

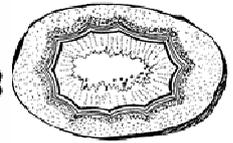
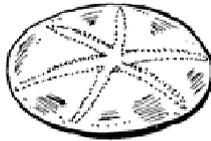
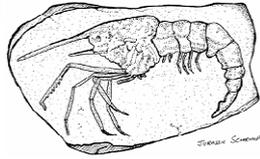
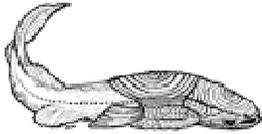


GEMBOREE 2017

INFORMATION E-NEWSLETTER

April 2017 – Edition 13

Tony Luchetti Showground, Lithgow – Easter – 14th – 17th April, 2017



FROM THE E-NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Welcome to our FINAL e-newsletter before the GEMBOREE 2017 in a couple of weeks at Easter. Many people have put in a great deal of work and time into this forthcoming gem and lapidary event to be held in Lithgow, so it will be an outstanding success.

Already we know that people have left home on their way to the GEMBOREE 2017, the 53rd National Gem & Mineral Show, being held from Friday 14th to Monday 17th April, 2017, at Tony Luchetti Showground in Lithgow, New South Wales.

Once again I would like to thank the dedicated staff at the Local History Library at the Lithgow Library Learning Centre of the Lithgow City Council, for their continuing support with photos and answering questions about Lithgow and district.



The number of GEMBOREE 2017 Raffle Prizes seem to be increasing weekly with some of the major raffle prizes appearing here. Tickets will be on sale at the GEMBOREE 2017 in Lithgow over Easter this year.

1st Prize is a Russian Topaz which was donated by Arthur Roffey and set

in Sterling Silver by Ainslie Flynn from Western Suburbs Lapidary Club.



2nd Prize is a Chrysoprase Bracelet which was subsidised by Preyas Jewellery.

3rd Prize is a voucher for a night's accommodation and dinner to the value of

\$200 at the Alexandra Hotel, 62 Great Western Hwy, Leura, NSW 2780 Phone: (02) 4782 4422. This hotel

was built in 1903 and fully refurbished in 2014. It has stunning views over the Leura Gap and other magnificent mountain views.

4th Prize is an appealing Adamite specimen which has been subsidised by Crystal Habit. Adamite crystals are often surrounded in brown Limonite matrix as seen on the specimen. This specimen has copper present in the Adamite, thus giving it the brilliant green colour.



5th Prize is an Enamelled Bowl made and donated by Annette Clarke from Central Coast Lapidary Club. There will be lots more prizes to win as well.



I notice from their newsletter that the Northern District Lapidary Club are running a club bus to Lithgow for the Saturday of the GEMBOREE 2017. Now that's a good idea to see everything without the hassles of driving and extra expense.

Some twenty commercial dealers will be set up inside and a much larger number of tailgaters and hobbyists, possibly 60 or more, outside selling lapidary equipment, books, a surprising variety of mineral specimens from Australia and all over the world, crystals, fossils, rocks, meteorites, beads and lapidary books, jewellery, quality gem rough supplies, rough and cut precious and semi-precious gemstones, opals, beads, carvings, metaphysical and healing crystals, craft, gifts, and lots more are all on sale at the show. It is certainly a great day out for the whole family.

There will also be gemmologists, faceting experts, lapidists, and other experts in the hobby attending as the GEMBOREE 2017 is staged by the Gem & Lapidary Council of N.S.W. Inc. under the auspices of

Long Alley. During construction Lawson wrote in his diary that they found a three-foot seam of 'coal' and reported it to the Governor. The find proved to be kerosene shale. The site was mined from the 1860's where contractors with their horse and carts would carry it to the railway to be sent to Sydney to be refined.

Once the New South Wales Government Railway reached Bowenfels the shale company constructed a narrow-gauge rail line from there into the valley. It was later closed.

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THE ESKBANK STATION CONTROVERSY

The postcard (below) shows Eskbank Station in Lithgow. Numbered 1103, it was made in Saxony for Mr. G. Giovanardi of Sydney, ca 1909. It seems that the building attracted the attention of locals who would express their thoughts to the newspapers of the day.



One article under the headline "RAILWAY STATION FARCES" went on: - "Possibly there are many railway station farces in Australia, but we venture to think the primest farce is that which is to be found in the town of Lithgow. Here we have two stations only removed a few hundred yards from one another, one named Lithgow and the other Eskbank. The Commissioners seem to perpetuate them judging by every day happenings for their own amusement and the mystification and inconvenience of the travelling public, added to the temporary dislocation of many of the business firms of Lithgow. To say nothing of the loss of time and money to a great many inhabitants of this thriving centre."

"It is at least some consolation to know that the Commissioners themselves are beginning to realise that the time is approaching when alterations should be made. At the last meeting of the Lithgow Town Council a letter was read from the Commissioners wherein it was stated that extensive alterations were proposed to be effected to the railway stations here.

We understand this to mean that one large central station is to be substituted for the two at present in use. That is satisfactory, as far as it goes. But in the lengthy interval that must necessarily elapse between now and completion of the works proposed cannot something be done to remedy these inconveniences and disabilities which beset Lithgow residents in particular, and the travelling public generally?"

"Why the principal station here is called Eskbank when the town is known as Lithgow is a mystery to all but the Commissioners themselves. As a matter of common sense the names should be transposed. But who ever knew of a Government Department, least of all a Railway Department, with the same amount of common sense that an ordinary private business man exercises? It would be hardly human to expect it! Most of the principal trains stop at Eskbank station and many of them do not pull up at Lithgow. The confusion thus created, to say nothing of the disability to the public, is inconceivable."

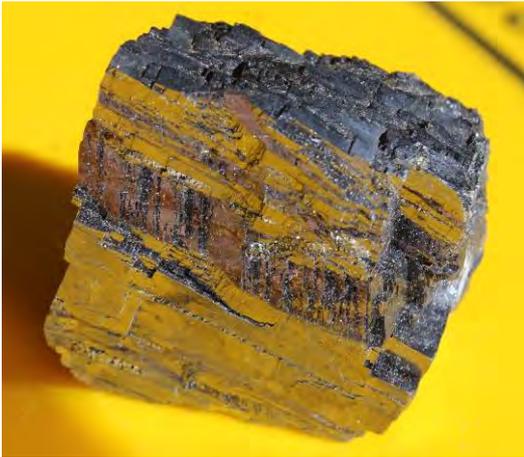
"Just one illustration as mentioned at the last meeting of the Lithgow Progress Association, parcels addressed 'Lithgow' are frequently despatched from Sydney by trains that do not stop at the station, but at Eskbank. The result is that the parcels are carried on, and the consignee does not receive them until some other train has brought them back from where they were overcarried. Can anything more farcical be imagined? We venture to think not. Why cannot way-bills for Lithgow parcels and luggage be dealt with by the Eskbank officials, even though they be addressed to Lithgow, a couple of hundred yards further on!"



"Just another illustration of this gigantic farce that could only be conceived in the minds of the Railway Commissioners. If a passenger from Sydney to this town purchases a ticket to Lithgow, he will not be permitted to travel on a train bound for Eskbank, presumably for the reason not that the train is not going to Lithgow town, but because it stops at a station several yards on the Sydney side of the Lithgow

BROKEN HILL LOCKOUT 1909

If you had picked up a newspaper late in 1908 you would have read about the Broken Hill mine workers' wages being cut across all its enterprises to below the minimum wage. This was due to the deteriorating mineral market price. The response by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company was to lock out the Broken Hill mining unionists for rejecting pay cuts. The company gates were locked. The workers then took the case to the Federal Arbitration Court. As the case wouldn't be heard till February 1909 the BHP company started hiring what the unionists called 'scabs', many of these living within the mine for their safety.



Galena (above) was just one of the ores from the Broken Hill Proprietary mine and eventually produced lead. The mine workers set up their tent camps which were manned by pickets outside the mine. As the Union leaders increased pressure the miners engaged in a number of bloody riots which involved thousands of protesters, some of the men waiving socialist flags. The men clashed with the police causing many injuries to both sides.



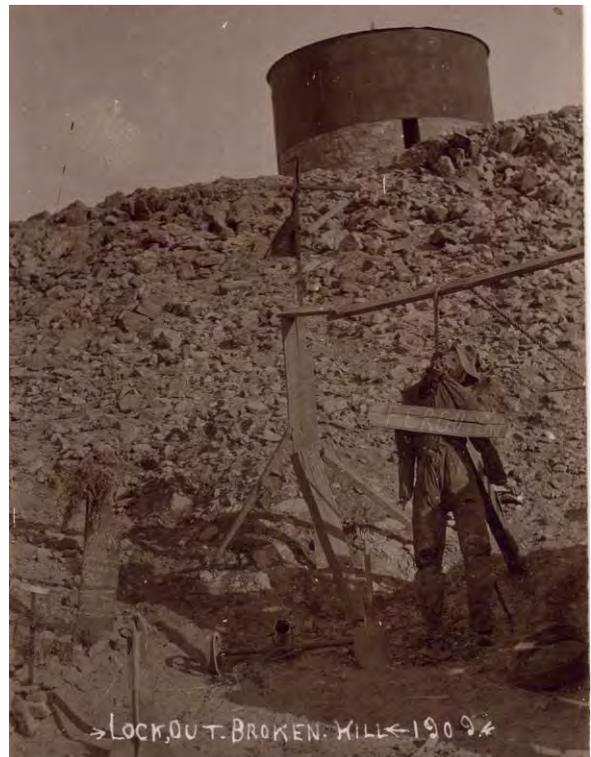
The miners set up numerous symbolic protests such as the one above. Just declared a city in 1907, Broken

Hill was about to be tested.

The miners and other unionists would make up songs which they would sing in the protest marches with the struggle reaching its peak in January 1909, but not before many more men joined the local Union. As it happened Justice Henry B. Higgins in the Arbitration Court was very sympathetic to the working class. He declared that BHP increase the workers' pay to above the minimum wage. The company wanted to cut the wages from 8s 7½p to 7s 6p per day. BHP then decided they would close the mine so they didn't have to pay their miners and workmen. It became known as 'The Great Lockout'.

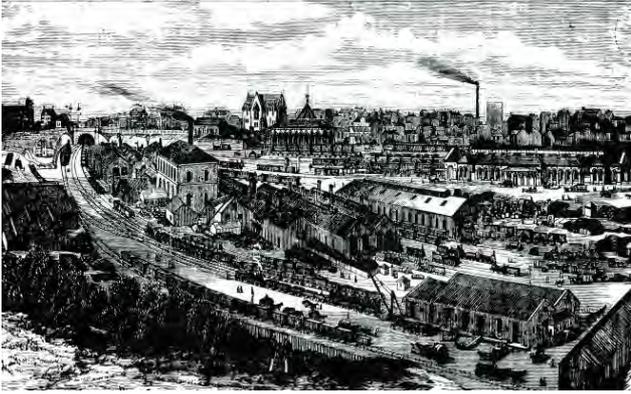
A miner's band would play ceremoniously as the pickets outside were changed three times a day. Many unionists volunteered to be pickets. No money coming in to households would bring great hardship and poverty to the workers and miners and their families. Over 100 extra police were despatched to Broken Hill to boost some 200 already there. They were issued with revolvers and carbides. Miner's wives and other womenfolk joined the ranks of protesters, which estimates put at around 10,000 in some cases.

The mayhem went on for five months but it wasn't to be the last as there would be another in 1915 and then the "Great Strike" of 1919. The latter one lasted some 18 months, though it would later gain the miners a 35-hour week as well as enhanced health and safety conditions.

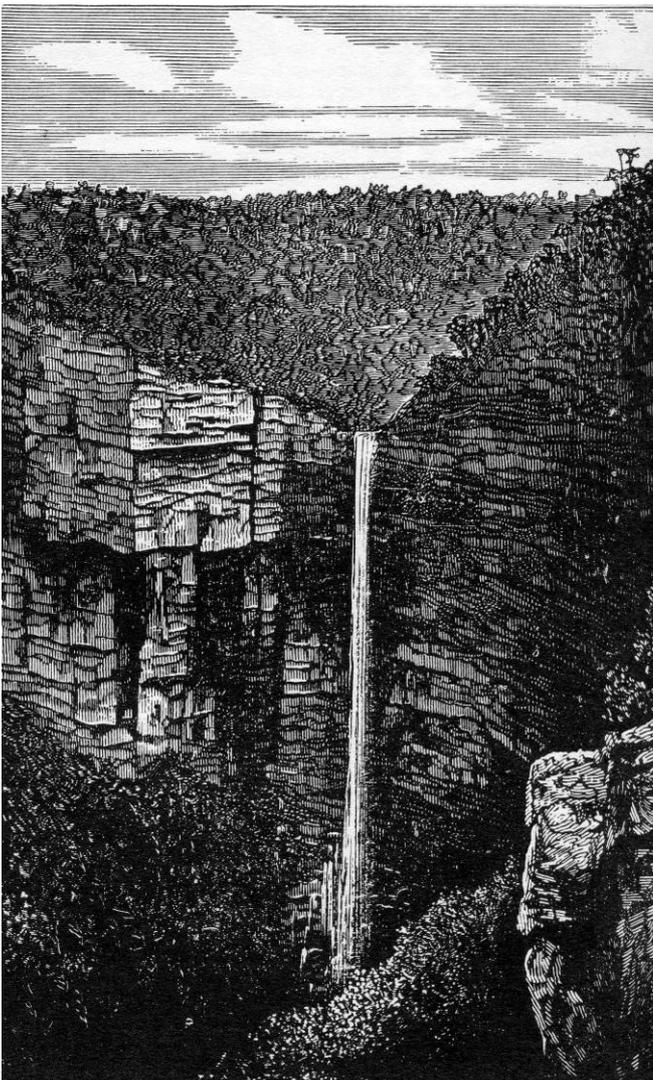


Another postcard (above), just one of many, which were produced during the tumultuous time and struggles in Broken Hill's mining history. Local women established a Relief Committee in order to help those grappling to feed and clothe their families.

A VISIT TO LITHGOW



A tourist in 1882 travelled by train to Lithgow after leaving Redfern Station (above). He kept a diary which is of interest noting some of the scenery and landmarks along the route. He considered many of the hotels had moderate charges and the Blue Mountains provided many magnificent views within less than a mile from many hotels. There were sufficient views to afford pleasure for a month. Many hotels could often provide a horse and buggy and accompanying guide.

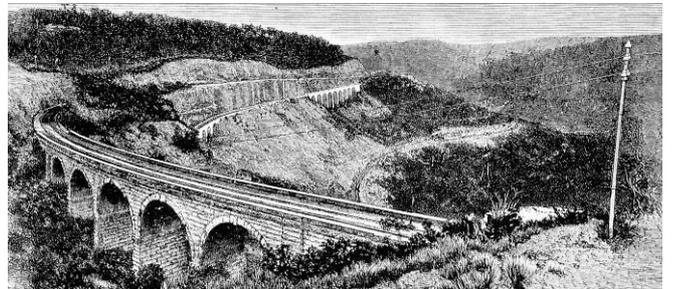


Govett's Leap (above) was worth a visit and was best approached from Blackheath Station where one could go to a hotel nearby. The path was easy to find where

the sublimity of the scene suddenly bursts forth holding him spell-bound.



Mitchell's Gap, Mount Victoria (above). Next day he travelled to Mount Victoria and leaving there eleven miles behind he was at Clarence Siding, the highest spot on his journey, 3,658 feet above sea level and a short distance further he was at the Clarence Tunnel, 539 yards long. After a smart two miles more he was commencing the descent of the great Zigzag. This part of the line is of similar character to the one by which the train had climbed the mountain, but of greater magnitude. The Zigzag is considered a marvel of engineering skill, the gradient nearly all the way being 1 in 42 and the line being in parts on the very brink of a precipice. This five miles of railroad cost the country over £100,000 per mile.



Arriving at the base of the mountains he was in the fast-rising town of Lithgow and all among the mines. There were four coal mines in the township – the Lithgow Valley Company, Bowenfels Company, Eskbank Company and Vale of Clwydd Company; two copper mines, the Vale of Clwydd and the Eskbank Company; an iron smelting company and foundry; a terra-cotta works; a steam sawmill; three brick factories; four hotels – the Royal, the Commercial, the Club House and the Miner's Rest. There are three churches, three schools and a population of 1800 souls. He commented that "It is needless to say, with all the mineral wealth this vale possesses, it is probably destined to become an important city.

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TANZANITE

The zoisite variety Tanzanite is from the western slopes of the Merelani Hills in the Arusha Region of Tanzania and are keenly sought after. Despite intensive

SUNNY CORNER SILVER MINE

The Sunny Corner Silver Mine was located between Lithgow and Bathurst in the central west of New South Wales. The photo below was taken by me in the mid 1980s. Information on Sunny Corner's mining area is inadequately recorded as it was a minor field and as the Mines Department hadn't been formed no systematic reporting was in place.



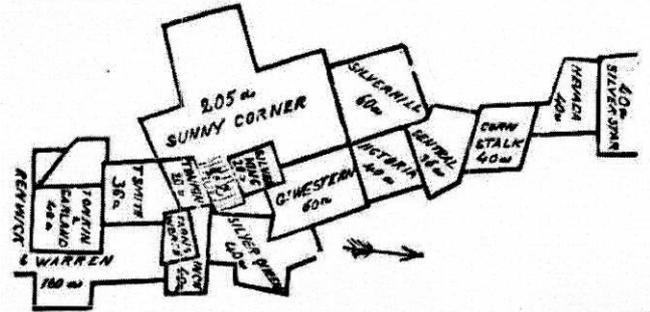
The Bathurst Free Press in July 1852 reported that Mr. Moffitt had found a quartz reef containing gold at Mitchells Creek located in the headwaters of the Turon River. Prospectors were soon working the alluvial field which returned payable gold for the next two years. By 1856 miners had located auriferous quartz in the area. In 1881 an assay exposed a rich concentration of silver and test tunnels commenced. This silver, gold, zinc and antimony were extracted from 1875 to 1922.

By 1886 the town grew up on Crown Land adjacent to the mining leases with the village of Sunny Corner being formally gazetted on 2nd October, 1885. The following year the population was estimated between 1600 and 3000, down from the 4,600 earlier. The Sunny Corner Silver Mines lay about 15 miles north of the township of Rydal, on the western lines, with which there was communication by coach.

The Sunny Corner Mine, worked two proprietors, named Winter and Morgan, was held originally as a gold lease, netting them no less than £20,000. Then the existence of large deposits of silver ore became gradually known. With the mines came the population, and the old name of the settlement was changed to Mitchell.

But hard times came, with shares in the Sunny Corner

mine, their £7 10s shares falling some 70%. The Nevada Silver Mine fared still worse coming down from 37s 6d to eighteen pence, whilst other mines just stopped work. The newly laid out village became Sunny Corner.



A plan of the argentiferous areas are drawn out above. The arrow points north.



Businesses waxed and waned as the population changed but the Royal (above), the Criterion, and Star Hotels carried on. The Carrington billiard room, the Sunny Corner Boot Palace, Sunny Corner Coffee Palace and the Tattersall Sadler's Store opened. Some businesses diversified such as the watchmaker who carried on photography. One of the billiard saloons had a species side show bearing the device "oyster saloon" in the window in which sweetmeats were exhibited and an auctioneer had for sale a block of land, a spring cart and two well-bred dogs. At one trade emporium there was an offer to mend boots and shoes, to sell ginger beer and cool drinks, tobacco, cigars, and fancy goods. There was a combined skittle, bowling, rifle and oyster saloon. Each day saw the arrival and departure of the five daily coaches. They also had a School of Arts.

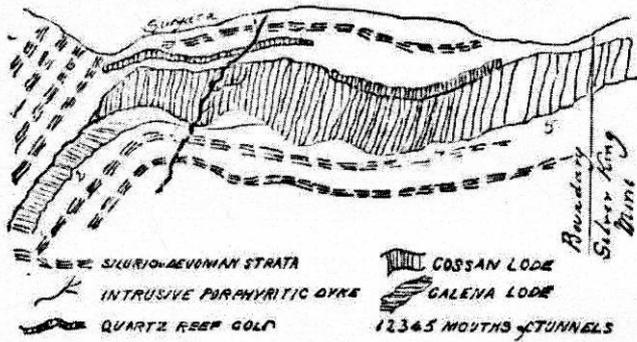


As for mining there were two main strata of silver-bearing ore, the upper consisting of gooson or peroxide of iron, and the lower of galena or sulphide of lead (left). Areas worked often had a payable percentage of gold, yielding from 10oz to 60oz of silver

to the ton. These results helped keep companies afloat.

The Sunny Corner Silver Mine was by far the most important mine of the group and comprised an area of not less than 205 acres. It issued 64,000 shares and commenced active operations on the 27th of August,

1884, the lode proved to be of enormous size that was unexpected.



The sketch (above) of a cross-section looking north conveys an idea of the geological formation of the Sunny Corner Silver Mine. Mr. Nicholas was the initial mine manager with Mr. H. Hampton as the Captain. Mr. Janitzky became the assayer, with the smelting department placed in charge of Mr. J. Gafford.

The mine was developed and worked by means of five tunnels and rises being put up to work the intermediate ground. The tunnels were numbered from one to five. The No 1 tunnel was about 6 feet in breadth by 8 feet in height, timbered with 9 inch legs and somewhat stouter caps.

The men working the No 1 tunnel mouths paid under contract 30 shillings per foot. At times the air was so bad that the candles would scarcely burn. The No 2 level was driven for a distance of 400 feet. The No 3 tunnel was initially driven a distance of about 550 feet. When digging the No 4 tunnel the old timbers of the gold workings could be seen. It was driven a total distance of 680 feet to the south. In this tunnel timbers 9 and 12 inches in thickness had to be used. In one section was 10,000 tons of silver-bearing matrix which yielded from 40 to 60 ounces per ton. There were also old gold workings above the No 5 tunnel.

Miners here often could hear a gentle grating, crackling sound overhead, which warned them that the ground was still slowly settling down. Several track ways were put in to transport the ore bins. The surrounding county had all been timbered to keep the walls up.

From the tunnels the 'dirt' was trucked out to the seven smelters, which had been erected at a distance of 600 to 700 yards away, thereby involving a loss of time in trucking, and consequently a loss of money. Smelters were made in San Francisco and reached temperatures of 1350° C. Furnaces were loaded with 230lb of (gosson) ore, 45lb of quartz, 15lb of limestone, 60lb of litharge, 40lb of coke, 3 bricks made of flue-dust and a shovelful of slag. Each charge was wheeled from the scales to the tops of the furnaces and shovelled in. Hard work! The whole neighbourhood reeked with that peculiar garlic-like odour which proclaimed the presence of arsenical fumes. The bars

of silver were sent to England, and a very fair percentage of gold was won from them, sufficient to increase the value of the silver by about one shilling per ounce.

The flume for carrying away the noxious fumes generated in the furnaces progressed up the hill. It ran horizontally for a distance of about 400 feet towards the hill, after which it rose to the summit where it was capped by two smoke stacks. Men had to continually clean out the flume where they were breathing air contaminated with lead and arsenic. Large sores broke out on their bodies. They become incapacitated for work until they found a purer atmosphere. A number of hot and cold baths were erected by the manager who said, "if the men take advantage of them they will no doubt escape as much of the evil as is caused by outward contamination." Inhaling of the noxious fumes did most damage, bringing an early death.



(Above) An early letter to Michells Creek. The celebrated Sunny Corner mine was the largest silver producer in NSW at one time. From 1881 the silver ore had grades high enough to be carted by a horse or bullock team to Rydal, then by train to Sydney and shipped direct to London.

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AUSTRALIA'S DINOSAUR ERA



Most Australians would be unaware of the enormous number of dinosaur fossils being found around our nation, especially in Queensland and Victoria. Dinosaurs dominated the earth for more than 160 million years and due in many cases to the vastness of Australia such fossils are just being located in the last fifty years or so, though many are not complete skeletons.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions are free, however you are asked to drop a coin donation into the bucket at the front of the bus in support of the Children's Breakfast program in the Blue Mountains area.



Good Friday: A half day bus trip to Newnes Junction and the glow-worm tunnel (above) as mentioned in earlier e-newsletters. Newnes Junction was a railway station on the Main Western Line.



Easter Saturday: full day bus trip to Hill End with a tour of the walk-in mine. Experience a unique opportunity to step into an original 1870s mine shaft and experience the subterranean world of a colonial goldminer. See the tools and witness the tough world as an underground miner in those days. Remember to take your water, camera and good closed in shoes.

Hill End, once known as Bald Hills, saw gold first found in 1851 not long after payable gold was encountered at Ophir. Before long there were several hundred prospectors, two local stores and a hotel. The Government surveyor arrived to measure out the village before it was gazetted in 1860, erroneously calling it 'Forbes'. The mistake was corrected in 1862 when it was retitled 'Hill End'.

Hawkins Hill was soon yielding surface gold from 1855 however it was not until the early 1870s that rich gold deposits were found. Miners had put down deep tunnels, some more than 800 feet deep.

The Star of Hope Gold Mining Company in October 1872 found a massive specimen of reef gold the largest in the world at that time. It quickly became known as Holtermann's Nugget', though Holtermann didn't own the mine at the time.



By Christmas it was estimated that Hill End had a population of some 8,000. With almost two miles of shops, the township was well catered for and by which time five banks had opened their doors. Miners were thirsty men and it boasted twenty seven pubs and its own brewery.



Easter Sunday: full day bus trip to Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens, a 28-hectare public botanic cool-climate garden located in the Blue Mountains. See the famous dinosaur tree, the 'other' name for the Wollemi pine, once thought extinct. The tree was discovered in 1994, deep in a gorge in the Wollemi National Park. The traditional Aboriginal owners, the Darug people, also travelled through to Lithgow as well. Entry is free, and if time permits on to Mount Wilson Cathedral of ferns.



DID YOU KNOW!

Edwin Barton, engineer in charge of the Zig Zag railway project married the daughter of early Lithgow settler James Walker. She had been christened Georgina Lyon Wolgan Walker.

that ammonites were carried around in the medicine bags of the Navajo and Indians of the North American Plains to ensure good health as well as bountiful hunting expeditions. These ammonites were referred to as 'buffalo stones' as they thought they resembled the North American bison.

that the early Egyptians used increased concentrations of manganese to produce amethyst (purple) coloured glass, in fact manganese is one of the oldest glass additives.

that the New South Wales Government was so impressed with the Zig Zag Railway project at Lithgow they decided to gazette the site as a Reserve in 1881.

that in March 1900 at the Lithgow Council meeting applications were opened in committee for the position of sanitary inspector and collector, and lamplighter. For the former position there were 12 applicants, and Mr. R. Vought was appointed. For the latter 10 applications were received with Mr. James Vought being selected. James was expected to provide his own horse and would ride it around Lithgow to light the gas lamps of an evening. In the early hours he would ride around and turn them out. If the night was windy he was expected to check the street lamps regularly.

that the 1823 Bells Line of Road, so named after Archibald Bell who was the first white man to cross these mountains with the help of local aboriginals. It was not fully functional until after World War Two.

Mr. Jas. Charlesworth announced in mid-December 1900 that he had completed arrangements with the Leading Winegrowers of the Colony for regular supplies of 'PURE GRAPE WINES of Every Description'. It had so-called special qualities recommended for invalids and weakly people. They were certified by the Medical Profession to be 'Pure and Unadulterated'. These nutritious and strengthening wines could be obtainable in any quantity from the modest glass, upwards from Charlesworth's Cooked Meats and Wine Shop, Main-Street, Lithgow.

it was reckoned in March 1900 that there were about 600 houses under the new sanitary pan system in Lithgow, and the number was likely to be increased.

that carved quartz stones were popular in Greece and Rome. Some feature the upper half of the body of a man with a hand upraised, pronouncing judgment, sometimes just the head and shoulders of the man are shown, but always with the hand raised. These pieces are said to have been especially good to have around at

the time, during a lawsuit. In the 14th century, it was common for quartz crystal to be engraved with the image of a man in armour holding a bow and arrow. The stone supposedly guarded the wearer and the place where it was situated.

on Saturday 1st December, 1883, a ceremony to declare the Great Western Zigzag Company colliery open and to raise the first skip of coal was performed. A number of invitations had been issued and much interest was felt in Lithgow on the occasion. Some 400 people dined on beer, bread and roast beef whilst the Lithgow Imperial Band played a number of selections excellently well during the day.

that during the mid-1800s a three-foot "coal" seam was uncovered at Hartley Vale, which was later proven to be shale. Mining commenced with the ore being carried across the mountains by horse and cart to Sydney and by train once the railway went through. The now ghost town was named Hartley Vale and the Comet Inn is the only remaining hotel. The Inn was named after the brand of Kerosene produced from the valley's shale.

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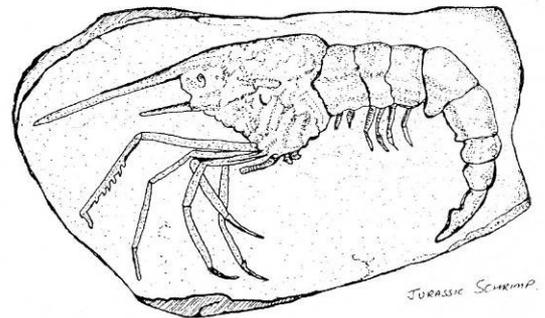
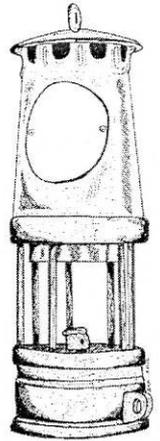
Phone 02 63315404

amcrae@lisp.com.au

GEMBOREE 2017

incorporating the
**53rd NATIONAL GEM &
 MINERAL SHOW**

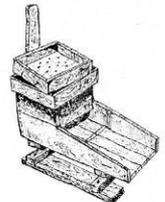
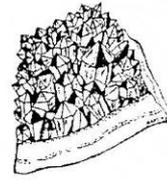
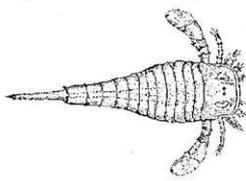
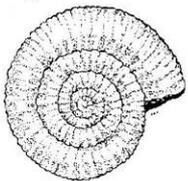
*at the Tony Luchetti Showground in Lithgow,
 New South Wales*



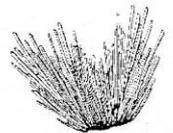
Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday

14th – 17th April, 2017 (over the Easter Long Weekend)

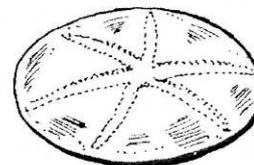
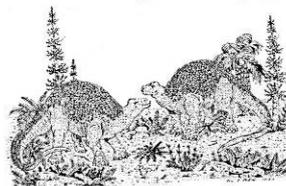
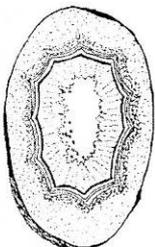
Open 10am – 5pm Friday, 9am – 5pm Saturday & Sunday, 9am – 1pm Monday



***20 Dealers buying and selling
 plus large numbers of tailgaters***



Open to the general public every day – see Age of Fishes display, 100's of displays of all types of lapidary, crystals, minerals, gemstones, fossils, metalcraft, enamelling, scrimshaw, gem trees, jewellery, carvings, tumbled stones, cameos, gold nuggets, metaphysical crystals, faceted gems, jewellery supplies, polished rocks, lapidary equipment and supplies and many interesting and unusual and pleasing gift lines. Food available.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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