GEMBOREE 2017
INFORMATION E-NEWSLETTER
August 2016 – Edition 5
Tony Luchetti Showground, Lithgow – Easter – 14th – 17th April, 2017

FROM THE E-NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Gee this year is getting away and there is only about 17 weeks until Christmas, then a few more days we will be into a new year. I have seen some very nice work that is being entered into the competitive section for the GEMBOREE 2017. It always amazes me that 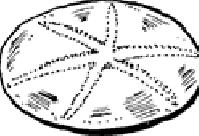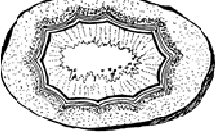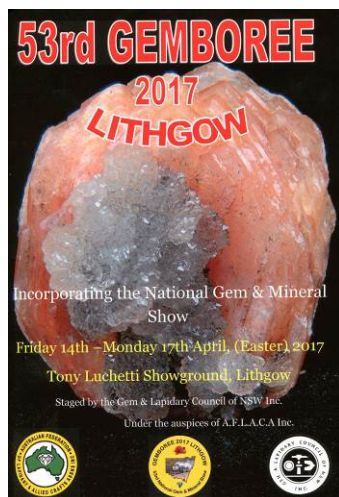many of the people who enter their faceted and polished gemstones have learnt what to do from their lapidary clubs and other members.

The 53rd GEMBOREE booklet for the event being held over Easter next year has all the information on the competitive sections, registrations, tailgating etc. You can contact Colin Wright, 13 Geoffrey Crescent, Loftus N.S.W. 2232. Ph 02 95212688 Mobile 0418286003 or email coldel1@hotmail.com or on the website http://aflaca.org.au/gemboree/ for copies.

A REMINDER that all ENTRY FORMS for all sections must be received by the Competition Committee by Saturday 11th February, 2017, together with a flat entry fee of $5 per competitor. Entries from overseas competitors will be free. A stamped self-addressed envelope must be sent with the entry form. Be sure to look at all conditions as some entries are also due to be posted for judging by Saturday 11th February, 2017.

The competition form has all the sections which cover areas like - cabochon cuts, opal sections, carving/cameo, intaglio sections, scrimshaw, spheres, facet cuts, tumbled stones, polished faces, gem trees (photo below), novelty gemcraft, all sorts and varieties of jewellery, then various showcases for fossils, minerals, etc. with entrants competing for a myriad of trophies.

Lithgow also has a few secrets, one being that one of their locals, Joseph Cook, went on to become the sixth Prime Minister in Australia. He was later knighted becoming Sir Joseph Cook. Born on 7th December, 1860, in England, he was the son of a poor coalminer. Knowing nothing but poverty he was forced to look after his family when his father lost his life in a mine accident at the Silverdale Coal Mine.

Despite his early decision to possibly become a minister of religion he did take up being lay preacher. He worked hard doing clerical work at the mine where his father was killed. He also became involved in trade union affairs and could successfully get his ideas over to the public. He

wasn't even 25 years old when he took an interest in politics.
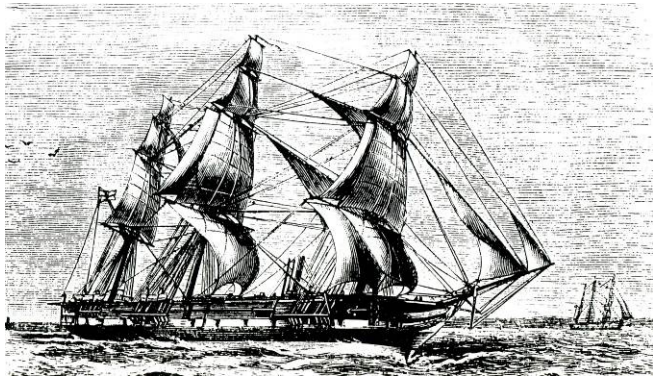
His association with Lithgow began when he married Mary Turner, a school teacher, in the Wolstanton Primitive Methodist Chapel near Newcastle-under-Lyme, in Staffordshire on 8th August, 1885. The couple decided to migrate to New South Wales, then travel to Lithgow where Mary's brother had already settled and was working as a coal miner.

Joseph was employed at the Vale of Clwydd colliery by January 1887. Determined to better himself he learnt book keeping as well as shorthand, these skills being useful for the rest of his life. The couple made their home in Macauley Street in Lithgow which they called "Silverdale" in remembrance of their old home town in Staffordshire and where his father lost his life.

Read the rest of Joseph Cook's story further on in this newsletter on page 8.

Alan McRae, FAIHA – GEMBOREE 2017
e-newsletter Editor and Publicity Officer

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BANKING IN LITHGOW

As Lithgow developed so did the banking services. Ulmera was built of sandstone in 1850 as the 'Bowenfels Inn' and in 1869 the Australian Joint Stock Bank opened an office in this building but they moved into Lithgow soon after.

With the discovery of gold in the early 1850s there suddenly seemed to be an obvious need for

more banks. A number of businessmen, merchants, traders and well-to-do citizens met in Sydney's Royal Hotel to consider the possibility of establishing another bank in the Colony of New South Wales. Based on the success of the Bank of Victoria in Melbourne those attending probably had the same idea in mind for New South Wales. The meeting was considered to be 'well

attended' in late October 1852. By the end of December a Deed of Settlement was ready to be dealt with and signed.

The Australian Joint Stock Bank Limited was formed as a result of the meeting with the bank opening in Sydney for business on 24th January, 1853. By the end of the financial year in June the bank had issued £52,966 in notes. The bank then went on to open branches throughout New South Wales and Queensland as well as a branch in London. By 1881 the bank had opened some 55 branches in New South Wales and 17 in Queensland. Agents were Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Levuka in Fiji, Scotland, Ireland, India, China and seven cities in America.

With the bushrangers causing an increased problem in the 1860s the various banks had domiciled notes designed such as the one below in the bottom centre for 'Bathurst' however the bank's location name was dropped along with the idea as it wasn't practical.

What the banks then came up with was to cut notes in half and despatch them to the required destination. After the bank manager or accountant received and checked them they would notify the bank sending the notes who would send the other 'halves'. On their arrival a bank clerk would match the two halves and repair them using paper tape and glue.

The 'halves' idea worked in the 1860s and 1870s as one couldn't spend 'half' a bank note and accounts of holdups mention bushrangers going through mailbags and leaving the halved notes by the roadside.

The Lithgow Mercury reported in May 1880 that The Commercial Bank of Sydney had purchased a site for their bank from Mr. Gray, near Messrs Lonergan's store. The land was 60 feet by 180 feet. It also noted that the Australian Joint Stock Bank was currently negotiating for the purchase of a site in the same part of town.

Later in 1880 it was reported that: - "on the opposite side of the main street of Lithgow now stands the Commercial Bank, and closely centred around this spot are the chief buildings of the town, comprising stores, hotels, &c. The cost of erection, including fittings and purchase of land, has been £2,750. When first started,

the general opinion was that the building was too large for the place and already the proprietors find the place too small, and contemplate adding additional buildings."

Early in 1881 the Branch Inspector for the Australian Joint Stock Bank, Mr Edward Griffith, travelling by steam train visited the Lithgow branch along with some of the other branches in the Central West.

Right – A typical design of a New South Wales bank note in the 1860s and 1870s – each bank issued their own individual banknotes.

Worrying news arrived in Lithgow on 21st April 1892, and even though Lithgow didn't have a branch of the bank any more there was one at Mitchell (Sunny Corner). Most Lithgow residents were already aware that the banks were in crisis and so was their money.

Under the headline "THE AUSTRALIAN JOINT STOCK BANK - SUSPENSION OF PAYMENT" went on "Yesterday evening it was notified by the general manager of the Australian Joint Stock Bank that the excessive withdrawals since Tuesday last had so reduced the coin in the bank's treasury that the board had determined to close the doors. The company was incorporated by Act of Council in 1853. At present it has an authorised capital of £1,000,000, of which £704,394 is paid up. The reserve fund amounts to £517,000. The directors and principal officers are as follow: -Directors Messrs Walter Friend (chairman), Hon W.A. Long, M.L.C., Josiah Mullens, George A. Murray, Louis Phillips, Charles H. Myles, auditors, Messrs John S. Dunlop and Robert J. King, general manager, Mr Francis Adams, manager, Mr. G.G. Blatland."
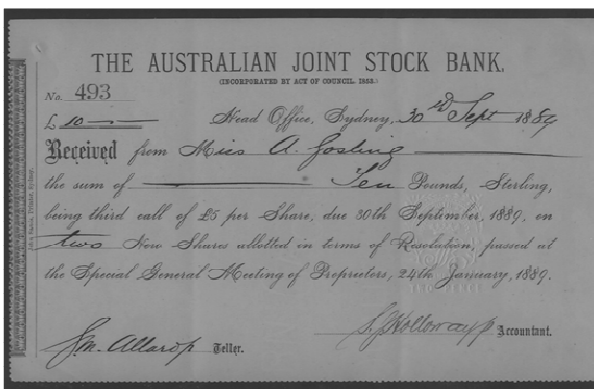
Above – a The Australian Joint Stock Bank share certificate sold in 1889 which had to be issued in Sydney at Head Office.

Besides a considerable number of suburban branches, the bank had many branches with those in the Central West and general area being at Bathurst, Blayney, Boggabri, Condobolin, Coonabarabran, Coonamble, Cowra, Crookwell, Dubbo, Forbes, Goulburn, Grenfell, Gulgong, Gunnedah, Hill End, Katoomba (agency at Blackheath), Lake Cargelligo, Mandurama, Mitchell (Sunny Corner), Molong, Mount Victoria, Mudgee, Newbridge, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Peak Hill, Quirindi, Rockley, Rylstone, Temora, Warren and Yass.

"The New South Wales portion of the business of the bank is indicated by the averages for the January - March 1892 quarter - Notes in circulation, £355,785; bills in circulation £6073, and balances due to other banks was £19,844."

"The bank's operations had been subject to some comment on the grounds of the considerable amount of deposits obtained from England. It was estimated that of the total deposits, amounting to £10,841,840, about three and a half to four million were deposited outside the colonies."

Many of the private banks went out of existence in the early 1890s, some amalgamated but it gave fuel to the Federation cause for a Federal Government to issue their paper money.

Even under the new bank note arrangements that came about after the Commonwealth Government of Australia was brought in after Federation there were still those who wanted to get some easy cash by either forging notes or signatures on cheques as the following news story states.

"ALLEGED FORGERY. LITHGOW, Wednesday. 1st January. 1913 – At the local Lithgow Police Court, before the Police Magistrate, Leslie George Price, alias Cyril Ernest Melrose, was charged on four counts that he did forge the name of John A. S. Jones to a cheque on the Lithgow branch of the Commercial Bank of Sydney, and did utter the same on December 24th. The amounts in question were £5 2s 6d, £4 2s 6d, £4 2s 6d, and £4 2s 6d. The evidence of the arresting constable indicated that when he took the accused to the police station and searched him he found the sum of £14 0s 3d in his pocket in gold sovereigns and silver, and a deposit slip for £2 5s on the Commercial Bank, Lithgow branch, dated December 24th. Witness also found seven cheques, drawn on Commercial Bank, Lithgow branch, for different amounts in favour of Cyril E. Melrose and signed John A.S. Jones.

John Alexander Stammers Jones, a brewer, of Lithgow, deposed that the accused was unknown to him. Accused had never had any transactions with witness and he had never given accused any cheques.

The accused was committed on each count to the Parramatta Quarter Sessions on 28th January. Bail was allowed in each case, self in £40, and one surety of £40 or two in £20 each.

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FISH FOSSILS – WHAT A CATCH

There will be many fine fossils at the GEMBOREE 2017, the 53rd National Gem & Mineral Show, which is being held from Friday 14th to Monday 17th April, 2017, at Tony Luchetti Showground in Lithgow in New South Wales. The massive event is staged by the Gem & Lapidary Council of N.S.W. Inc. under the auspices of the Australian Federation of Lapidary & Allied Crafts Association Inc.

What will soon become apparent is the great variety of fish fossils on show. All shapes, sizes and colours will be there for sale, with some commanding some very high prices whilst others are comparatively cheap. Some of the very early types are sometimes hardly recognisable as a fish as we know them. Many fish fossils are found almost intact, well their bones anyway. Sometimes the fish has eaten other small fish before they died and were fossilised, these tiny bones being found inside the larger bones.

Our oceans are said to be older than 4 billion years and the distribution of fossilised fish is such that they have been located in most of the counties world-wide.

Fish appeared more than 500 million years ago in the Cambrian Period, they were quite small and were jawless. Specimens of this type have been found in China, a country where large numbers of common fish fossils are located these days.

Another feature was the bony armour to protect them. These later evolved into fish with moveable jaws (seen on a typical armoured fish drawing at the bottom of this page) some 400 million years ago by the middle Silurian with the size of some species being quite large, in some cases 15 to 20 feet. Around 390 million years ago the first sharks as we know them began to make their appearance.

Most good fish fossils have occurred it seems, where the fish have been trapped in ponds, shallow lakes, estuaries and such where the various fish have been preserved in mud. Usually they were alive and there can be more than one species caught in time. As the salt or fresh water disappears and the fish are also covered in layers of mud and fossilised. Other marine life and sea plants can be found along with the fish.

I remember visiting the Talbragar Fish Beds at Farr's Hill near Gulgong as a school kid with the Armidale Rock and Mineral Club with Professor Ellis. We got some very nice fish fossils. It was a bit of an art, and luck, to carefully prize apart the layers to get a good example and to open a nice pair just made one's day. They seemed to be everywhere, most only one to five inches long I recall, in the rusty brown looking ironstone. However, this site has been closed for many a year. These specimens date from the Jurassic which makes them around 175 million years old.

Fish fossil beds are located sometimes in the most unlikely places, however some places are well known for their superb specimens. These include the Messel Oil Shale Pits at Messel in Germany; Southern Morocco; the Old Red Sandstone Formation near Orkney in Scotland; the Green River Formation in Uintah County in America has seen the discovery of tons of fish fossils each year.

Then there is Hajoula in Lebanon and the Utah Alpes de Haute Province in France along with the discoveries at the Solnhofen Plattenkalk Formation near Eichstatt in Germany. Brazil has exported fish fossils for over a century from the Santana Formation at Ceara. Then there are the Phosphates Deposits at Khouribga in Morocco but no matter where your fish fossil comes from they make an interesting addition to any fossil collection.

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POTTERY WORKS AT LITHGOW

The photo (right) is on a postcard taken about 1895 of Lithgow's pottery works. The postcard was posted in Goulburn and sent to Bathurst. The company made items such as salt-glazed pottery drain pipes (which were purchased in quantity by the Bathurst Municipal Council) to pottery jugs, vases, seed pans, bung jars and spittoons. They made specialised bricks for furnaces as well as household bricks. Steel products came from the same area and the complex was massive.
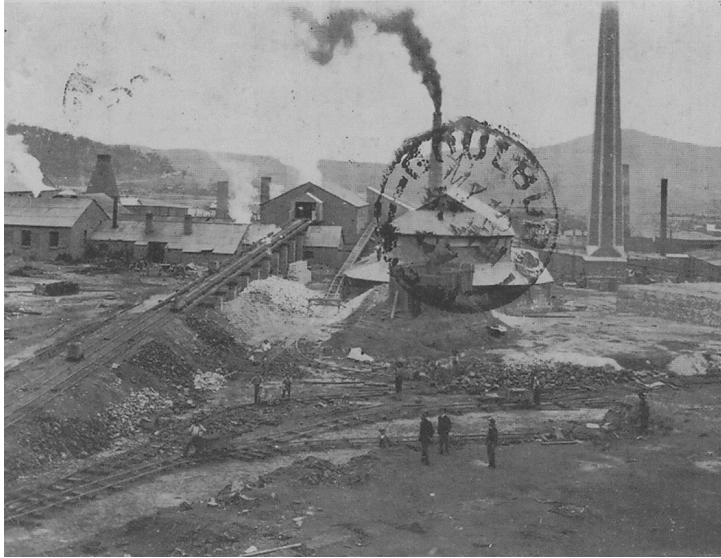
The mining of coal was commenced in 1873 by the newly formed Lithgow Valley Colliery after the New South Wales Government Railway successfully completed the Great Zig-Zag portion of the railway, finally getting the railway line down in to Lithgow. The arrival of the railway had seen coal mining in the Lithgow Valley increase dramatically as it was now possible to get the coal away to sell. The name was changed to the Lithgow Valley Colliery Company in 1877. (Newspaper drawing right.)

Large and small chimney stacks constantly spewed smoke indicative of the hive of activity that went on, especially in the pottery works and factories on the site. It was serviced by a railway line which allowed for efficient despatch throughout the colony of New South Wales and beyond. In the scheme of things Lithgow's pottery works was relatively efficient eventually offering a good range of practical household wares.

Terracotta products were manufactured from 1876 along with bricks, the latter keenly sought after with local miners and other settlers needing to construct houses and buildings. With the arrival of James Silcock, a skilled potter from England, the works moved to the manufacture of domestic pottery wares with "Lithgow Pottery" becoming a product sought after by the colony's housewives. To promote their new products the company mounted a 'considerable display' at the 1879 International Exhibition in Sydney. An 1879 Sydney International Exhibition medallion is seen at the bottom of this page.

The new glaze known as "Bristol salt-glaze" was introduced during 1881 with another new line undergoing trials however it was not perfected the same year. In time new ranges such as Majolica, Rockingham and the smart Caneware made their appearance to the public. An office at 92 Pitt Street in Sydney was established and the telephone connected.

The Lithgow Valley Colliery Company, Ltd, Lithgow Pottery and Brickworks as it was then known issued catalogues at various intervals which listed the products with prices. The freight prices from Lithgow Railway station was included in each catalogue allowing customers to ascertain how much freight they would be paying on their order. Packaging in wooden crates was also chargeable with no allowance for crate returns.
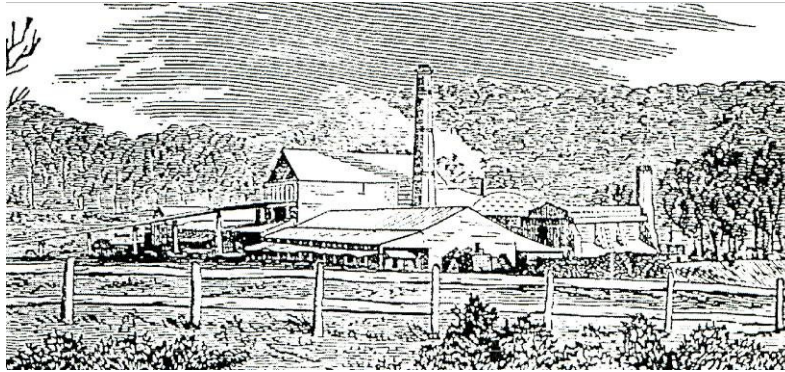
Orders were to be placed in writing with the Lithgow Pottery and Brickworks which took no responsibility for carriage breakages or loss in transit.

Their clay works produced a fine workable clay to produce the variety of products. The pottery works used a kangaroo trademark (seen on next page) which was impressed into their products. Each product type and design was given a product number to try to diminish the problems with mistakes when customers ordered products. With the number there could be several sizes within each product number. For example in the 1895 catalogue the high globe pattern teapot was No 1 with seven sizes available; a butter pot was No 28 and available in sizes 1lb, 2lb, 3lb, 4lb, 6lb, 8lb, 10lb and 12lb; a pottery hanging flower pot was No 57 either with or without a copper hanging chain; a slipper bedpan was No 64 and jelly moulds in 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 inch, were design No 69.
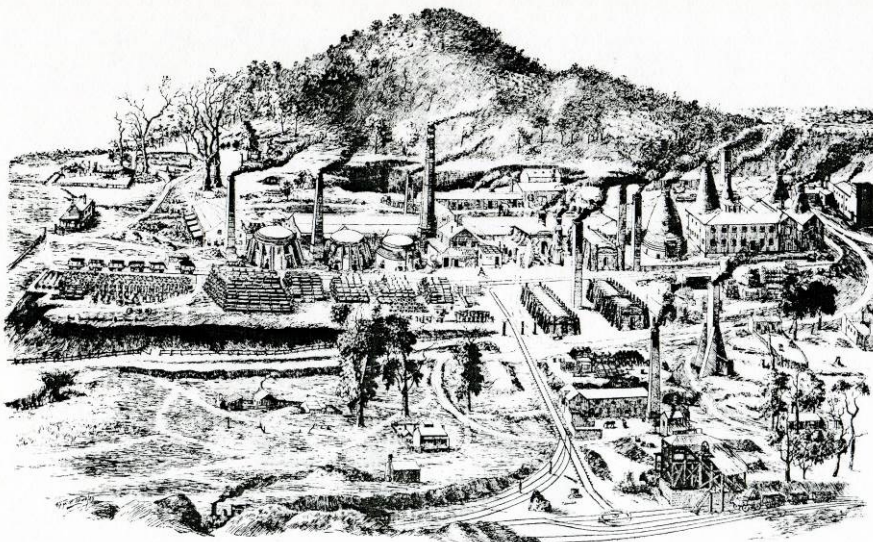
One has to marvel at the numerous

types of products manufactured and fired on the site. Other products included – bung jars, Rockingham teapots, Majolica Ware teapots, patty pans, miniature vases, globe covered jars, funnels, squat covered jars, Toby jugs, butter pots with lids, safe stands, bread trays, cream pans, milk pans, spirit barrels, water filters, tobacco barrels, butter churns, pudding bowls, spirit flasks, baking dishes, cheese covers, butter coolers, foot warmers, Dutch pots, lipped mixing bowls, spittoons, water monkeys, wicker bottles (large salt glazed bottles with cane plaited around them for protection), foot baths, straight covered jars, mugs, round mixing bowls, bird fountains (below), jam pots, milk or water pitchers, fern pans, saucers, bed pans, pipkins, flower pots, jelly shapes, shaving pots or mugs, screw topped bottles, demijohns and even brewing jars.

The brickworks produced a number of bricks from 'common' bricks selling for £1-15-0 per 1,000, this number weighing around 3½ tons so customers could work out the freight. Another type of brick was the 'white' bricks, double pressed, and sold for £5 per 1,000. The company also made various shaped bricks which were all hand pressed. Salt glazed agricultural drain pipes, chequered paving bricks, gutter tiles, chimney pots with and without wind guards, moulded decorative garden tiles, closet traps and syphon type pipes and several types of pipes, elbows, bends and junctions were manufactured.

Left – several impressed 'kangaroo' trademarks, both looking left and right, were used at the pottery works over the years. See the later symbol below on the shoulder of the earthenware pot.

They also made 41 standard sizes of firebrick with other sizes made to order. Customers could order bags of fire clay at £3 per ton, with seven bags comprising a ton. Sixpence was also charged for the bag. Bagged lime was also sold by the factory.

With more products being imported from other colonies as well as overseas, sales slumped and much of the workforce was put off. By 1896 it had basically become a ghost-works. The "Lithgow" and "Hermitage" coal mines were still in use and fortunately producing well.

In 1905 the works re-commenced but had closed again within two years after Edward Brownfield opened the works again. He was part of the Staffordshire family but things didn't go to plan.

After World War Two the decision was made to concentrate on the mining of coal and the pipes and brick divisions were put up for sale. Around the same time it was decided to sell up what still survived of the company's pottery establishment.

THE LITHGOW VALLEY COLLIERY AND POTTERIES.

ACCOMODATION FOR
LITHGOW GEMBOREE 2017

Don't leave your accommodation requirements too late, whether you plan to stay at the Tony Luchetti showground or stay locally in Lithgow. Do it now! If you are staying off-site accommodation will be at a premium so if you need accommodation or other local tourist information you can contact the great staff at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre, 1137 Great Western Hwy, Lithgow. NSW 2790 or telephone 1300760276 or email tourism@lithgow.com or www.tourism.lithgow.com
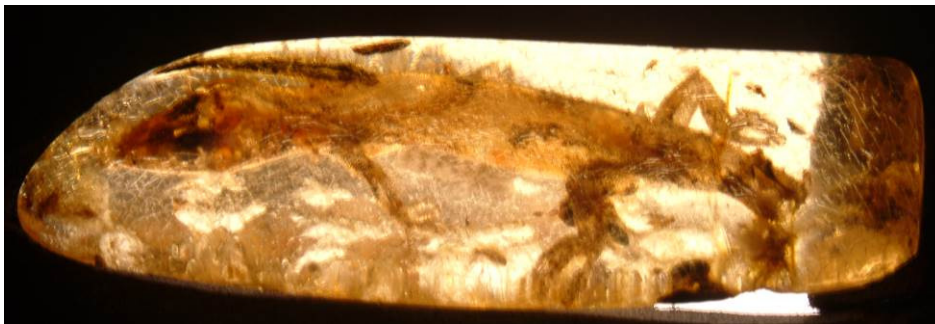

Buy a GEMBOREE 2017 Badge

to remember your trip to Lithgow

at Easter 2017 only $6 each.

AMBER CAN CONTAIN PAST LIFE!

From cockroaches, flies, spiders, centipedes, beetles, gnats, wasps, mayflies, ants and even lizards, they have all have been trapped by the sticky resin from ancient trees, some up to 400 million years ago. They date even before the rise of the dinosaurs and their final demise. Amber is fossilised tree sap which can trap insects as it hardens allowing the unfortunate insect to be

perfectly preserved over time. As insects evolved it was the Carboniferous Period some 353 to 298 million years ago when the first winged insects began to make their appearance and we see things like grasshoppers and mayflies along with some spiders and the cockroach. Then during the Permian Period from 298 to 251 million years ago came the flies, beetles and other insects. Later there were the wasps, moths, earwigs, fleas, dragonflies and stick insects.

The image below contains a lizard in amber and is part of the Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum collection here in Bathurst, though it is very unusual to find a vertebrate in amber. Insect fossils are rare and lizards even rarer. Often the amber has small bubbles in it and these are usually bubbles of gas created by the microscopic bacteria initially stuck in the sap.

Amber is a golden orangey/yellow colour with the most commonly known type being Baltic Amber. It can also come in other colours, in fact quite a wide range - from an off white to dark red and sometimes comes in very dark brown to black from other locations in the world. Amber has been located and collected in massive amounts from along the shoreline of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea is found in Northern Europe and bordered by Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, north-eastern Germany and eastern Denmark so that amber can be found or washed up after storms in numerous places. Once very expensive, like diamonds, as it was controlled by a cartel, it has now become much cheaper.

It seems that amber was creating interest thousands of years back when it was collected for ornamentation by early man. In England amber that would have floated there probably from the Baltic. It has been located in archaeological digs that have been traced back to around 11,000BC. It became an early trade item being traded along many of the sea routes to places such as Africa and China and around the Mediterranean. Even the Aztecs used amber to make bodily ornaments as well as incense to burn at their ceremonies. The Egyptians and the Greeks used it, the latter using ground amber as a medicine, calling it "electron". It was once popular in some Middle East for prayer necklaces as it is a light material. In later times the Germans became well known for their amber carving by their skilled lapidaries.

As amber was so light some thought it had magical powers. Like some other precious and semi-precious stones there were those who believed it could ward off spirits and other evil. Others, like the Romans and Greeks, thought it had medicinal powers so it was ground up and consumed with various liquids.

Amber varnish was one side-line from the mining of amber in the Baltic region. Lithuania was one country that became well known as a supplier of good quality

varnish especially good for use on sailing ship decks. The Italians and other countries demanded their varnish for their prized violins and other string instruments.

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FROM COAL MINER TO PRIME MINISTER

Joseph Cook's parliamentary life began when he was just 31. In May 1891 he was elected President of the Lithgow branch of the Labor Electoral League and was subsequently endorsed as its parliamentary candidate. He was successful, becoming the Labor Member for Hartley, near Lithgow, and went on to be elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly from 1891 until 1901.

Joseph was part of the new Commonwealth Parliament after Federation that took place in 1901. He had for a long time been in favour of 'Free Trade'. Obviously a man who was determined, Joseph, despite being just 5 ft. 9 ins (175 cm) tall and weighing 12 stone (76 kg), secured a place as a minister in George Reid's Free Trade Government just three years after in 1904.

Above - Medallion for May 1901 Opening of Federal Parliament Melbourne - from Joseph Cook's estate.

Some newspapers were critical of him and his style however for some twenty years he represented the Federal seat of Parramatta keeping up a tight schedule attending numerous functions. His long time in politics gave him some experience and in 1909 he received the portfolio as the nation's Defence Minister at a time when the British Government was undertaking a defence analysis. Lord Kitchener arrived in Australia as part of a world-wide trip to inspect what defence capabilities and manpower could be available if a war broke out.

Lithgow wasn't sitting idly by and a local committee planned for the reception of Lord Kitchener's party

While still in his railway carriage Kitchener would be introduced to about twenty citizen representatives of local industries' unions and institutions. It had been suggested that the Minister for Defense would be the best person to perform this duty on account of his local knowledge and his connection with Lord Kitchener. Four motors (cars) were promised for the party, which the Mayor was advised would number twelve. The idea was to put three visitors and one resident in each motor. Mr. Cook was to distribute the visitors and the residents to be the Mayor, Mr. Hoskins, Major Brucey, and Mr. J. Ryan. For the pressmen horse-drawn waggonettes were to be provided.

It was arranged that the motors should drive to the blast furnace, where everything would be in readiness for the motor party to be sent in the lift to the top of the furnace. From this elevated position a splendid bird's eye view of Lithgow is obtainable. The party was then to be driven along Inch and Main streets to the Small Arms Factory. The motors, if desired, drive over the site right up to the targets, but two points had been selected as affording all the required facilities for inspection - the site of the proposed buildings and the northern end of the rifle range.

As soon as the inspection was completed the motors would leave for Bowenfels Railway Station. The timetable provided for the arrival of the train at Eskbank Station at 2.32 pm, introductions, inspection of blast furnace and view there from arrival and inspection of the Small Arms Factory site with the embarkation of the party at Bowenfels Station at 3.25 pm. Police, it was arranged, would be in attendance at all points, to prevent crowding. Mr. H.F. Thompson, Hon. Secretary, drafted the programme in detail, so as to leave no room for any hitches.

As it happened the special train arrived at Eskbank in Lithgow a couple of minutes before time. There was a very large crowd congregated on the railway bridge and in the vicinity, while numbers of representative citizens had assembled on the platform to meet the party which was made up of Lord Kitchener (whose staff included Colonel Kirkpatrick, Captains Hore, Ruthven and Fitzgerald, the Minister for Defence Hon. Joseph Cook) Mr. F.S. Carr, M.P. Mr. J. Miller; M.L.A., General Hoad, and Captain Sands, A.D.O. The Mayor (Ald. Ireland) journeyed with the party from Bottom Points, and on the arrival of the train at Eskbank introduced the citizens to Lord Kitchener.

Then after the introductions and at the call of the Mayor, further cheers were given for Lord Kitchener and the Minister for Defence. No time was lost in setting out for the blast furnace, where the lift was boarded and the party taken to the top of the furnace, from which vantage point the visitors were shown the sights of Lithgow by the Mayor, Mr. Hoskins, and Mr. Henderson, blast furnace manager. Then the descent was made and the visitors, were taken in the motors to the site of the Small Arms Factory. There was a considerable crowd in Main Street to see Lord Kitchener and party as they went by.

People also drove or walked out to the factory site. The plans of the proposed building were examined by the Field-Marshal, who did not leave the car and to whom everything was explained by Col. Owen. Afterwards the party left for Bowenfels station, where the train for Bathurst was drawn up in readiness. A number of Lithgow residents went to Bathurst in the train.

At Bathurst Lord Kitchener received several addresses including one from Dr. Machattie on behalf of the Bathurst branch of the Empire League. Kitchener also reviewed the cadets and Boer War and Sudan War Veterans, presented the Empire Cup for rifle shooting and Lille trophies and unveiled the South African Soldiers'' memorial (below).

After the public ceremonies at Bathurst the Hon. Joseph Cook dined with Lord Kitchener at 'Hawthorn', the residence of the Hon F. Jago Smith, and other guests including Major General Hoad, Colonel

Kirkpatrick, Colonel Owen, Captain H. Ruthvan, Captain Fitzgerald, Captain Sands, Major and Mrs. Machattie, Mr. E.S. Carr, M.H.R., and Mr. John Miller, M.L.A.

Centre is Dame Mary Cook and Sir Joseph Cook, in England c. post 1917. Photo courtesy 'Lithgow City Council- Library'.

After some persuasion in 1901 Joseph Cook contested the Seat of Parramatta, a new Federal seat, as he felt that his previous constituents in Lithgow and much of Hartley relied on him and they were now in the 'Parramatta electorate'.

Cook had served in the House of Representatives from 9th May, 1901, to 21st November, 1921, which included being Leader of the Opposition in 1914 to 1916. During his time in Parliament he changed parties which included - New South Wales Labor Party, Free Trade Party, Liberal Party and finally the Nationalist Party.

On 24th June, 1913, Joseph Cook became the sixth Prime Minister of Australia, with a Liberal Party majority of just one seat in the House of Representatives. He remained Prime Minister until September 1914, not long after he had told the British of Australia's support in World War One, He was honoured with Privy Councillor in 1914 and in 1918 he received the Knights Grand Cross (GCMG) of the Order of St Michael and St George which entitled him to the prefix "Sir".

In 1917, he led the Liberal Party in a merger to form the Nationalist Party and served as Navy Minister and as Treasurer in William Morris Hughes' government. Hughes went on to become Australia's longest serving Prime Minister until 1957 when Robert Menzies took the honour.

By 1917 Joseph Cook was 57, having been born on 7th December, 1860, in Silverdale, Staffordshire in England. It seems the loss of his father and his determination to look after his mother and siblings put him in good stead to get a good understanding of life.

After his marriage on 8th August, 1885, in Wolstanton

in England to Mary Turner, who was a school teacher who had been born in Chesterton, Staffordshire, the couple wasted little time starting a family of nine children, the last arriving in 1906.

On leaving politics, Cook served as Australia's third High Commissioner in London from 1921 to 1927 and Royal Commissioner 1928 to March 1929.

He died on 30th July, 1947, at Bellevue Hill in Sydney.

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A LITHGOWITE ABROAD - SOME INTERESTING IMPRESSIONS

The following article in The Lithgow Mercury of 28th June, 1909, gives an interesting insight into observations of the time though some are not politically correct these days. Everitt observed some interesting comparisons and changes of the times. It is reproduced as reported over a century ago.

In his diary of his recent trip to the Old Country, Mr. Arthur Everitt, jeweller of Lithgow, (above) set out that on the way to Adelaide he was very-sick, and thought of leaving the ship and returning home. Amongst the passengers was an old Lithgow resident, Mr. O'Reilly, who was unfortunate in leaving his belt containing £35, in the lavatory, and he did not see it again. After leaving the Australian coast, Mr. Everitt was instrumental in arranging sports and concerts, and they gave the youngsters and ladies on board a good time.

Of the niggers at Durban, South Africa, Mr. Everitt writes that they are mere slaves under the white men, as children are under school masters. They are roughly treated, and if not so dealt with they are said to be no good for anything. The Zulus are described as splendid men, as far as physique is concerned, but they wear a headgear that makes them look very queer. In their hair is a lot of long, coloured grass, and they have two large horns sticking out on each side of the head. The Hindoos keep very dirty shops, and are a lot of "sharks," and Mr. Everitt is of opinion that they will be a curse to Africa. The black fellows do all the work, and the whites look on and boss them.

Las Palmas, the chief town of the Canary Islands, Mr. Everitt says is a place with beggars at every street corner. The natives ply their boats in hundreds, to sell their wares, and are thorough "take-downs" in their mode of business. On his first Sunday in London, Mr. Everitt went into Hyde Park, and heard all the "blatherskites" and the military band, and saw all the fashion of London. "Top hats are as common in London as beers are in Lithgow on a Saturday night." The Franco-British Exhibition, Mr. Everitt considered to be a sight alone worth the trip to see. Even though then not finished, it was magnificent, and surpassed everything he ever saw. The traffic and the lights in London streets at night formed another sight, which he will never forget.

On going to Coventry, his native place, Mr. Everitt hired a sulky, and had a good run round to all the land marks of his youth. After a most enjoyable time at Coventry and a visit to Birmingham, and Dudley Castle, the home of our Governor-General, Mr. Everitt returned to London. During his inspection of the sights of that city, he found that policemen were by far the best to seek direction from as to where to go and how to get there. He next visited Bristol, and found that municipal rates amount to 8s 6d in the £. Around Observatory Hill, at Bristol, he saw scenery similar to our Blue Mountains, with a railway on each side of the river in the valley.

Mr. Everitt next went through France, to Switzerland, and saw nearly two hundred miles with plenty of cultivation, corn, barley and other produce being grown, though he did not go much on the country. Mr. Everitt writes in the highest terms of praise of the scenery of Switzerland, especially around Lake Lucerne and on the mountains. The people he found to be most light-hearted, either singing or making other fun.

From Switzerland Mr. Everitt went to Paris. There he notes that if a person wants a beer it is not necessary to enter a pub., for drink may be obtained on the footpath. But despite this facility for obtaining, drink, Mr. Everitt never saw a drunken man or woman on the Continent. Paris is "alive with motors," and they travel at a fast speed. About the middle of July, Mr.

Everitt returned to London, and paid a short visit to Kent. He again visited Hyde Park, and heard the "windbags letting off steam."'

On his last day in England he visited Woolwich arsenal, and was surprised to see the number of men working there. But at the same time many machines were idle, and hundreds of men had been discharged. He saw how the big guns were made, also the large and small ammunition. Wages are at least 100 per cent lower than in Australia. The head roller gets £2 5s per week, and his assistants 30s to 35s; fitters 37s 6d, labourers 23s, skilled labourers 26s, puddlers 28s, steel furnace men 30s. Mr. Everitt also obtained particulars of other wages, and found that ironworks puddlers in full work get £2 10s, and labourers £1 4s, assistants earn about £1 5s, and a good clerk £1 10s, brick makers £1 5s, coal getters £2 6s, slate and quarrymen £1 4s. Rates are about 8s. in the £ all over England.

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LIFE WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT TIN!

Did you know that Napoleon Bonaparte in 1795 actually offered a reward to anyone who could come up with a method to preserve food for military use? As it happened the 'product' was there it was just that no-one had worked it out, yet. Left – 1793 French siege coin from the Siege of Mayence (Mainz), which involved 21,000 French soldiers.

Just fifteen years later in 1810, Nicolas Appert, a French cook, won the accolade by coming up with a method of sealing food in a glass container by using boiling water – basically he had invented 'canning'. For his efforts he received 12,000 francs.

Some twelve months later a British merchant, Peter Durand, successfully applied for a patent for a method of canning food using a tinplated steel can. The tin over the steel resisted the corrosion that would have spoilt the contents.

Within a year all sorts of things were going into cans as factories experimented with such products as fish, meats, jams, fruits and other foodstuffs. Then some years later around 1818 exports began, firstly to America. By 1825 an American manufacturing business, Thomas Kensett & Company patented their 'tin can'. Now there was a need for more tin to plate the cans and tin

is relatively rare.

Tin was originally known by the Greeks as plumbum candidum (or white lead in Latin). Tin was first recognised for its curiously low melting point of 231.85 degrees Celsius. The English named it tin with this soft white metal becoming a part of everyday life.

Its chemical symbol is Sn (an abbreviation in Latin for stannum). Primarily derived from cassiterite, tin was processed with limestone, silica and salts to achieve a desired end product. Initially it is thought that over 5,200 years ago humans found cassiterite in beach or river sands, picking out the grains by hand thus beginning tin's role in man's history.

The use of tin combined with copper to make an alloy marked the start of the Bronze Age as man realised he could use the bronze to make bronze weapons and various tools, both of which could be traded for other goods. In the Near East the Bronze Age commenced around 3300 B.C. with the Phoenicians trading both tin and artefacts around their Mediterranean trade routes. These merchants would have traded the tin and items from places such as Brittany and Cornwall as well as from Spain.

Archaeologists in the Near East have dug up tin jewellery and objects located in 18th Dynasty Egyptian tombs that date from around 1570 – 1350 B.C.

In Tasmania the discovery of tin in 1871 at Mount Bischoff brought hordes of prospectors and track cutters to western Tasmania where it changed the mining landscape. Western Tasmania became the focus of explorers, prospectors and others initiating a prospecting boom lasting some three decades or more. Tin was found near Mount Cameron in 1874 and in 1876 more deposits turned up in a location known as the Heemskirk Tinfield. More discoveries followed.

Above – tin mining in Tasmania.

The metal was created by smelting the ore (cassiterite) in either a blast furnace or a reverberatory furnace fired by anthracite coal or coke. In the process workers attempted to remove any antimony, zinc, silver copper, lead, iron or bismuth, depending on where the mine was. Later it was refined more.

Tin has been predominantly mixed with other metals to create alloys such as pewter (tin and lead), bell casting metal (tin, copper and lead), as well as including the traditional bronze (tin and copper). Sometimes special combinations are made such as mixing tin and niobium together to make wire that is superconductive.

Window glass is made with the assistance of tin which is firstly melted before molten glass is poured over it producing glass of uniform thickness with a very clear surface.
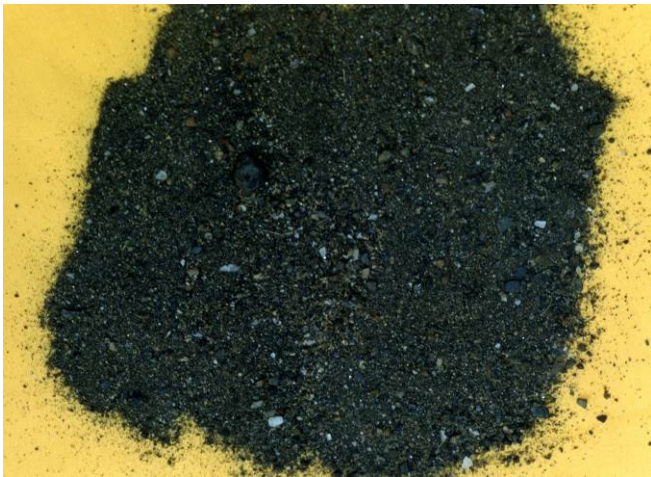
Above - Tin mined in Tasmania in the 1890s.

Tin is predominantly mined in Australia, Peru, Congo, Malaya, Bolivia, Indonesia, Russia, Brazil, Portugal, Thailand, Zaire, Nigeria and China.

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PLACES & ATTRACTIONS TO VISIT

Remember there is plenty to see in and around Lithgow. Blast Furnace Park (below) is a monument to Lithgow's industrial history. This is the location where the first iron and the first steel in Australia was cast. The blast furnace was established by William Sandford in 1886 and it continued production until 1928 when the entire industry was moved to Port Kembla.

The site has now been developed as a park around the remains of the pump house and the foundations of the furnace. It is well worth a visit whilst here for the GEMBOREE 2017.

DID YOU KNOW!

that Sir Joseph Cook's surname originally had an 'e' on the end of his surname. He was born Joseph Cooke (1860-1947), the son of William Cooke, a Staffordshire coalminer, and his mother was Margaret, nee Fletcher. When Joseph was thirteen his father lost his life in a coal mining accident forcing him to become the family's breadwinner. Shortly after he dropped the 'e' from his name. Joseph later became our nation's sixth Prime Minister.

that the Lithgow Municipal Council, who owned and operated the Corporate Gasworks, decided in November 1900 to allow some customers to trial a penny-in-the-slot gas meter.

that various gem and lapidary clubs from around New South Wales are assisting in organising and co-ordinating the various aspects of the GEMBOREE 2017 which will draw a large crowd of lapidaries and hobbyists, as well as the general public to Lithgow.