting that the first story published from the archives of the *Ballarat Historian* should feature one of Ballarat's greatest pioneers and philanthropists James Oddie, often referred to as the Father of Ballarat.

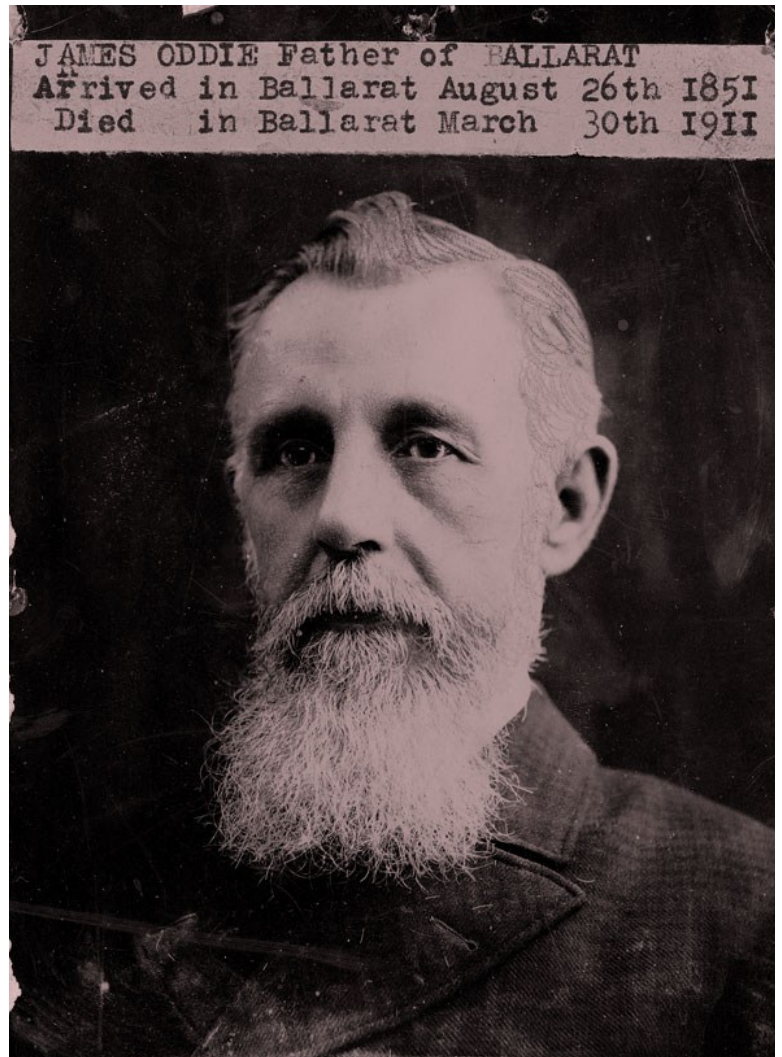
The story was published in June 1982 and was researched and written by the late Edgar Bartrop, who established a reputation of his own as a visionary business and civic leader and one of the architects behind the establishment of the Ballarat Begonia Festival.

Few, if any have made a greater and continuing contribution to the well-being of Ballarat than James Oddie (1824-1911). As will be shown later in this paper the continuance of the work of the virtual "father" of the City of Ballarat is represented by institutions still serving its citizens.

He saw and contributed to the rise and progress of Ballarat from its earliest infancy until his death at the ripe of age of 87. Born at Clithero, Lancashire, on 31 March 1824, James Oddie was 25 years of age when he embarked for Australia in the Clipper ship 'Larpent' which left England on the 28th March 1849 and arrived in Geelong three months later, on 28 June of that year. Oddie "came out" under the "Dr Lang emigration scheme".

206 passengers came out in the vessel. Only 26 assembled for the celebration of the jubilee of the arrival of the 'Larpent' when Oddie and 25 others of his fellow passengers forgathered for the occasion. Oddie lived in Geelong for two years until 23rd August 1851 and during that time conducted a foundry business. On the Ballarat "rush" breaking out, he was seized with gold fever and joined with many others who abandoned security to search for gold. With three men – Morgan, Reece and Walker – he arrived at Hiscocks diggings (Buninyong) on 28 August and was "on" Golden Point on 1st September 1851, when the first diggers tent at Ballarat. Oddie's tent was pitched a little to the west of where Peel Street crosses the bridge over the Yarrowee Creek.

After working there for two months with varying luck, Oddie went to the Mount Alexander diggings in November 1851. He stayed, at Fryers' Creek and the Loddon Fields, until April 1852. He went to Bendigo and worked at Sailor's Gully until 24th September, when he decided to return to Geelong "for a spell".



After two months in Geelong, he made his way back to Ballarat and in 1853 was trading between the goldfields and the port. His store was "on" Yuille's sheep wash, Winter Flat, "where the lead from Sebastopol come in". In fact the lead was subsequently picked up under the store occupied by Oddie.

In August 1853 he moved his store to Smythes Creek where the rush was in full swing and he remained at this field for six months. While he was there, a 50 pound stores licence fee became a requirement. Oddie was amongst the first to resist it and as a result suffered the usual penalty, being brought before the Police Court of the day and penalised to the extent of five pounds. He had previously taken out a gold-digger's licence but declined to pay the stores licence fee, for the reason that every time a store was moved to a new spot of the rush another licence fee was demanded. This made store keeping very hazardous, though of course, the profit was high.

On leaving Smythesdale, Oddie returned to Ballarat and "pitched" his store in Eureka Street not far from the Stockade, which it overlooked at an angle.



Image from BHS collection

Here during the unhappiness which led to the encounter between the diggers and the military, Oddie had sundry exciting experiences. During one, he nearly became a victim of some men who were searching for arms.

Oddie and his wife had retired for the night of 2nd December 1854 when the former heard the tramp of horses near his stable. He got up, went out and was instantly covered by a couple of revolvers, the holders of which demanded supplies for the "patriots' commissariat". Oddie declined to give anything without an order from Peter Lalor. The men abused him, but did not shoot, and after arguing with him for some time, during the whole of which time he was kept covered, they eventually rode off without taking anything. During the argument Mrs. Oddie came out and stood by her husband's side. At about a quarter-to-four on the morning of the fight, Oddie heard the first volley fired from the stockade. He was able to get a good view of the subsequent proceedings from his hut through a small hole in the side of the wall facing the stockade.

While the fight was in progress a number of diggers and their wives gathered some distance away on a ridge, looking down into the Stockade, and Oddie and his wife also went out to watch the fighting. He saw two mounted troopers ride away

from the main body across where Cowley's foundry stood and draw their sabres, charge into a small crowd of men and women. Oddie was unarmed, having given up his only revolver to the defenders of the Stockade. He took Mrs. Oddie back to the hut and later to the Stockade and there counted 22 bodies. He saw Captain Ross, a Canadian and one of the fighting diggers being carried wounded, to the Star Hotel in Main Road, then kept by Irwin. Ross subsequently died at the hotel.

After the Eureka affair the goldfields began to settle down, Oddie set up his store in Dana Street, near Armstrong Street. Shortly afterwards he gave up storekeeping as such and became an Auctioneer. Auctioneer's licence were not required at the time.

At this time in 1855, there was agitation for a better system of education than that which prevailed. Oddie, with Peter Lalor, now "respectable", Dr. Stewart and others called a public meeting, the outcome of which in at least part resulted in a national school being established. The gentlemen mentioned became the "patrons" of the resultant schools in Ballarat. A school was erected on site in Dana Street, Mr. Martin becoming the first teacher. There were also schools in Humffray Street, Brown Hill and Main Road.

Oddie held the position of Secretary of the Patron body for nearly 20 years. This was the beginning of Oddie's public career.

About the end of April 1856 the question of founding a municipality was mooted. A public meeting was then called to further the matter. Incidentally, and to use Oddie's own words, "nothing then was properly set going unless it was first handled by a meeting of the public".

This meeting, like most others at the time, was held at Bath's (now Craig's Hotel) and as a result of the agitation the municipality of Ballarat was formally constituted on 14th January 1856. The first election results were as follow: James Oddie 31 votes, Robert Muir 29, Dr J Stewart 28, Patrick Bolger 28, JS Carver 26, Wm Yullock 23 and A.B. Rankin 14 votes.

The council met fortnightly at Bath's Hotel. At the time Cobbs corner (N.M. building today) and the Town Hall site were vacant and, on being put up for auction were sold at 150 pound each half acre. Both were subsequently forfeited, and the new council promptly applied to the Government for, and obtained, a grant of one block for municipal purposes. The first Town Hall, a modest wooden building and the municipal offices were erected, at the cost of 800 pounds on the site. The present Town Hall now stands on the site.

The first valuation of city property showed 297 vacant allotments and 267 tenements with a total rateable value of 40, 000 pounds. The first water supply was from Yuille's swamp (Lake Wendouree) the banks of which had been cut down to supply the diggers with water for sluicing.

Water was supplied at 10s per load and Oddie and one or two others member of the Council worked out a scheme for bringing water in pipes to the city centre at a cost of 3,000 pounds. The scheme was strongly opposed by Dr. Stewart and Wm Collard Smith, by then a Councillor. Eventually, however, it was carried out. Standpipes were erected and the price of water fell to 2s 6d per load and continued so until Kirk's dam was built.

The first Council was, Oddie subsequently claimed, responsible for the system of Residence Areas. There were many "excellent blocks" in the City, which the Council sought to have made available for building purposes.

The matter was taken up by Duncan Gillies (later Premier of Victoria) and Fraser who were then member as the Court of Mines and as a result the Residence Area system was established under the control of the Mines Department, and at once became popular. Much could be said about the system as it applies today but that is another story. When Oddie was Chairman of the Council a man committed suicide leaving a wife and children totally destitute and as a result of the efforts made to assist her the inevitable public meeting was called, and the Ballarat Benevolent Asylum had its modest beginning. Oddie was a member of the Board of the Home for 44 years. All Ballarat citizens are proud of that now much enlarged Institutions today called the Queen Elizabeth Home.

The Hospital, now Ballarat Base, began in 1853 when Superintendent Foster gave the use of a slab shed in the police camp to some 30 sick people and supplied them with food from the George and Bath's Hotels.

The patients received primitive but sustainable treatment there for some time and it is on record that Oddie often took buckets of gruel to the hospital from one or the other hotel. The original hospital committee was then set up and in 1856 the first building was erected on the site of the present Institution.

J.A. Douglass was the first President, Robinson and Oddie the first Vice Presidents. Oddie was made a Trustee of the Savings Bank in 1856 and an Honorary Magistrate in 1858.

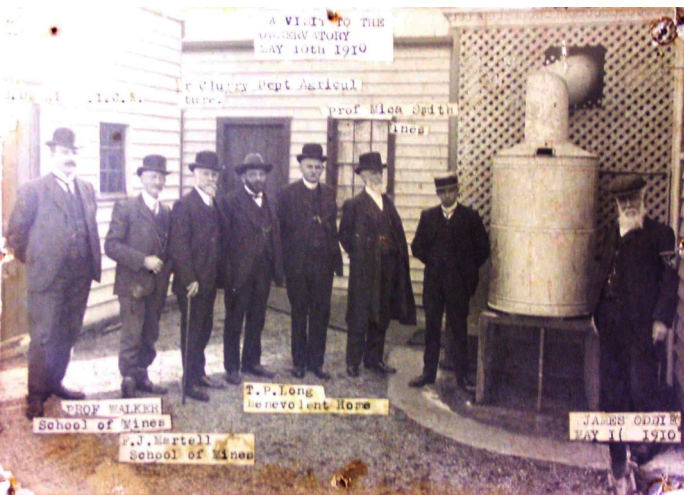
Oddie was unquestionably the founder of the Art Gallery in Ballarat. In 1884 he was asked to see a collection of pictures by Price, a noted artist and modeller, and in conjunction with Mr. Oldham he arranged for an exhibition in Ballarat. Application was made to a number of Melbourne artists with a result that a fine collection of pictures was brought together and exhibited for three weeks during which the building was crowded daily. So much interest was evinced in the pictures that from this exhibition the present permanent gallery sprang. A public meeting was called and 200 pounds promised. Oddie supplemented this with another 300 pounds and J.A. Powell was appointed Secretary.

When in England in 1887 Oddie wrote to Powell suggesting that a permanent gallery should be erected and offered to advance 3,000 pounds for the purpose. The offer was accepted and Powell managed to procure a Crown grant of the present Lydiard Street North site – (58 feet frontage to the old police camp) and the building was duly erected. Oddie, in all presented 150 pictures to the gallery including 70 portraits of pioneers. It is on record that Oddie was in Price's studio whilst the



latter was painting a portrait of one Robert Lewis. Conceiving the idea of getting a collection of portraits of early pioneers, he gave Price an order for one hundred of such portraits. Only 70 had, however been completed when the bank crisis came and the balance of the order had perforce to be cancelled. Oddie's generosity provided the splendid bronze statue of Peter Lalor which stands in Sturt Street.

The Observatory is another institution which Ballarat owes to Oddie's public spirit. In 1882 Oddie learned that one Thomas Baker, a customs officer at Geelong and an enthusiastic amateur astronomer, had sent an order "home" to purchase a telescope for 6 pounds for a boy at Geelong. The idea struck Oddie that if the 300 boys receiving instruction at a school could be induced to each subscribe a small sum, a telescope could be procured for the school. Thus it was that the Ballarat Boy's Telescope Company, capital 6 pounds in 600 shares of 3d each was formed. The idea caught on and the 6 pounds was quickly subscribed and the instrument purchased and brought out by Baker, by then a resident of Dunolly. He came to Ballarat and stated that in addition he had an eight-inch telescope for sale. Oddie brought this and it was mounted for use at the School of Mines. Baker then made a 12-inch instrument to Oddie's order and subsequently the 26 inch reflector now in the observatory. When in England Oddie ordered from Sir Howard Grubb, a noted astronomer, a 9-inch refractor which with its mounting cost 1,000 pounds and also obtained an electric clock and transit instrument. All these instruments were brought together and the Observatory at Mount Pleasant was equipped and established.



The above image is titled "A visit to the Observatory - May 10 1910". The image quality is poor but it lists notable citizens Prof. Walker, Prof. Smith and FJ Martell from the School of Mines, along with representatives from the Department of Agriculture and the Ballarat Benevolent Home. James Oddie is shown on far right in the cap.

Image from BHS collection.

Oddie was a member of the School of Mines Council for many years. The school was founded by Garrie Wood and J.W. Bickett. In January 1881 Oddie was elected to the Vice Presidency of the Council. At that time the old Court House, later the reading room of the school, was in use for judicial purposes but owing to mining operations it subsided and became so dangerous that it is reported the Judges were once seized with alarm and refused to sit in it thereafter. The school Council took steps to secure the building which had subsided some seven inches. The building was abandoned by the Government and the School obtained use of it at a peppercorn rental and eventually the James Service Government granted the Council the freehold of the land and buildings. The school in its early days had a hard time. It was, to quote Oddie's reported words "when Professor Mica Smith took up the management that the tide had turned."

Mention was earlier made of Oddie probably becoming the first Auctioneer in Ballarat. This was before Auctioneers were legislatively recognised in this country.

'The Victorian Auctions Sales Act came into effect in 1884. Sometime after he commenced, when storekeeping to sell goods at auction (when for instance a crowd of would be diggers arrived from Melbourne or Geelong and needed supplies) the Gold Commissioner or Council issued licences for such.

There was quite a "to do" when the Duncan Gillies government changed. The Auction Sales Act deprived the Municipalities of the fees which they had been able to collect from Auctioneers. It was William Little (Oddie's successor) by then a City Councillor who led the unsuccessful fight to retain the fees for the Municipalities.

Oddie then decided to add banking to his many interests. From Geelong, he brought William Little, a young bank clerk, to assist the bank establishment project and to work at his auctioneering and estate agency which was located in Dana Street. As Oddie became more immersed in public and commercial interests, so the estate agency business came under the control of William Little.

Whilst no records can be found of the precise date upon which the business became technically that of Little it is known that by 1878 he was trading under his own name and moved business into the premise that he had acquired at 54 Lydiard Street South.

As had been mentioned, Wm Little, also a noted citizen and a councillor of the City of Ballarat, was its Mayor in 1890. Amongst the successes of his career was the development of Victoria Park. There took place the first Arbor Day, marking the Queen's (Victoria) birthday in May 1890. He built upon the foundations laid by James Oddie a most successful real estate agency. His son William Cazley Little later joined his father in the conduct of the business and assumed and retained full control from the date of death of Wm Little Snr until for unfortunate reasons for him and his family, he left Ballarat.

However, it is an ill wind that blows nobody good. His departure allowed the writer to acquire, through H.J. Dunstan who had been Little's managing Clerk, first the business and soon afterwards the property at 54 Lydiard Street South. Hence the writer can rightly claim that his company is in the direct line of succession from that of the pioneer auctioneer in Ballarat. It might be mentioned that William Cazley Little - a gifted man, musically and otherwise, was "young Willy" in the office for so many years that even at the age of 82 when he died in a Melbourne suburb he was, to many, still "young Willy."

But to return to James Oddie.

If only to refute a statement made recently by a Ballarat City Councillor, mention must be made of one unhappy experience which Oddie suffered. He was, in this matter, clearly a victim of circumstances. Few banks (in the lusty days of gold rushes which so spectacularly lifted Victoria's population almost "overnight" and brought about boom conditions), were of the strong joint stock concern type with which we at least in this country associate the term "Bank" today.

They were, most often, small localized concerns as was Oddie's. His entrance into the banking field was to lead to later discomfiture for him. His Ballarat banking venture, The Freehold Bank, was successful enough, but in hectic land boom days of the 1880's it was absorbed by the Australian Economic Bank shortly to become the Mercantile Bank with nearly 2,000,000 pounds in deposits from English as well as Australian depositors and customers.

The merger gave Oddie a seat on the Board of the Mercantile. His fellow Directors headed by Sir Matthew Davies, were men of great prominence in the state. They also included Sir Thomas Bent, Premier at the time of its later debacle, and Sir Graham Berry, Treasurer of Victoria, also one time Premier. Then the land boom burst and the supposedly all-powerful bank along

with many others, crashed. Directors of some of the banks which failed took their places in court on charges of falsification of balance sheets and the like and suffered the ignominy of trial, but the Directors of the Mercantile who faced trial were ultimately acquitted. Neither Oddie nor Sir Graham Berry were included in the indictment and therefore were not charged in any way.

Most Ballarat people sympathised with Oddie and showed their faith in him at functions organised by his Ballarat friends in public and business life. Indeed some little time after that difficult period for Oddie, the Alfred Hall was, reports shows, "filled by representatives of all sections of the community who gathered to honour him". All speakers were most eulogistic as to his qualities. That was not the only occasion when the citizens of Ballarat paid tribute to the grand old man. On his 80th birthday a celebratory gathering of representative people was held at Craig's and a review of his long life and work given, Institutions and organisations which he had instigated and /or worked for so effectively gave him well merited recognition.

But his work for Ballarat was coming to an end. Time was catching up. In his later years he quietly withdrew from the public eye. He died on 3rd March 1911 at his home "St Columb" on the corner of Macarthur and Armstrong Streets, Soldiers Hill and was buried in the new Cemetery Ballarat on the Sunday following. A Mayor's special report, dated 4th March 1911 tabled by the first citizen of the City Cr T.T. Hollway, father of Thomas Tuke Hollway, Premier of Victoria in the 1940's read as follows;

"it is with deep regret I have to record the death of Mr. James Oddie F.R.S., the first Chairman of this Municipality. Mr Oddie died at his residence "St Columb" on Friday the 3rd inst. After a very brief illness and a unique career of public and private usefulness spanning the greater part of a century.



Above; James Oddie at home on the occasion of his 85th birthday in 1909. Image from Ballarat Golden City - Reid, Chisholm and Harris. Right; The caption reads "James Oddie as an elderly gentleman" but has no date. BHS collection.



Ron McLean's

More Tales from the Goldfields

Last month I told the story of the American Charles Ferguson and his involvement in the Eureka Affair up until the time he was involved in covering up the injured Peter Lalor. I thought it would be of interest to continue the story from that point.

On looking around he had lost sight of his companions except for one man, Ross. He said "Charlie it is of no use, the men have all left us" and in the next instant he said "My God, I am shot" and fell. Before he had time to see how badly hurt Ross was, a soldier demanded his surrender but he decided to try and escape and jumped the stockade and fell, and the soldier who had demanded his surrender fired and the ball passed through his hat.

prisoners were asking the soldiers what was to be done with them, the answer was, "Why, hung of course". They were then subjected to a thorough search, or robbed rather, as he noticed any money found went straight into their pockets.

When Charles surrendered he had upon him a Colt revolver and a Bowie knife which he slipped down his trousers leg and kicked them some distance away. After being marched back to headquarters they were again searched and any found with arms on them were listed as such.

After some weeks he was brought to trial and the first witness said that he had seen Charles surrender to Captain Carter and saw no firearms on him which Captain

touched the ground again until the party arrived at the George Hotel.

The trial of the other prisoners lasted for some days, he thought at the end only about nine were sent to Melbourne, among whom was the editor of the Ballarat Times. The sympathy of the whole colony was aroused on their behalf, the papers took up the matter, censuring the government and its officials, and dwelling largely upon the case of the Americans who they said were not in prison because they had friends and money. So much was said, Charles was advised he should keep out of the way for a while so he moved to Melbourne.

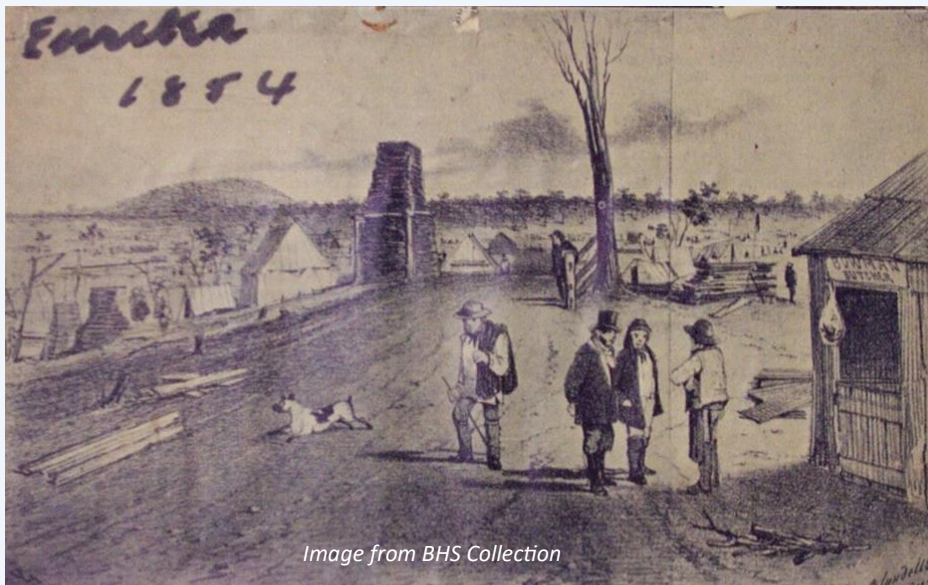


Image from BHS Collection

On getting to his feet he was confronted by a party of soldiers in front of him, so he jumped back into the stockade. The soldiers had been ordered to stop firing but the police kept it up when they saw someone trying to escape. Seeing Captain Carter of the police he ran towards him and surrendered.

While standing on the field with Captain Carter he observed a ghastly scene, the sun was just rising and spreading its light over the forms of dead and wounded men who a few minutes before were in full health but now lay there in their long, last sleep and others moaning in their pain. The

Carter agreed to. The court then asked Charles how he came to be in the stockade then, to which he replied that curiosity took him there the day before, and he had lingered longer than he expected.

Being in poor health a friend had offered him a bed there for the night and he had slept soundly, but being awakened by the gun fire had dressed in haste and seeing it was impossible to escape, he had surrendered to Captain Carter. The court at once said "The prisoner is discharged". No sooner had the court said those words and Charles was out of the building, he was raised on to men's shoulders and never

The story of Ah Pan's Rum

A swindle was perpetrated by a notorious character by the name of "Jumping George", the victim being Ah Pan, a Chinese publican.

During the wet season when the roads were near impassable and liquor had nearly run out, the wily Celestial made an arrangement with George to go to a store and gave him five pounds to buy two gallons of rum and promised him five pounds for himself if he bought it up in kegs within a week.

George had a rough trip, had to swim two creeks, but to Ah Pan's joy he came back with the rum in the stipulated time. The rum was sampled and found to be good.

After pouring out about a quart of excellent rum, there was a sudden stoppage. Ah Pan stuck a steel in to clear the blockage, but nothing came out except water. The wily George had tacked a circle of canvas inside around the bung hole, filled the artificial bag with a quart of good rum and filled the rest of the keg with water. The rage of Ah Pan was something terrible, not only had he been swindled out of the rum and the transport fee, but he had shouted the whole of the first and only quart to his customers.

George never returned to that town.

Sovereign Hill Update

Introducing Lauren Bourke Head of Collections & Curatorial



In November I was privileged to join Sovereign Hill as the Head of Collections and Curatorial, taking over from Michelle Smith. In this role I am responsible for management of collections, curatorial practice, historical research and responsible interpretation across the museum. I am also leading a number of Master Plan projects including the establishment and operations of the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections.

I have worked in the museums, archives and heritage sector for more than 15 years with significant experience in collection management and access, exhibitions, strategic partnership development and capacity building within the sector and collaborative research. I have a deep respect for community based collecting organisations, having worked for 15 years at Public Record Office Victoria supporting community based organisations to care for and provide access to historical collections and archives. I am particularly excited to be able to work with the Ballarat Historical Society to ensure the ongoing management, care and access to the significant collections which Sovereign Hill manages and cares for on behalf of the members.

It's such a privilege to have the opportunity to work at Sovereign Hill and to contribute to an exciting and transformational chapter in its history and so exciting to have the opportunity to contribute to the valuable and meaningful work of the organisation.

On 8 March as part of International Women's Day we were excited to launch Sovereign Hill's new research publication ***Courage & Resilience: The Pioneer Women of Ballarat Montage***. Extensively researched and beautifully written by Fiona Poulton and Lucy Bracey of Way Back When Consulting Historians, the book explores the stories of the 32 women who appear in the impressive photographic montage Pioneer Women of Ballarat. At the event more than 120 members of the public were treated to a lecture and discussion with the authors and were given the rare treat of being able to see the Montage in person.

Believed to have been created sometime between 1870-1890, the montage is part of the Ballarat Historical Society collection managed by Sovereign Hill Museums Association and includes 32 portraits of significant women who lived in Ballarat in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The montage originally celebrated the women's status as wives of Ballarat's prominent male citizens.

In ***Courage and Resilience***, Fiona and Lucy bring these women's stories to life in their own right and show the breadth of contributions these women had in the domestic, commercial, economic and social development of the city. The free e-publication includes the 32 photographs of the women and their biographies and is available for download on Sovereign Hill's website at www.sovereignhill.com.au/courage-and-resilience.

Sovereign Hill Museums Association gratefully acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government and Public Record Office Victoria for making this project possible. If you would like to keep up to date with future research programs, talk and seminars please join the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections mailing list at www.sovereignhill.com.au/acgc



Picture Credit: Accession number 78.707, Courtesy of the Sovereign Hill Museums Association and Ballarat Historical Society Collection

Sovereign Hill update continued...



Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades & Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections

As part of the Sovereign Hill Masterplan the Gold Museum is transitioning to two centres of deep learning and research, including the Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades (CRAFT) and the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections.

As part of this process the Gold Museum closed to the public, with the collections and exhibitions de-installed and a huge amount of work undertaken by the Collections & Curatorial team to document, catalogue and store the collection items which had been on display. Construction works continue to transform the building and we look forward to being able to welcome many of you to the Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades and the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections later this year.

For more information about the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections and to keep to up to date with future research programs, talk and seminars please go to sovereignhill.com.au/acgc

To find out more about the Rare Trades Centre and to sign up to our e-newsletter to get exclusive news and latest developments please go to sovereignhill.com.au/raretradescentre

Research & Donation Enquiries

While major building works have been underway, the Collections and Curatorial team have continued to respond to historical queries and proposed object donations. If you or any one you know has a research or access enquiry you can send your request to goldmuseum@sovereignhill.com.au. We will endeavour to answer enquiries as quickly as possible but may take between two (2) and four (4) weeks to process. Please be patient if you do not receive an immediate response; all queries are placed in a queue and managed accordingly.

All proposed donations must be assessed by the Acquisition Committee and this may take up to six (6) weeks. To speed up the process we ask that all proposed donation queries include the following:

- Clear image of the object including any labels or distinguishing features
- Historical background – who owned and used the object, relationship to Ballarat and/or the Central Victorian goldfields
- Current condition
- Current location

Much of our collection, including a large proportion of the Ballarat Historical Collection, is available to browse online through the Ehive website:

<https://ehive.com/collections/4819/sovereign-hill-museums-association>

This site is very easy to use and has approximately 80 000 records as well as over 30 000 images. The collection is also available through Trove <https://trove.nla.gov.au/>.

It is an exciting time for Sovereign Hill and the Collections and Curatorial team, and we look forward to keeping you up to date with our progress and welcoming you to the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections in the future.



Ballarat Historical Society

Capture The Vision



Many people would be familiar with this home, which for many years belonged to the Coghlan family, located at xxx Sturt St.

In preparing images for our forthcoming 90th anniversary book, these photos provide the perfect "then and now" comparison we are looking to show how certain streetscapes or buildings have changed over the years.



There is divided opinion about the building that now stands on the site. Is it a sympathetic re-creation and in keeping with other nearby streetscapes, or is it a concrete box with a heritage frontage tacked on? One suspects the arguments will go on as long as the building stands.



Future Meetings

Tuesday March 8th, 7.30pm BNCC Walker St Ballarat Nth

The Mine Chasers

Raymo Shaw and friends are the Mine Chasers - a group of thrill seekers who climb into abandoned gold mines "just for a look". They take nothing but photographs so as a result they have an incredible series of images of hidden unseen areas. Some of their images show artefacts and equipment left behind after the gold ran out.

The LampLight

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