

GEMBOREE 2017

INFORMATION E-NEWSLETTER

December 2016 – Edition 9

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



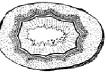












FROM THE E-NEWSLETTER EDITOR



As this is our Christmas e-newsletter I would like to take the opportunity to wish one and all a very happy, enjoyable and relaxing Christmas and my best wishes for the New Year and 2017. Welcome again to our enewsletter for December and especially to the influx of collectors who have just requested this newsletter.



Colin Wright, our GEMBOREE 2017 Co-Ordinator, would also like to extend to every one of you a very Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year. This is a joyous season to take a step back from our busy lives and enjoy time with our loved ones. Best wishes to you and yours.

Colin is looking forward to meeting you next Easter in Lithgow, with just four months to go till the GEMBOREE 2017 takes place.

Remember that you need to think about your accommodation and if you are staying off-site. Accommodation will be at a premium now as we get closer. You also need to get your registrations in along with any tailgating applications, etc., A.S.A.P.

There is plenty to do and see around Lithgow, including horse riding (seen below) negotiating the Cox's River.



If you need details and contacts for the various local attractions or any accommodation needs in and around Lithgow you need to contact the illustrious staff at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre, 1137 Great Western Hwy, Lithgow. NSW 2790 or telephone 1300760276 or email <u>tourism@lithgow.com</u> or www.tourism.lithgow.com



It will be great to meet you people in person and I hope you all make the effort in a few months' time to visit Lithgow in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales and its scenic environment.

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

The specimen (below) shows a hexagonal molybdenum crystal which has a silvery-looking finish and breaks into flakes if not handled carefully, so it is considered quite soft. This metal mineral occurs in many places around the world, but in many cases in just small quantities that make it uneconomical to treat with large scale treatment plants.



It is to be found in a few localities around Australia. In particular in the New England area in northern New South Wales where I used to live before coming to Bathurst. It's found in places such as Kingsgate, Bolivia and Deepwater. It is also located at Everton (close to Beechworth in Victoria) and in Queensland in Chillagoe mineral fields some 200km west of Cairns. Molybdenite has also been mined around the Moonta and Yelta areas in South Australia and in the Northern Territory at Yenberrie.

Originally considered not very important, the mineral

was given a reprieve when it was discovered that it gave tensile strength to steel, increased hardness and added to elasticity so the price rose making it more valuable to mine. It has however, caused many problems in an effort to process it for sale as there is often differing methods needed which is determined by the grade of the molybdenite. It was also found that it was easier to process, the higher grade ore, which also took far less time. They soon learnt that poorer quality ore had to be processed in smaller batches, hence commercial companies now only work the richer deposits.

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



Many a collector will have a piece of molybdenite from Kingsgate (above) which at its peak saw the mines fully worked from 1905 until after World War One and into the very early 1920s. It was expected to attract mining and miners again during World War Two but that did not eventuate. There were still plenty of specimens to be picked up in the 1960's when I was last there, along with some quite large quartz crystals. Evidence of sizeable crystals could be seen around with most obviously smashed during earlier mining operations to extract the molybdenite.

The field contains copious amounts of quartz pipes, believed to be around seventy, which were mined for both bismuth and molybdenum at Kingsgate giving it the honour of the biggest molybdenum producer in New South Wales.

Other countries mine deposits of this mineral and these are primarily Canada, Norway and England.

"ESKBANK" & THOMAS BROWN



The name 'Eskbank' is a common word in Lithgow. It is a symbol of industrial industry of the town and later the city. Eskbank Estate, for some ninety years, sustained the industrialists and their workforce who transformed Lithgow from being a serene valley into a hive of

industry with coal mines, iron and copper foundries and steel mills.



It began with Thomas (above) and Mary Brown after the couple married in June 1838 in Dumfries, Scotland. Thomas Brown had been born in 1811 at Craighead, near Inverness, in the north of Scotland. Mary was born in 1804 in Dumfries which was a coal-mining region adjacent to the English border. Not long after, they set sail for Sydney

arriving in December 1838, and heading for Bathurst, where Mary's brothers lived.

The couple settled at Bowenfells (later spelt Bowenfels) where they rented Andrew Brown's Cooerwull for a period of two years. Obviously seeing potential in the area they were able to purchase one of the first blocks of land to be offered in the Lithgow Valley in 1840. His 200 acres, adjoining Cooerwull, had coal on it which he would later mine.

'Eskbank House' was built in 1842 by a local Scottish stonemason Alexander Binning, also a Presbyterian. He used the local sandstone that he quarried at Bowenfels and Farmers' Creek before having it transported by bullock dray to the house site. From Inverness, Binning had been brought out by ship by Presbyterian Minister Reverend John Dunmore Lang to assist in the building of a college for him. Binning at one time, in 1835, was the Inspector of Bridges for the New South Wales Road Department at Bathurst.

Thomas almost immediately purchased another 630 acres. His land now extended from Farmer's Creek up into Oakey Park and then across the floor of the Lithgow Valley over to Mort Street.

Mary's sister Wilhelmina Maxwell also lived at 'Eskbank House' which features a hipped roof, a

verandah all around, finely dressed sandstone blocks, bay windows, graceful chimneys. If you visit the old home next year it's quickly pointed out that the house has a symmetrical internal structure. Stables and a cottage for the workmen were also added. The name came about after the river Esk in Scotland.



Thomas and Mary had a circular driveway out the front and a formal garden and trees set out. Once climbing roses adorned the verandahs. A hexagon pavilion was also built at the side and a vegetable garden was quickly established along with a selection of fruit trees.

By 1847 Thomas had been appointed as a Commissioner of Crown Lands and in 1849 Charles Augustus Fitzroy, Captain General and Governor in Chief of New South Wales, Victoria and Van Diemen's Land engaged Thomas as a Bench Magistrate. By 1855 he had become a Police Magistrate at Hartley Courthouse.

Having no interest in pastoralism Thomas proceeded with more industrial pursuits and created the Eskbank Colliery. He was quite aware that it was in an isolated area so along with other fellow Scotsmen and Presbyterians lobbied the New South Wales Government to bring about a rail line through the Lithgow Valley. The Great



Western Railway extension would also make other projects possible.

Thomas must have been very pleased when he learnt that the Government had begun to investigate possible routes for the Great Western Railway in 1858. The Government Surveyor was Edwin Barton and he favoured a zig zag configuration over the Blue Mountains and into Lithgow. Thomas was aware that coal would be needed so the year before the railway arrived he had a test coal tunnel cut in at nearby Farmers Creek with pleasing results. He opened his Eskbank Colliery in time for steam engines to arrive in Lithgow in 1869. The Colliery over the following three decades was the Western Coalfields most valuable mine.

He paid for a personal rail siding behind Eskbank House, calling it Brown's Siding. In 1882 Eskbank Station was constructed, becoming the main station for Lithgow till after World War One.

Thomas Brown became the Member for Hartley from 1872 until he was expelled in 1876 after it was found he had manipulated documents hiding his interest in the Eskbank Colliery's tenders to supply coal to the New South Wales Government Railways. The Commission of Inquiry found he had purposely engineered the tenders for the profitable contracts. This conflict of interest had brought his parliamentary career to an end.

Over the years Thomas had built Eskbank Railway Station, Eskbank School (Lithgow Public School) and St Mary's Presbyterian Church, the latter to honour his wife. The land for the School of Arts was also given by Thomas. He also set aside some land which was subdivided to construct housing for his workers which would have been an unusual thing in those days.

Mary Brown died childless in 1878 and Thomas Brown left Lithgow the following year though it seems he visited occasionally. Eskbank Estate was sold to James Rutherford, of Cobb and Co fame, in 1881 with 'Eskbank House' renamed 'The Grange'. As the Rutherfords didn't need the house and had no interest in living in it, it was rented out. On brown's death in 1889 several newspapers wrote about his life.

Lithgow District Historical Society opened Eskbank House as a house museum in 1966 with the gardens later restored by the Lithgow City Council. It is well worth a visit when you come to the GEMBOREE 2017, the 53rd National Gem & Mineral Show which is being held at the Tony Luchetti Showground in Lithgow in New South Wales from Friday 14th to Monday 17th April, 2017.

TABULAR RUBIES FROM INDIA

The three six sided hexagon-shaped purplish-reddish coloured natural tabular ruby crystals (pictured right) where dug from underground ruby bearing deposits in India. The ruby was named from the Latin word 'ruber' or 'rubeus' after its colour red. Despite being known for thousands of years it was only around 1800 that they were associated with corundum, as was the blue sapphire. Known generally for their rich carmine red colour some specimen's colour can vary from a yellowish red, orangey red to pink or purplish colours. The red colouration comes from minute trace amounts of chromium.

Within the deposits where these rubies are found the colour varies as can be seen within these varying specimens. These variations can show up in spots as well as stripes as seen above. With their greasy and dull-like appearance in natural light, parts of these specimens give off a rich ruby red fluorescence under other light sources. Gem quality rubies are rare, even today, though being of high density it is often found in river stones and sands in gravelly river areas where we collectors and prospectors can simply pick them out by hand.

The ruby has the hardness second only to the diamond, thus on the Mohs' scale it has a hardness of 9. When working with rubies one needs to be careful as they are quite brittle having no cleavage. Ruby crystals can be found in prismatic tabular, bipyramidal rhombohedral shapes along with granular or massive habits.



Considered once the stone of nobility the ruby, the very clear types that is, by some cultures who believed that the ruby was more prized than the diamond. Rubies are often found with other gemstone material such as topaz, zircons, garnets, tourmaline, moonstone, spinel and beryl.

Rough rubies and other stone treasures have been found in the graves of Norsemen, these adornments being considered as a prized possession, along with their swords and other weapons. In the ancient Indian Sanskrit language can be found where it is claimed that the ruby is the most precious of all the gemstones. The blistering and enchanting ruby was admired in many civilizations, some of who wore them as a talisman to protect them and bring fortune.

In ancient times wearing a piece of ruby could forewarn the wearer of looming danger. In some early cultures they believed that rubies could even boil water!

The Romans and Greeks saw some medicinal value in them as they were a possible antidote against poisonous snakes' venom. They also used rubies as a stone for the aristocracy, including their wives. There were some in Greek society who believed that if one had a cube carved with their seal it would melt the sealing wax if placed on the wax. The Egyptians also admired the traded ruby for its beauty and was often given for love believing that it gave the owner or wearer protection as well as awarding great wealth and affluence

Kublai Khan, the Chinese Emperor, once proposed to exchange an entire city for a substantial ruby. It has been said that in ancient Imperial China, bureaucrats wore badges to show rank. The top ranking bureaucrats wore red stones which included ruby and red or pink tourmaline. It was also considered one of their spiritual stones signifying the soul's beauty.

During the Middle Ages people wore rubies as an amulet to ward off the plague and evil spirits. Others believed that they protected one from being poisoned and kept the bearer healthy.



Then there were the various medicinal properties that over time some believed in. Medicinally, powdered ruby was mixed with water and used to treat eye disabilities. I can assure you it would have been

very painful. Others thought that ground-up rubies taken internally would 'restore the body'.

One can find several references in the bible to rubies, though they called it 'carbuncle' in those days. A ruby was selected by God as one of the Twelve Stones of the Breastplate mentioned in the New Testament. Various gemstones are also mentioned in Exodus, Ezekiel and Isaiah. Talking of religious associations numerous blood-red rubies have been used to set into the golden rings of cardinals and bishops. The British Royals have over time used rubies to ornament various coronation rings as well as crowns.

Whilst the origins of wedding anniversary gifts goes back to the Holy Roman Empire we today use the ruby as a gift for one's 15th or 40th Anniversary present, the Romans just gave a silver wreath for the 25th anniversary and a gold wreath on their 50th Anniversary. The wreath was placed on their wives' head.

Rubies are commonly mined in such countries as Thailand, Kenya, Malawi, Brazil, America, Tanzania, Vietnam, Cambodia, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Myanmar (Burma) as well as in Queensland and here in New South Wales.

At one time there were 'Siberian rubies' on the market but they turned out to be tourmaline. These days with the technology available there are plenty of gemstone ruby fakes about! Many synthetic rubies are made in commercial quantities to be used in decorations for cheap jewellery and watches. One would assume that all stones on the market today have had some kind of heat treatment as it has been the practice for decades.

GOVERNMENT SMALL ARMS FACTORY MUSEUM - LITHGOW

I have taken a number of groups to visit the Small Arms Factory Museum in Lithgow and the most common comment is that people just did not realise the variety of items this factory produced, and you probably won't either.

Originally almost all of our nation's defence needs were supplied by the United Kingdom. It became really apparent during the Boer War campaign in South Africa that obtaining material from so far away was impractical and was too slow leading to acute supply problems should any future wars occur.

After Federation, the Commonwealth undertook a stocktake of our defence capabilities of both personnel, arms, supplies and material assets. Obviously Joseph Cook, a former Lithgow coal miner and the Federal Minister of Defence, would have had an input into where a possible Small Arms Factory could be located.

Prior to 1900 practically all defence equipment had been supplied to Australia by the United Kingdom. Finally the Commonwealth Government in 1908 announced their plans to construct the Small Arms Factory in Lithgow. Obviously it had been pointed out that Lithgow was ideally located to steel and coal supplies, rail transport and electricity. As well, the township was some 90 miles from the coast.

A number of companies were invited to tender to supply a Lee-Enfield rifle manufacturing plant capable of supplying 250 rifles each week. Australian Government officials approached companies in Europe, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Controversially the Pratt & Whitney Corporation of America was awarded the contract to supply the comprehensive plant, machine-tools, jigs, fixtures and gauges and the first Lithgow manager. Six men were sent to America to their works to train as foremen. The semi-skilled workforce would be recruited locally. In December 1909 Mr F.R. Ratcliffe of Pratt and Whitney arrived to help with the planning of the factory.

Building commenced in 1909, then on 10th January, 1910, the site of the factory was inspected by Lord Kitchener on his way to Bathurst to open the Boer War Memorial there.

The National Advocate in Bathurst reported the official opening proceedings on Saturday 8th June, 1912. They associated Lithgow as the "Birmingham of Australia" – Governor General opens Lithgow Small Arms Factory. It went on "Yesterday was a proud day for Lithgow but the town is so used to stirring events that it took it quietly. Possibly the damp, wintry weather contributed to this. It was also a memorable day for Australia, for the first Small Arms Factory in the Commonwealth - a collection of buildings where hundreds of machines are now busy cutting rifle stocks, straightening barrels, perfecting aperture sights,

manufacturing sword bayonets and generally turning out lethal weapons was yesterday morning opened by the Governor-General, Lord Denman. The birth of the idea was, seventeen years ago, in the brain of Mr. J. Ryan, one of Lithgow's best known townsmen. Its maturity was yesterday. On Friday night a horde of military officers, politicians and pressmen swooped down upon the town in anticipation of the event, but the morning broke rainy and raw, the mountains being hidden by the rain, and the enthusiasm of the inhabitants merely extended to a cadet guard of honour, the showing of some flags, and a small gathering at the station to see the Governor-General arrive.

His Excellency, who was accompanied by Captain Nutting, A.D.C, and Senator Pearce, Minister for Defence, was welcomed by the Mayor (Alderman Pillans), and the aldermen of Lithgow. Lord Denman motored to the factory and, without much ceremony, handled a lever, switched on the current, and declared the factory opened. At noon His Excellency inspected the factory which can turn out 50 magazine rifles and bayonets a day. He addressed the employees, expressing the hope that Lithgow would become the Birmingham of Australia. He trusted that any economic disturbance in their industrial life would be settled by conciliation and voluntary agreement.

Mr. Joseph Cook said that the idea of a Small Arms Factory originated with Mr. Ryan, of Lithgow. Messrs. Pratt and Whitney, an American firm, for whom Messrs. Noyes Bros, Ltd., Sydney, are the Australian agents, supplied all the rifle-making machinery for the factory. The electric generators, switchboard and electric motors were manufactured by the British Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, Limited; of Manchester and were supplied by Noyes Bros., as sub-contractors to the Government Dockyard."



With Mr. A. C. Wright as the first manager of the new factory it began manufacturing in 1912 - 13. The new factory (above) embraced the most modern precision engineering practices that became the benchmark for all engineering establishments throughout Australia.

With World War One declared the military authorities had local militia and cadets supply the security to guard the Small Arms Factory in Lithgow. The men and boys camped in bell-type tents, a week at a time with one day off, many travelling home to Bathurst and Kelso on the steam train for their rest day. Four members (below) were from Bathurst with Arthur Saunders of Kelso, 3rd from the left.



More equipment arrived in May 1916, with the first consignment of the rifle-making machinery ordered from the Platt and Whitney Company by the Federal Government. The machinery had been long overdue owing the difficulty in securing freight space, whilst doubtless the fact that the American factory was working to full capacity on other orders has had something to do with the delay. Work was progressing steadily and satisfactorily at the factory, and the production of rifles is increasing."



(Above) the Bathurst contingent camped near the Small Arms Factory in Lithgow.

After the declaration of World War One it saw escalating demands on the factory with production doubling and then later re-doubling. The production of Lee-Enfield .303 rifles increased during this time from 15,000 per year to 80,000 per year. By the end of the Second World War the Small Arms Factory had made 640,000 .303 rifles.

With World War One over production slowed so the factory diversified to make other items such as streamlined wires, metal aircraft engine parts and the Vickers

Machine gun. By 1931, in the great Depression, half of the factory's output production was linked to sound projection and sheep shearing machinery. As the Second World War loomed they made golf clubs and handcuffs as well as rifles and machine guns at the factory. With war declared again the factory made rifles and Bren Machine Gun.

A large forge and die sinking shop was constructed, reputedly the largest in the southern hemisphere and new laboratories, boiler rooms and heat equipment were also introduced. The workforce at this time rose to 12,000 with the inclusion of increased shift work. This included 6,000 people in Lithgow as well as an additional 6,000 in feeder factories established at Orange, Bathurst, Young, Forbes, Wellington, Cowra, Dubbo, Parkes, Portland and Mudgee to assist the Lithgow operations.

The Small Arms Factory was one of the major employers in Lithgow for some time and as a result of the rising work force during World War II a suburb known as Littleton was established with 'Duration Cottages' to house both workers and their families. An additional railway station at Cooerwull was also established to facilitate commuter travel from the Blue Mountains' towns.

After the war, tools, pencil sharpeners, sporting rifles and telephone parts were produced. Operations at the Small Arms Factory have been significantly scaled down due to increasing government cutbacks.

The Small Arms Factory Museum was officially opened in 1996 to celebrate the history of the factory as well as the people that worked there over its many years of operation. The Museum now has the largest firearms collection on public display in the southern hemisphere and is considered by many experts to be amongst the finest and most comprehensive in the world. It is located at 69 Methven St, Lithgow, in the old administration building.

Some information thanks to the Small Arms Factory Museum Inc.

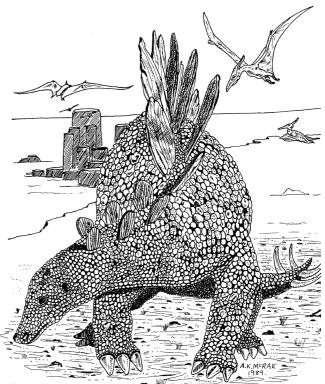
STEGOSAURUS

It seems that some dinosaurs are more interesting to children than others and this dinosaur is one of those. The Stegosaurus had a large body and quite a small head, hence it has not been called 'too smart' amongst dinosaurs. It is one dinosaur of two groups that developed armour. Its body was covered with masses of small bony plates. It was a land dweller and was a slow and sluggish beast that wandered through swampy areas looking for food.

They are from the late Jurassic period where a full adult would grow to around 20 to 25 feet long and about 12 feet high. They were solid, maybe 8 to 10 tons, so that one wouldn't fit in your one ton ute.

Despite all its massive armour plates along the ridge of its back and down its tail, as well as a savagely armoured tail, its design left its side areas very open to attack. The tail worked like a club with its sharp appendages which could number from two to eight.

Palaeontologists now feel that the back plates may not even have been used for attack or defence necessarily but for body temperature adjustments by allowing blood to be pumped through them to permit it to heat up more quickly or, by the same system, cool the beast down. The head was small with no forehead, just a flat area. Its mouth housed a large number of little teeth with some fossil specimens being found with up to 100 teeth in place.



Its short forelegs had three toes, as can be seen in the drawing (above), it allowed the head to be closer to the ground for grazing. It would not have been able to go too deep into the water in search of reeds and other water vegetation, though it may have preferred thicker woodland so that largest predators would be more unlikely to enter. The back legs are longer and larger and they too had three toes.

Alberta in Canada has been one country to find some fine Stegosaurus fossils, some of theirs being from the Cretaceous period. Several have been found with mended broken bones due to some misfortune, maybe a fight with an Allosaurus.

The Pteranodons flying and sitting in the background had a wingspan of over 20 feet. They are thought to have weighed in at around 20 to 25 pounds. They had a large bony crest that could have been to counterbalance its long toothless beak. They had an extending pouch in which they carried the fish and other aquatic life that they swooped up.

STEAM LORRIE WORKHORSE

This old steam-driven lorry (below) was owned by the Bathurst & Western Transport Company and was loaded with bags of coke from Lithgow. The coke was bound for the Bathurst Municipal Council Gas Works which was located in Russell Street beside the railway underpass where the site still exhibits the old buildings and some of the massive equipment. The Bathurst & Western Transport Company also carried coke and coal to local blacksmiths as well as to householders to use in their fireplaces, heaters and black steel stoves. Other businesses and distributors were also supplied with coke to resell in smaller amounts.

witnessed around Lithgow and Bathurst and districts by our grandparents and great grandparents. The Bathurst & Western Transport Company was just one of at least five steam haulage businesses that established themselves in Bathurst. All had replaced their draught horses. Before these steam-driven lorries entered the scene the first form of steam powered freight and cargo carrier was a combination of a trailer and steam traction engine.

These steam-powered vehicles were usually used for transporting commercial freight. Whilst many were relatively slow some could get up to 60 miles per hour (almost 100 kilometres per hour) on an absolutely



The steam lorry was supplied to the Bathurst & Western Transport Company by Garratts Limited, Sole Agents in Sydney. It was brought to Bathurst from Sydney on the steam train. Garratts also provided maintenance and spare parts for this interesting form of early transport. Though this vehicle has a cab with doors around the front it must have been cold to drive in winter even with the boiler beside the driver. Unlike later versions this lorry had no windscreen. This Garratts' design has the boiler and funnel across the front.

Smoke could definitely be an issue with these steam vehicles and the Bathurst City Council received a number of letters of complaint at their meetings concerning some of the local businesses' steam trucks. One was owned by Wright Heaton and drew several complaints. Another letter describes one offending smoky lorry as a "road locomotive" with more than one complaint concerning these steam lorries upsetting people's horses and being 'too noisy'.

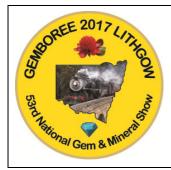
These steam-powered road vehicles would have been

good road though these would have been rare around Bathurst or elsewhere. Mostly they travelled up to 50 kilometres per hour on a fair road.

Many vehicles weighed around and upwards of five tons, unladen weight, and were fitted with solid rubber tyres. Earlier models could have either steel or wooden wheels however all gave a hard ride. Before long the wooden, steel and solid rubber wheels were discontinued and modified with pneumatic tyres.

Mocklers, a Bathurst general store, had a solid tyre lorry that they had converted over to the 'pump-up pneumatic tyred wheels'. One has to wonder whether the flat heavy solid tyres would have been beneficial when negotiating the unsealed roads and tracks around Bathurst's countryside at the time.

There were two types of these lorries, these being known as an 'undertype' and 'overtype'. The difference related to where the manufacturer positioned the engine and makers tended to concentrate on one form or the other.



Buy a GEMBOREE 2017 Badge

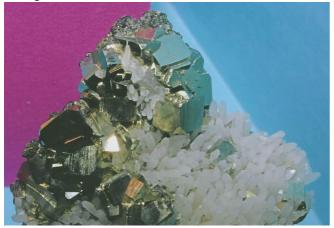
to remember your trip to Lithgow

at Easter 2017 only \$6 each.

Remember that a special badge has been produced for the GEMBOREE 2017, the 53rd National Gem & Mineral Show, which will take place next year over four days from Friday 14th to Monday 17th April, 2017, at Tony Luchetti Showground in Lithgow, New South Wales. Staged by the Gem & Lapidary Council of N.S.W. Inc. this enormous event is under the auspices of the Australian Federation of Lapidary & Allied Crafts Association Inc. Various gem and lapidary clubs from around New South Wales assist in organising and co-ordinating the various aspects of this mammoth event which will draw a large crowd of lapidaries and hobbyists, as well as the general public.

IRON PYRITE

You wouldn't be the first person to be fooled by this mineral and most collectors starting out will be attracted to the bright and shiny pyrite mineral crystals on the dealer's tables. Iron pyrite is an iron sulphide and due to its metallic lustre and yellowy brass appearance is often referred to as 'fool's gold'. To make it more confusing iron pyrites was often found with gold.



(Above) Pyrite on Quartz - Muldura, Peru

As it can be also found in coal seams the early miners often called it 'brass' or 'brazzle'. Collectors frequently prefer the crystallized specimens which occur in cubes, octahedrons and pyritohedrons or in some cases combinations of these forms. We know that iron pyrite can be a replacement mineral in fossils with some superb specimens found in Germany. They look as though their edges and highlights have been emphasised in this shiny material.

Pyrite was once used in early wheellock firearms of the 1500s and 1600s as the ignition source. A piece of pyrite was located in the cock up against a circular file to strike the sparks needed to ignite the gun and fire it.

The most common of the sulphide minerals, the name pyrite is derived from a Greek word meaning 'fire'. The Romans used the word 'pyrite' to any stones that could produce sparks. It is usually found in association with quartz veins, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks with other sulfides or oxides (below).



Pyrite has long been used to produce iron sulphate. One early method was to allow piles of pyrite to break down in the weather. The acidic runoff water was collected and boiled with iron to produce the iron sulphate. Later methods just burnt the iron pyrites. Today pyrites is used to make sulphur dioxide to use in the paper manufacturing industry.

Pyrites was once used in radio receivers and in the old crystal sets we once used as kids. It was later replaced by the vacuum tubes or valves. Lately it has been used in some solar panels.



Pyrites can be found in remarkable glittering discs (above). As the ancient Chinese viewed the earth as a golden cube they collected this mineral as they felt their vision was emulated by the cubes of pyrites. They also believed that Pyrite would guard against crocodile

attacks and they considered that pyrite crystals attracted money and good fortune. Other societies believed it was protection against infections as well as ensure good general health and used as a 'healing stone', especially the pyrite 'dollars'.

The American native Indians polished pyrites in the early times to make mirrors. In Queen Victoria's time pyrite crystals were popular set in silver.

NEW KING GEORGE V STAMP ARRIVES AT LITHGOW

After Australia's Federation in 1901 the nation was not ready to immediately produce its own postage stamps and coinage. As it was, the various colonies hadn't given much thought to the changeover either so in the meantime the stamps of each individual colony were used up. This red one penny King George V surface printed postage stamp was the first denomination to be issued in this series though the first design known as the 'Map and kangaroo" had previously been issued on 2nd January, 1913.

The stamp die for this King's head issue was cut by the English firm Perkins Bacon and Co, of London. The plates were made of steel on which two lots of 60 stamp images were cut in.



The Lithgow Mercury at the time noted: - "Mr. Wynne's new steel engraved King's head penny postage stamps (seen left) will be on sale all the States on Monday, 24th November, 1913, including Lithgow. One million stamps were printed in Melbourne by the Federal note printer,

Mr. Harrison, have been distributed amongst the States on a population basis. Mr. Wynne has instructed that no stamp dealer must sell in more than half-dozen lots so that professional philatelists will not be able to mop up the issue and sell it at fancy prices as curios."

This red penny stamp has the unique honour of being printed from the original steel 1914 stamp dies until they were stopped in 1937.

> ICE IN LITHGOW HOTELS

With Australia's hot and thirsty climate the need for cool alcoholic drinks and aerated cordials initially was given a real boost on the goldfields. Whilst ice making companies established themselves and sold blocks of ice to hotels, as well as the public to keep their food cooler, there was always a need for smaller units to allow hoteliers to make their own ice.

As with any village or towns Lithgow had their fair share of hotels and regular reports would appear in both the Lithgow Mercury as well as Sydney newspapers.

One report in May 1879 made mention of hotels:- "All these places - the coal mine, copper works, brickyard, and public school, are situated in the higher part of the township, in the Eskbank direction, and the population seems densest at this part. A handsome new hotel, the Cosmopolitan, has been put up here for the accommodation of the public. It is handsomely furnished throughout, and is well adapted for families from Sydney visiting the zigzags or any of the valley scenery beyond the mountains. Mr. Howells, the proprietor, who since my visit has met with a buggy accident, has spent a large sum in making his place comfortable, and doubtless will attract a large custom without injuring the older houses. The Royal is situated at the opposite end of the township, near the present Lithgow Railway Station. Mr. Grey enjoys a good reputation as a host and his house appears well adapted for the trade."

Every year each publican had to appear in person to apply for their 'Publicans Licence'. "In June 1888 twenty publicans from Lithgow and surrounding districts appeared before the Licensing Magistrates in Lithgow on Wednesday last to get a renewal of licences. The applications in every case were granted without any objection."



The news that John Sands in Sydney was selling "the simplest and most effective ice-making machine"

which could produce ice in the hottest weather was just too tempting for some publicans to forego. Hoteliers could look at the unit or obtain a prospectus if they made application to John Sands who were the sole agents for New South Wales and Queensland. The advertisement appeared in 1889 and two applications to obtain the icemakers came from Lithgow.



(Above) A postcard of Main Street in Lithgow showing the three-storey Grand Central Hotel on the right. Note the gas street light and the red postal letter receiver on its right. (Photo – Lithgow Library)

BOWENFELLS POST OFFICE

With the discovery of payable gold and an increase in people generally throughout the Lithgow district, a deputation was sent to the Postmaster-General which resulted in an official sub-post office being opened at Bowenfells on 1st July, 1852. The premises was at the intersection of Lockyer's Line and Mudgee Road with John McLennon appointed as the first Postmaster. Within three months the sub-post office was upgraded to a full Post Office with Mr. McLennon's pay allowance increased to £10 per annum, quite a meagre sum to live on when he was expected to be there to receive and despatch mail every day as well as opening six days a week to the public. Hopefully the person who took the local Postmaster's position had other family members who could help out as required.

On 8th December the following year Mr. McLennon resigned due to ill health and the low pay. Mr. Joseph Cooke then applied for the position on the recommendation of well-known locals Mr. Andrew Brown and Mr. Thomas Brown. Mr. Cooke's appointment was confirmed and he took over the position as Postmaster, however he relocated the Post Office to his own home at Somerset House on 1st January 1854. Joseph Cooke stayed about four and a half years, resigning on 2nd June, 1858, noting in his resignation that he considered the pay to be inadequate, especially for the responsibility.

The loss of the Postmaster meant that mail would not be delivered from other localities by the coach mail contractors. With letters the only real means of communication a good, reliable and regular mail service was essential. Dr. Rygate wrote a letter from the Bench at Hartley on 28th June, 1858, indicating that he had received three applications for the position as Postmaster, these being Mr. David Reed, Mr. William Corderoy and Mr. John McLennon. In his application, Mr. Reed of Pulpit Hill, stated he conducted a store in Binning's house (later the Donnibrook Royal Hotel) opposite George Lee's Glasgow Arms. Several weeks later Rev. Stewart of 'The Hermitage' at Bowenfells, wrote that John McLennon's was the most central location for a post office. Within days the Post Office authorities received another letter, this from Mr. Robert Rygate J.P., stating that Mr. William Corderoy's residence was on the



same site as the first post office. Finally Mr. William Corderoy was appointed as Bowenfells' Postmaster on 1st October, 1858, receiving the annual salary of £20. His sureties were Mr. George Lee and Mr. John Blackman (left). The New South Wales Colonial Government usually required respectable and well-known individuals to pay the surety, a set amount of money or to undertake to pay a sum of money if an individual who

was undertaking a Government position, such as a Postmaster, if that latter person fails to perform their duty as specified.

Mail at this time was usually picked up from Parramatta and brought through to Bathurst via a mail coach service that had a contract to carry the mails by the General Post Office. A mail bag would be dropped off at Bowenfells on the way through and the mailbag for Sydney collected on the return trip from Bathurst back to Parramatta. The coaches travelled the Hartley-Bathurst route, via Rydal, Meadow Flat, Frying Pan (now Yetholme) and on to Kelso. Later after the railway reached the Lithgow district mail was despatched on the train and dropped off at the Bowenfels Railway Station.

Mr. William Corderoy proved a popular and reliable Postmaster at Bowenfells and in 1867 when he had to reapply and was successful he had Mr. Mark Hayward, a tanner, was a new surety. In 1870 William was employing James O'Brady and Thomas Corderoy as his assistants.

On 2nd October 1875, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that "the Sydney General Post Office has come up with a cheap and rapid means of communication known as a 'postcard". It went on: - "It is a white stout card the size of your hand on which you write an address on one half and your short

messages on the other. It was designed and printed by Messrs. De la Rue and Co, and bears the British coat of arms. At the cost of one penny, the Post Office has confirmed the post cards sold well on the first day of issue with 12,000 bought and posted. The first card issued and passed through the post was from Lady Robinson, wife of the NSW Governor, addressed to the Postmaster-General."

In 1879 the name of Post Office changed from Bowenfells to South Bowenfells, and the Post Office at Bowenfels Railway Station, known as Lithgow, renamed Bowenfells Post Office. William Corderoy resigned as Postmaster, South Bowenfells, and recommended that his son, Mr. Arthur G. Corderoy be appointed in his place, which was approved. After Federation in 1901 all Postmasters were employed by the Commonwealth Government.

Finally in 1910, after numbers of letters and comments by the Lithgow Mercury the spelling of Bowenfells was changed to Bowenfels, thus bringing it into line with Bowenfels Railway Station. In the same year Mr. Arthur Corderoy's salary for the year was £31/10/0 however this was later reduced to £26/10/0 per annum.



Mr. Arthur Corderoy, now working for the Federal Government, would have taken delivery of the first stamps (left) issued by the Federal Post Office in January 1913. The red one penny stamp bears kangaroo inside a map of Australia. These issues superseded the Colonial stamp issues previously

used by the various individual states. Various colours were used for the different denominations, though red was always reserved for the one penny stamp issues.

The kangaroo and map design was not very popular as all as many Australians were expecting the King's image. The 'map and roo' stamp design had been the result of a competition conducted by the Postmaster-General's Department which had initially been inaugurated in January of 1911. The competition attracted some 1051 designs, with some entrants submitting more than one design to be judged.

In 1916 Mr. Arthur Corderoy sent in his resignation as Postmaster following which Mr. George Morrow, who was the caretaker of the old South Bowenfels Police Station, was appointed the new Postmaster and the Post Office conducted from there.

In 1922 Mr. W. Dodman was the appointed Postmaster with the Post Office being relocated to a premises some 50 yards from the old police station. In 1925 Mr. Rowe replaced Mr. Dodman as Postmaster. Mr. Rowe remained Postmaster until his resignation in 1940. With no one available to take over from Rowe the Postmaster General's Department decided to finally close the Bowenfels Post Office so residents had to use the Lithgow Post Office.



(Above) the first official Lithgow Post Office singlestorey brick building. (Photo courtesy Lithgow Library.)

In February 1909 the western mail was sent from Penrith via Windsor, Richmond, Mount Victoria, Hartley, Lithgow, Bowenfells, Wallerawang, Rydal, Sunny Corner, Meadow Flat, Tarana, Oberon, Locksley, Brewongle, O'Connell, Glanmire, Raglan and Kelso and on to Bathurst daily. The train left at 3.20am.



A postcard (above) addressed to a Miss Jones, c/- C. Jones, Pottery Enclosure, Lithgow was posted around 1906. The postcard was mailed from Bathurst and would have travelled to Lithgow on the train, delivered and sorted to be delivered to the pottery works.

HISTORY ALL AROUND IN LITHGOW

Lithgow boasted hordes of interesting places and sites to visit over your stay during the GEMBOREE 2017. Whether you visit for the day or stay for the week there is plenty that you can look at. Lithgow is in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales and has a most picturesque environment. Why not extend your stay for a few days and take in the many highlights. Should you need brochures to various attractions, accommodation or other local information you can contact the very well-versed staff at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre, 1137 Great Western Hwy, Lithgow. NSW 2790 or telephone 1300760276 or tourism@lithgow.com email www.tourism.lithgow.com

Lake Wallace is a charming lake and is situated approximately 10 minutes drive north-west from Lithgow. It is also known as Wallerawang Dam or Lake Wallerawang and is not far off the Great Western Highway at Wallerawang. Fed by the Cox's River the lake is topped up with water from the Fish River Scheme and Lake Lyell.



Whilst power boats are not permitted on the lake you can use a kayak, canoe or sailing boat. For the fisherman the lake presents outstanding trout fishing throughout the year and picnickers use the location frequently. The area attracts a number of birds and is a great place for birdwatching.

Lake Wallace was constructed on the Cox's River in 1978 for the purpose of supplying water for nearby power generation. Trout were present in the lake from the time of constriction and are regularly restocked. Fisherman may also encounter bass which can be caught since the lake was stocked in 1998.

CHALCOPYRITE

Chalcopyrite is a mineral known as iron copper sulphide or copper pyrite and as it turns out extremely common in the crust of our earth. It has many a time been confused with gold. It is also known as 'fool's gold' depending on how much colour it is showing. Ironically enough it is often associated with gold deposits. Some even refer to it as 'vellow pyrite'. Most of us just call it 'peacock ore'.

Its name comes from the Greek word "chalkos" for copper and "pyr" or "pyrites" which meant "strike fire". Early man used this mineral to light their fires in their caves. It was also used in early firearms devices as part of the firing system.

In the 1700s, I assume due to its high content of copper as well as its yellowish and sometimes brassy looking colour, it was known as "yellow copper", even more so if it was found near native copper, though this is rarely the case. Unfortunately as we soon find out when we break up iridescent specimens of chalcopyrite and expose them to the air, chalcopyrites will tarnish and oxidise fairly quickly giving them sometimes a greenish to purplish look. Later there is not much colour at all depending on how and with what it is stored. This can form a number of oxides, hydroxides as well as sulphates.



Deposits of chalcopyrite are generally very large though they may also be found within veins as it is in Nice specimens have also been Broken Hill. occasionally found by coal miners where specimens are associated with pyrite nodules. As one of the copper ores its yield is rather low however as it is usually located commonly in massive quantities it can be mined as such. Depending on the price of copper it now is an important source of the world's copper.

Chalcopyrite forms crystals with a tetragonal form. Miners associate chalcopyrite with other minerals such as pyrite, calcite, quartz, fluorite etc. where it is found in countries such as Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Australia, South Africa as well as in America. It is also found at Kambalda in Western Australia with nice specimens of chalcopyrite which came from the Poona Mine (part of the Moonta Mines group) and also often contains gold. Nice iridescent crystalline specimens on dolomite and quartz have been extracted from Tasmania's Mount Lyell mines near Queenstown. This extremely common mineral is quite brittle and mineral specimens are unfortunately known to crumble and break.

DID YOU KNOW!

that the garnet is the birthstone for January and is known as the "Gem of Faith". The garnet supposedly has the power to impart everlasting happiness, wellbeing and prosperity on whoever owns it.

that in May 1928, a blasting accident occurred at the Main Roads Board's blue metal quarry at Cox's River, near Lithgow, when Alexander Knight, a powder monkey, was seriously injured. Knight had placed 12 plugs of gelignite in a hole prior to blasting, when a premature explosion occurred. Knight, who was bending over the hole, received the full force of the blast. His injuries consisted of a wound in the left leg, in which a large hole had been torn, a compound

fracture of the lower portion of the leg, portion of the left hand blown away, compound fracture of the left forearm, burns to the right arm, a wound about two inches long in his face and pieces of gravel embedded in almost every portion of his body. (We certainly got all the details in the newspapers in those days.)

that in October 1900 various villages, towns and cities around Australia were commemorating British victories during the Boer War in South Africa. Lithgow wasn't going to be left out so a huge flagpole, some forty-five feet high including five feet odd in the ground, was erected in Lithgow on Tuesday 1st October, 1900, in front of Mr. Francis' hotel as a memento of the British successes in South Africa. Most of the leading residents of the town were present at its erection, which caused a good deal of interest. The Lithgow Postmaster, Mr. Tomkinson, not to be behind the times, has also erected a flagstaff some five or six feet higher than the public one. There are now some four flagpoles in town.

that early Byzantine warriors would take several garnets off to war either wearing them on their uniform or carrying them in a pouch as a talisman (good luck charm) against injury or death. They also believed that they would bring their troops swift victory or at least bring them back alive. Some ancient medicine men would bind several garnets inside a bad wound to help stop the bleeding and support its healing.

in January 1887 it was reported in the Bathurst Free Press newspaper that fish had been caught in Lithgow. On Thursday afternoon Mr Robert Grant caught a fish weighing about 2lbs (which has been shown to us) in Farmer's Creek, near Mort's Meat Preserving Works. It proved to be an English trout, and is the first fish caught in the creek. Some years ago Mr. Andrew Brown, of Bowenfels, deposited some spawn or eggs of the British trout in a dam adjoining his house and it is thought the fish caught by Mr. Grant came from there.

the ancient Roman world traded sapphires which they would have polished by artisans and made into jewellery for both women and men, if they could afford them.

the first election of aldermen for the newly-incorporated borough of Lithgow took place on Friday 9th August, 1889, and the official declaration of the poll was made in the School of Arts. Little interest was manifested in the election and only about 130 ratepayers used the franchise in the Lithgow Ward, the largest ward of the borough. The following candidates were returned: - Lithgow Ward: Messrs. George Donald, Nicholas Sheridan, and David Brown. Clwydd Ward: Messrs. Joseph C. Hooper, J. M. Hughes, and Thomas Bennett.

in 1836 a shower of meteorites landed in the Kalahari Desert much to the amazement of the local

tribesmen. The natives collected some of the meteorites they found lying on the surface. Finding they were very hard they fashioned them into arrowheads and elaborate assagai-heads for their light spears. These latter weapons had very sharp points and appendages.

that Joseph Cook was responsible for the introduction of bicycles to allow postmen to use them to deliver the daily mail and telegrams.

that the original discus used by the ancient Greeks in their early Olympics was actually a fossilised ammonite.

that American natives well before their contact with the Europeans in the late 15th century were making metal alloys and creating household items, weapons and religious items. Native copper and gold was used by the indigenous Americans since ancient times, in some cases around 500BC. They would collect the native metals which were usually lying on top of the ground and would heat it up in a fire before using various cold hammering techniques to produce their artefacts.

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