










Tea Tree Gully Gem & Mineral Club Inc. (TTGGMC)
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**March
Edition
2019**

"Rockzette" Tea Tree Gully Gem & Mineral Club News

President's Report	General Interest	Club Activities / Fees						
<p>Hi All, I won't be at the next meeting as I will be in Victoria for their GEMKANA and then on to Canberra for their outdoor ROCKSWAP. The letters to the Dealers have gone out, and I will update you about our Exhibition in April. Cheers, Ian.</p>	<p>Page 6: Tuesday's 'Show and Tell' at Ian's and Friday's 'Jump Ring Production'...</p>  <p>Pages 7 to 9: Members 'Out and About' - The Happy Wanderers' Sri Lanka Safari ...</p>  <p>Page 10: DIY - Besser/Cinder Block Projects...</p>  <p>Pages 11 to 15: 'Newcastle and Rail - The Never-ending Story' - Part 7...</p>  <p>Pages 16 to 19: General interest, humour, etc...</p>  <p>Page 20: Members Noticeboard...Upcoming shows and Gemmasta update, etc.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p>	<p>Meetings Club meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of each month except January. Committee meetings start at 7 pm. General meetings - arrive at 7.30 pm for 8 pm start.</p> <p>Library Librarian - Augie Gray There is a 2-month limit on borrowed items. When borrowing from the lending library, fill out the card at the back of the item, then place the card in the box on the shelf. When returning items, fill in the return date on the card, then place the card at the back of the item.</p> <p>Tuesday Faceting/Cabbing Tuesdays - 10 am to 2 pm. All are welcome. Supervised by Doug Walker (7120 2221).</p> <p>Wednesday Silversmithing Wednesdays - 7 pm to 9 pm. All are welcome. Supervised by Augie Gray (8265 4815 / 0433 571 887).</p> <p>Thursday Cabbing Thursdays - 10 am to 2 pm. All are welcome. Supervised by Augie Gray (8265 4815 / 0433 571 887).</p> <p>Friday Silversmithing Fridays - 9 am to 12 noon. All are welcome. Supervised by John Hill (8251 1118).</p> <p>Faceting/Cabbing/Silversmithing Fees: A standard fee of \$3.00 per session applies - to be paid to the session supervisor.</p> <p>In the interest of providing a safe working environment, it is necessary to ensure everyone using the workshops follow the rules set out in <i>Policy No. 1 - 20/11/2006</i>.</p> <p>It is necessary that <i>Health and Safety</i> regulations are adhered to always.</p> <p>Everyone using the workshop must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that all club equipment (e.g. magnifying head pieces, faceting equipment, tools, etc.) used during the session, is cleaned, and returned to the workshop after usage. • that all work stations are left in a clean and tidy state; • that all rubbish is removed and placed in the appropriate bin; • and where applicable, machines are cleaned and oiled or dried. <p><i>NOTE: The Tea Tree Gully Gem & Mineral Club Inc. will not be held responsible or liable for any person injured while using the club machinery or equipment.</i></p> <p>Club Subscriptions:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td>\$25.00 Family</td> <td>\$20.00 Family Pensioner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$15.00 Single</td> <td>\$12.50 Single Pensioner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$10.00 Joining Fee</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	\$25.00 Family	\$20.00 Family Pensioner	\$15.00 Single	\$12.50 Single Pensioner	\$10.00 Joining Fee	
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Diary Dates / Notices/ General Interest								
<p style="text-align: center;">Happy Birthday</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Members celebrating March birthdays: 4th - Eirene Smith. 26th - Mary Warner. 10th - Dieter Zoyke. 28th - William Ashford.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Speaker at the March 2019 Meeting</p> <p>Tim Bowen will be speaking on the benefits of having an accessible Defibrillator at the club rooms.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NB. TTGGMC 2019 Biennial Exhibition Saturday July 20th and Sunday July 21st, 2019.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Pages 2 to 4: Augie's March 2019 Agate and Mineral Selections...</p>  <p>Page 5: Ian's March 2019 Collection Selections...</p> 								
<p>The Tea Tree Gully Gem & Mineral Club Inc. is not and cannot be held responsible or liable for any personal injuries, loss or damage to property at any club activity, including, but not limited to, meetings, field trips, all crafts and club shows. An indemnity is to be signed by all participants before each and every field trip activity they attend.</p>								
<p>Tea Tree Gully Gem and Mineral Club Incorporated, Old Tea Tree Gully School, Dowding Terrace, Tea Tree Gully, South Australia, 5091.</p>								

**Augie's March 2019 Agate Selections
– Dendritic**



Augie's March 2019 Agate Selections - Dendritic. *Continued...*



Augie's March 2019 Mineral Selections.



Amethyst & Calcite - Fengjiashan Mine, Daye Co., Hubei Province, CHINA.



Apatite - Konar Province, Nuristan, AFGHANISTAN.



Calcite sceptre.

Augie's March 2019 Mineral Selections.
Continued...



Aragonite - Pantoja, Toledo, Castile-La Mancha, SPAIN.



Marra Mamba Tiger-eye – WESTERN AUSTRALIA.



Quartz sceptre - Chihuahua, MEXICO.



Diopside on Calcite.



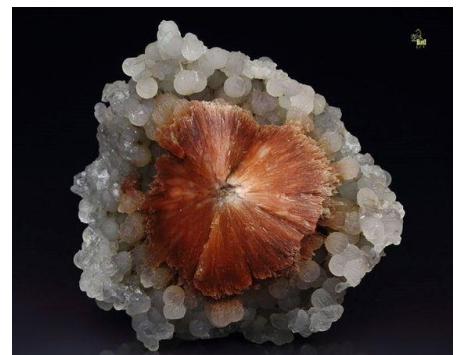
Mottramite – TSUMEB.



Rutile on Haematite - Novo Horizonte, Bahia, BRAZIL.



Diopside.



Scolecite & Chalcedony.



Emerald Trapiche - Muzo, COLOMBIA.



Prehnite - Djouga diggings, Bendougou village, Arrondissement Diakon, Commune Diakon, Cercle de Bafulabé, Kayes Region, Malix, SWITZERLAND.



Wulfenite & Mimetite - Ojuela Mine, MEXICO.

Contributed by Ian Everard...

Ian's March 2019 Collection Selections



0097 Smokey Quartz Geode with Calcite, MEXICO.



1404 Smokey Quartz Geode and Calcite, MEXICO.



1411 Quartz Geode with Calcite, MEXICO.



0098 Smokey Quartz Geode with Calcite, MEXICO.



1406 Amethyst Geode and Calcite MEXICO.



1412 Quartz Geode with Calcite, MEXICO.



0106 Amethyst and Calcite Geode, GERMANY.



1407 Quartz Geode, MEXICO.



1413 Quartz Geode with Calcite, MEXICO.



1403 Amethyst Geode and Calcite MEXICO.



1408 Quartz Geode, MEXICO.



1415 Quartz Geode with Goethite, MEXICO.

Contributed by Mel...

Tuesday's Show and Tell at Ian's



(L>R) Alan, Trevor and Jean.



(L>R) Wendy, Augie, Ken, Chris and Ian.



(L>R) Alan, Trevor and Jean.



(L>R) Augie, Ken, Chris and Ian.



(L>R) Augie, Ken, Chris and Ian.



(L>R) Augie, Ian, Ken and Chris.



(L>R) Alan, Augie, Ken, Chris and Ian.

Contributed by Wendy Purdie...

Friday's Jump Ring Production

Campbell made a jump ring cutter and used it to help Tom make some copper jump rings. Here are some photos of the process...



Campbell and Tom.



Coiling with the aid of a drill using a graduated mandrel made by Campbell.



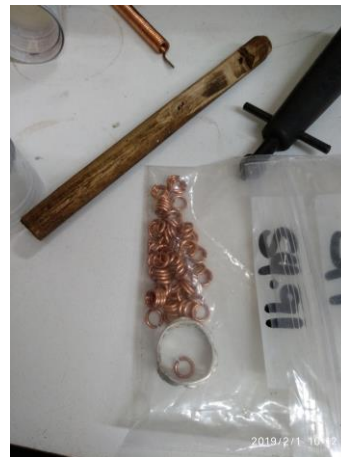
Coiled wire before cutting.



Campbell using his home-made guide and electric saw to cut jump rings.



Jump rings after being cut.



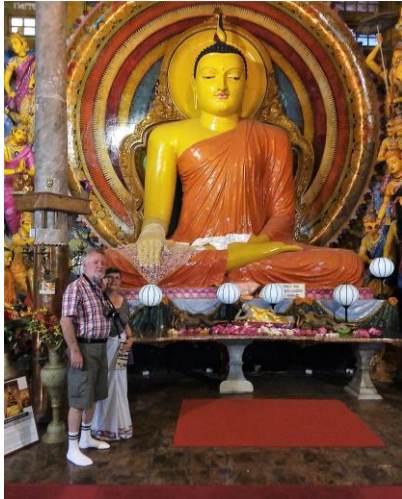
Finished and packaged jump rings.

Contributed by Ellen and Gerry Dillon...

The Happy Wanderers' Sri Lanka Safari



1. On city tour of Colombo.



2. On city tour of Colombo.



3. On city tour of Colombo.



4. On city tour of Colombo.



5. Beach town of Negombo.



6. Beach town of Negombo.



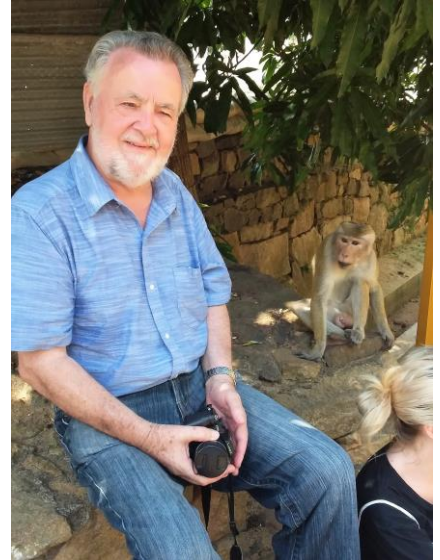
7. Beach town of Negombo.



8. Site of Mihintale.



9. Site of Mihintale.



10. Site of Mihintale.



11. Site of Mihintale.



12. Sigiriya Rock climbing.



13. Sigiriya Rock climbing.

The Happy Wanderers' Sri Lanka Safari
Continued...



14. Sigiriya Rock climbing.



15. Sigiriya Rock climbing.



16. Sigiriya Rock climbing.



17. Sigiriya Rock climbing.



18. Elephant washing.



19. Cave temples at Dambulla.



20. Cave temples at Dambulla.



21. Cave temples at Dambulla.



22. Kingfisher.



23. Nice surprise.



24. The tea plantation.



25. And, another climb.



26. Safari 1.



27. Safari 2.



28. Safari 3.



29. Safari 4.



30. Hikkaduwa.

The Happy Wanderers' Sri Lanka Safari
Continued...



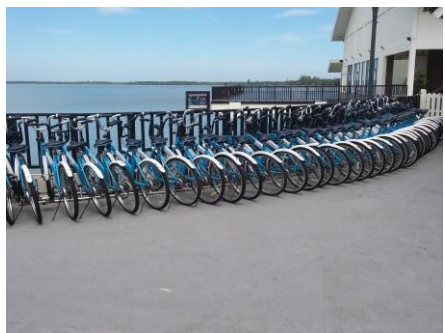
31. Birthday Cake.



32. Sepang Resort, Selangor.



33. Sepang Resort.



34. Best way to get around.

Contributed by Mel Jones...



Up to four Tawny Frogmouths have been roosting in one of our front-yard trees over the past month or so. The daily numbers vary... sometimes only one, other times up to four and occasionally none. Most times they huddle up close together... regardless of how hot it has been. My garden watering activities near the tree do not scare them off. Mel. *Photo taken by Trevor Rappell.*

Contributed by Doug Walker...



The Mechanic and The Cardiologist

A Lexus mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a LS460 when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his shop. The cardiologist was there waiting for the service manager to come and look at his car when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey Doc, want to take a look at this?"

The cardiologist, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So Doc, look at this engine. I opened its heart, took the valves out, repaired or replaced anything damaged, and then put everything back in, and when I finished, it worked just like new.

So how is it that I make \$48,000 a year and you make \$1.7M, when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The cardiologist paused, leaned over, and then whispered to the mechanic... **"Try doing it with the engine running"**.

Contributed by Mel Jones...

Karoonda/Peebinga Line Revisited Yet Again

I'm still searching the internet for pictures of train related events along the Murraylands lines, particularly those at Karoonda and the branch lines beyond Karoonda.

On Facebook, I came across Reece Jennings's site. After a lengthy scrolling search of the site, I found the following entries which relate to the previous articles that I have contributed to the newsletter (February 2019 edition), that is, railway services between Karoonda and Peebinga, South Australia.



Reece Jennings
8 February 2017

This is Mulpata, mid 1950s. The Commer van ran weekly from Karoonda to Peebinga (and back!) It left Karoonda at 12.28pm and reached Peebinga at 3.43 (it didn't derail). On Saturday it left Peebinga 9-05am and got back to Karoonda at 11.58. Here the postmistress is collecting the mails with what might have been most of the local population. I wonder what happened to them: God - they must have been resilient to survive in that country.



Reece Jennings
15 February 2017

The people here are engineman Scholtz and porter Deksinis at Karoonda, mid 1950s, with the Commer van before departure for Peebinga. Scholtz spent his working life in the S.A.R. in the days when it was your one job. When not driving the van he was usually found on an Rx steam loco running around the Mallee. Deksinis was one of the post-war migrants who found fulfillment in the railways. This country would be nothing if it hadn't been for those people who came here and worked hard and honestly.

The photo below appeared in an earlier newsletter... taken by Weston Langford, at Karoonda, December 28th, 1964...



SAR Rx loco with early 1950s Commer QX(R) rail motor in Karoonda.

Contributed by Janet and Mel Jones...

DIY – Besser/Cinder Block Projects

Our back-yard renovations are now well underway. We chose Besser blocks to complement our stash of Permapine timber. The Permapine stash, the remains of a shade house that we had previously erected in the backyard, has been stored in the shed for the past 20 years. I had cut it up with the intention of making wicking-beds but scrolling through Pinterest DIY ideas changed our minds. We have opted to make some pot plant display shelves, outdoor seating, and a heavy-duty frame for a large outdoor table instead. The following five pictures show the results...



Overall view of the backyard renovation project using recycled Permapine and Besser/Cinder blocks.



Closer view of the table using recycled Permapine for the main frame. Permapine posts were used in the end instead of Besser/Cinder blocks.



Plant stand with Besser/Cinder blocks and recycled Permapine, but no screws or glue were used. Sits over the septic tank, so is easily removed when the tank requires pumping out.



Beams inserted into the Besser/Cinder blocks are from a recycled plastic security window screen previously on the lounge room window. Paving blocks used on top match those across the yard.



Four vertical, recycled Permapine beams inserted into the Besser/Cinder blocks and horizontal planks screwed to the beams. No glue used. Each seats 2 to 3 people. Quite sturdy.

More examples using Besser/Cinder blocks can be found on Pinterest by clicking/tapping on the following hyperlink...

<https://www.pinterest.com.au/flintstonesgsc/get-creative-with-besser-blocks/?lp=true>



Raised Garden Beds



Get the industrial look of the Renovated Upper East Side apartment using a range of Besser Blocks.



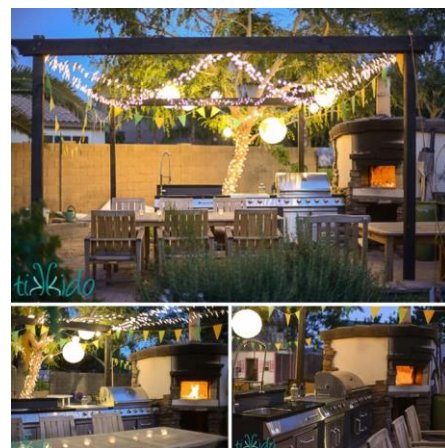
Simple to construct - Besser/Cinder blocks make an effective barbecue with a tidy for timber, axe, etc.



Put together using Besser/Cinder blocks (glued for extra stability), Permapine posts, and paint. And, cushions too if you prefer a softer seat.



Bar-B-Que for two.



[How To Build a Wood Fired Pizza Oven in Your Backyard.](#)



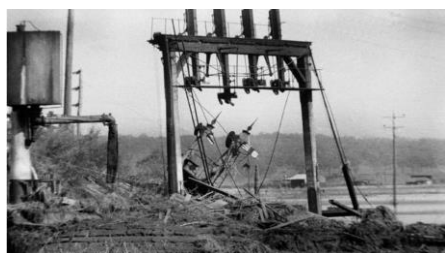
Besser/Cinder block shelving.

Contributed by Mel Jones...

‘Newcastle and Rail – The Never-ending Story’ by Garry Reynolds Part 7 of 20+...



The Newcastle City waterfront today where Aborigines once fished from canoes, convicts hewed coal and a railway system developed and disappeared over a period of 160 years. Source: *Familypedia*.



The devastated Maitland Railway after the 1955 flood. Source: *Maitland Mercury*.

We have followed the tragic repercussions of the early decision to locate the first stage of the Great Northern Railway on highly vulnerable portions of the Maitland Floodplain in 1857. Since then there have been 15 major floods.

Yet within a year, the risk was compounded when there were extensions from vulnerable East Maitland to even more vulnerable West Maitland, and at the other end, from Honeysuckle Point into the heart of Newcastle.



A 36 class-hauled train waits to depart Maitland Station during the 1955 Flood. Source: *Cessnock Advertiser*.

The Newcastle extension created enormous controversy in the 19th century. Then its removal in the 21st century, perhaps even more. Those 1.3kms of railway line probably generated more sustained passion about the type of city people wanted than anywhere else in Australia.



Ripping up the 1858 rail extension to the heart of Newcastle in 2017. Source: *Railpage*.

Why is it so?

History reporter of the “Newcastle Herald”, Mike Scanlon, has researched back deep into the 19th century to unearth the generators of this never-ending controversy.

In 1856, when the NSW Railway Commission proposed to extend the Great Northern Railway from Honeysuckle Point into Newcastle you would have thought that most people would be overjoyed that they were getting easier access to this new means of transport in the Colony.

Not so. Many of the local inhabitants were absolutely flabbergasted and outraged!

As with fellow thinkers in the 21st century, the thought of a railway cutting their north-south aligned streets at the water’s edge and the settlement’s relationship to its harbour was totally abhorrent.

And let’s face it, the visual division hasn’t proved to be subtle.



The physical and visual divide by the 1990s when metal met more metal. None but the keenest rail fan would see beauty in this part of Newcastle’s Harbour-side landscape. Source: *Andrew Roberts*.

Not surprisingly, in the 19th and 21st centuries, there were strong commercial agendas and interests at play underneath the pent-up emotions.

In the mid-1850s, fired-up groups held angry protest meetings in Newcastle. They petitioned the NSW Government to stop the extension proposal dead in its conceptual tracks.

Perhaps not surprisingly, after we have examined the former behind-the-scenes power of the Australian Agricultural Company (AA Co) and its strong connections to Government, there was an amazing result.

Mike Scanlon’s research reveals that although 403 signatures were received calling for the Great Northern Railway’s terminus to be left at Honeysuckle Point and only 12 on a counter-petition from Newcastle’s fledgling Chamber of Commerce demanding the extension - you know who won!



Workers preparing timbers for extending the AA Company’s coal loading staithes running to the dockside. Source: *Newcastle Herald*.

But this was only part of a long running strategic war between commercial interests in Newcastle and Sydney, although the short railway extension of 1.3 kms was an important chess piece in commercial move and countermove.



The AA Company coal staithes at Kings Wharf near Honeysuckle Station (later Civic Station precinct). Source: *Newcastle Herald*.

Some moneyed interests in Sydney, Maitland and the Hunter River Port of Morpeth, plus their associated agricultural and shipping companies, were still coming to terms with how they had been outflanked and done over by other Sydney and Newcastle private railway interests. The rail groups had tried to cut Morpeth out of the trade to Sydney and other ports with the construction of the first section of the Great Northern Railway.



AA Company wooden hopper wagons full of coal being pushed along the loading staithes to a waiting queue of ships. Source: *Flickr*.

'Newcastle and Rail – The Never-ending Story' Continued...

Not only had they commenced building the Great Northern Railway from East Maitland to Honeysuckle Point as a private venture, the company had collapsed, and the NSW Government had stepped in to pick up the pieces and finish the job as occurred with their Sydney to Granville line. Essentially the private railway business interests had socialised their losses and capitalised their gains at the expense of the public purse. Nice work if you can get it, and it seemed to happen a lot in Newcastle.



Drawing of the AA Co's loading staithes and railway, 1831. Coal is being loaded into the Sophia Jane. [from Bar Dangerous by Terry Callen, Newcastle Region Maritime Museum/The Runctman Press, 1989, p.34]



Map of the planned extension of the Great Northern Line to Newcastle Central in 1856. The position of the original staithes and the proposed development of King's Wharf are also shown. [from Bar Dangerous by Terry Callen, Newcastle Region Maritime Museum/The Runctman Press, 1989, p.193]

Source: Afloat.

Not satisfied with their initial triumph, now the same commercial interests of Newcastle were pushing the Government to extend the line into the heart of Maitland and Newcastle to siphon off more trade from the fertile Hunter Valley through their coal town rather than through Maitland's inland port at nearby Morpeth. The shop owners and conservative pastoralists in the more genteel areas of Maitland and Morpeth were running up against the boys from former penal Newcastle and they played the game tough and for keeps walking over anyone who got in their way.



Maitland (West Maitland) Station in dry times. Source: PiCCSR.

The Newcastle interests and their Sydney railway mates had a heightened sense of urgency to seal the deal. You see, the recent discoveries of gold over the Blue Mountains between Bathurst and Orange (originally Blackman's Swamp) were not only offering the prospect of a stream of revenue to pay for the infrastructure, the Newcastle rail interests knew they had to get in early before the Government started to focus more on extending the Southern Line to Goulburn and the Western Line over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst.

The Newcastle rail advocates also realised that

the Government had recruited a new Railway Engineer-in-Chief from England on a massive salary to straighten out the mess in the New South Wales Government Railways. He needed to be brought to their way of thinking as soon as possible.

The new man was the powerful and highly-opinionated John Whitton, who feared no-one including the Parliament and the Governor who he clashed with furiously even before he got on to the ship to Australia.



Newcastle foreshore wharves and coal loading staithes 1870s.

Source: Hunter Living Histories.

Meanwhile, the Maitland, Morpeth and Sydney shipping interests believed they were not going to get caught with their pants down again – or so they thought. They supported public campaigns in Newcastle opposing the extension for the Great Northern Railway.

It was like a guerrilla war – in their minds the line would not pass the outskirts of the Newcastle CBD.

The anti-extension interests decided also to get on the front foot – they would fight ribbons of iron with their ribbons of iron.

There was not only pressure on the Government to drop the railway extension into Newcastle but instead build a new 5 km branch line off the Great Northern Railway from East Maitland to the Port of Morpeth. This would cut out much of the potential trade through the Port of Newcastle. You see in the Colony, a key issue for the Treasury as the prime source of government revenue until this time were customs duties, as there were no sales or income taxes.



A short Morpeth-East Maitland train struggles up an incline.

Source: Wikipedia.

The Maitland and Morpeth interests and their Sydney shipping allies posed as taking the high moral ground. They said the Newcastle interests should not be greedy and needed to stick to their corporate working-class place in society - handling the high-volume low-value coal trade while Maitland and Morpeth took the cream from the pastoral traffic of the Hunter Valley direct to Sydney and other colonies.



Burwood Colliery coal loader with a series of wagons on the staithes with an open-sided shed running out over the water. Source: NIHA.

As always, self-interest was running rampant and the members of the NSW Colonial Parliament were being lobbied furiously as all and sundry chased the expected rivers of gold coming from over the mountains into the Treasury. Of course, the people from Bathurst and Goulburn were furious, seeing two groups in the north fighting over who would siphon off their wool and gold revenue for Hunter Region rail endeavours.

There was a lot of political manoeuvring and deal making going on behind closed doors. On several occasions, when the Morpeth Line advocates attempted to push enabling legislation through the NSW Parliament to allow private or public construction of their 5 km extension, it strangely came off the rails, held up on legal technicalities. The East Maitland Morpeth Line was not completed until 1864, too late to overcome the inexorable drift to Newcastle.

Meanwhile, while the Newcastle Railway boys were not only busy subverting the Morpeth Line extension proposition, they were also 'educating' the NSW Railway and Treasury bureaucracies on how the Morpeth trade would always be limited to smaller vessels going up-river.

They said that the Great Northern Railway should terminate at a deep-water wharf near the ocean at Newcastle (Morpeth and Honeysuckle Point were considered too shallow). They pointed out rightfully, that the development of agriculture along the Hunter River was leading to increased siltation amplified by wash from the steamer traffic eroding river banks.

To frightened Government bean counters facing enormous demands from a massively increasing population and infrastructure and policing demands with the Gold Rushes, the Newcastle rail interests painted a stark picture of an inexorable funding nightmare.

They said the Government would have to spend large amounts of funds year after year on keeping Hunter River channels to Morpeth clear, but the trade revenue would go to the private shipping companies.

They posed that by extending the line into Newcastle with a relatively small amount of Government funds, it would increase the Government's revenue considerably from siphoning off the private shipping trade onto the Government Railways. It was a compelling argument for the Treasury and Railway officials and eventually the politicians.

'Newcastle and Rail – The Never-ending Story' Continued...

However, due processes had to be gone through, or at least to be seen to have been gone through. Although it had been decades before, everyone in the Colony could remember the stitched-up deal between the Government and the AA Company and its wealthy London-based directors and shareholders when they received a million acres land grant and a 30-year monopoly of the Newcastle coal trade without any public debate.

You know what's coming, the politicians said – "we must set up a committee of inquiry".

A Government-appointed select committee took evidence and raised the issue of the impact of the proposed railway line extension on community access to the Harbour in Newcastle. However, having already taken over the Maitland-to-Newcastle rail project, the NSW Government badly wanted to ensure it wouldn't become a costly white elephant. To many parliamentarians, the idea of the grimy Newcastle coal town being associated with beauty was mutually exclusive and they didn't want to spend too much time on this 'meaning of life' type aesthetics.

There was also an unusual sense of urgency about the Select Committee's 'investigations'. The Government really wanted its Chief Commissioner of Railways, Gother Kerr Mann, to make the Great Northern Railway profitable as quickly as possible.

Unsurprisingly, the Chief Commissioner argued in evidence that the proposed Newcastle extension would not intersect many of the town's streets as the route passed along undeveloped land at the end of the streets. He reinforced this point by saying the frontage to the Harbour was not really open to community use with pools of water and embankments of rock ballast forming obstacles. Not insurmountable of course, but that was his story and he was sticking to it.

Even more so, John Whitton, the Engineer-in-Chief on the New South Wales Government Railways, who had only been in the Colony six weeks, already had formed a negative view of Newcastle. The aesthetics of breaking the beauty of the bond between the local people and their harbour didn't register with a man who was quoted in the evidence as viewing Newcastle as "a very poor place".



Morpeth Station and mill. Source: Wikipedia.

To give the Treasury officials the ammunition they wanted, he said in front of the Select Committee that leaving the terminus at Honeysuckle Point would have condemned the

line to a profitless future. For a Parliament which was overseeing the first Government-run railway system in the world, this was dynamite.

In typical Whitton-style, he also had no problem in publicly dumping on his forebears. In his opinion, the whole Maitland-Newcastle rail project had been a mistake. The position could be salvaged, but only by extending the line into the heart of Newcastle.

Then to really rub it in and give the private shipping companies a corporate two-fingered salute, he said:

"I think the only thing that can ever repay the government for making the line from Newcastle is to give them every opportunity of getting the traffic from the steamers and to prevent the steamers running in opposition to Morpeth."

That must have really got up the Maitland, Morpeth and shipping companies' noses – but that was Whitton's brutal manner as he saw off 28 NSW Premiers coming and going in his 'reign of bureaucratic terror' at the NSW Government Railways.



Morpeth Station and mill. Source: Wikipedia.

In the process, the Select Committee quickly dismissed a few flights of fancy. It resolved that it couldn't justify an expensive plan put before it for separate street-level goods and passenger lines to be built into the heart of Newcastle plus an elevated coal line!

Still, in the most recent debate, there was an informal proposal for a railway tunnel to be constructed from Wickham to Newcastle of several kilometres at horrendous cost because of the high-water table!

But back to the mid-1850s, the Government was realising that the glimmer of rivers of gold flowing into their coffers was also encouraging the Anglican Church to hold it to ransom. The Church owned the surrounding land for inevitable railway expansion if the terminus remained at Honeysuckle Point.



A sketch of Newcastle with its private and government railway systems feeding the coal loading facilities in 1875. Source: Sydney Illustrated News.

The good clerics were requesting staggeringly high prices for their patch which they originally received gratis with a grant from the Government!

In the end, the Select Committee recommended, unsurprisingly, that the Newcastle extension go ahead but at minimum cost. Certainly, Whitton was in no mood to construct a substantial station in Newcastle. In modern terminology - he wasn't going to 'polish a turd'!

So, the first primitive Newcastle Station constructed by Whitton was located on a spur line which serviced Circular Wharf. It had a large goods yard fanning out to the East towards the sea when it was opened in 1858. Its exchange sidings allowed trains to meet the ships for loading and unloading of cargo along Queens Wharf. Coal from all over the region was transported in wooden hoppers to this point where a row of steam cranes would lift the bodies of the wagons out of their frames to be emptied into the ships' holds.

However, it wasn't until 1878, before Whitton would build the present substantial railway station at Newcastle befitting its status.



A busy Newcastle Station Yard in 1879. Source: Newcastle Herald.



Newcastle Railway Station with the Customs House and its clock tower adjacent. Source: Flickr.

Tourism copywriters today writing about Newcastle wax lyrical about a long-gone era and a recently dispatched railway.

"Today, if you walk along the foreshore of Newcastle it seems hard to imagine that there was once a vast maze of railway sidings and goods yards strung out along the wharf edge with sailing and steam ships moored alongside or waiting their turn in the Harbour. Instead of the background buzz of motor traffic, there was cacophony of maritime horns, steam locomotive whistles and clanking shunting rolling stock as they rattled over multiple set of points among swivelling cranes and swinging wood hopper coal wagons. The landscape was dotted with men scurrying between the lines, workshops, offices and stations with foreshore in perpetual motion."

Where much of this took place is just irrigated and mown turf.

'Newcastle and Rail – The Never-ending Story' Continued...



Passenger cars waiting for duty in the Newcastle Station Yard adjacent to Queen's Wharf. The photo was taken ambitiously from a sailing ship's rigging with the chimney of a steam crane below. Source: Newcastle Herald.



The ball on the Customs House spire was raised approaching 1pm each day to be dropped right on the hour so officers aboard ships in the Harbour could set their chronometers. Source: Bing Images.



The Customs House today, a place of fine dining. The busy railway yard has been concreted over in parts. A working port's visual stimulation has been replaced by a sterile landscape in this area. Source: Honeysuckle Foreshore Blog.



Fettlers setting off on their daily tasks at Newcastle Station in the 1890s. Source: University of Newcastle.

In 1858, the interests of Newcastle business and its Government advocates had won out over the combination of residents and the Maitland and Morpeth interests and shipping companies from Sydney.

Surely it was all resolved now.



Newcastle Station and railway yard adjacent to Queens Wharf and Kings Wharf in the distance. Source:

Not really, the argument about the foreshore would go on for 160 years and in recent times the Newcastle business interests swapped sides in advocating the Railway's removal– and they won again. But there is a lot of water to go under the bridge before we get to there.



Newcastle Station in 1890. Source: University of Newcastle.

Meanwhile, whether it had been deliberately withheld or overlooked, the extension of the Railway from Honeysuckle Point into Newcastle would soon create further problems.



Newcastle's Queen's Wharf in 1875 with the East End railway yard in the foreground, steam cranes on the wharf and Nobbys in the distance. Source: State Library of Victoria.

You see, as the new freight trade came to the Central Business District, the extension of the current Government and privately-owned coal loading facilities would be limited. Most people agreed that Bullock Island (Carrington) on the opposite side of the Harbour was the ideal site for a new freight and coal terminal.

The problem was that it needed a lot of reclamation work and that would take many years especially as it was going to mainly occur through sailing ships dropping their rock ballast from around the world to make a dyke to protect the reclamation.

The Australian Agricultural Company (AAC)



Sailing ships taking on coal from the AA Company and other companies at Kings Wharf, Newcastle. Source: University of Newcastle.

As a quick recap on the first six parts of our story, in 1824, the Australian Agricultural Company was established as a land development corporate giant with the generous assistance of the British Parliament's Crown Grant of 1,000,000 acres in the Port Stephens area. Major shareholders were senior British parliamentarians and Bank of England office holders.



A Newcastle AA Co mine with its internal and external coal loading railways. Source: State Library of Victoria.

Not only did the Company pursue agricultural and pastoral interests successfully, gradually moving north in Australia, but also exploited its Government-granted monopolistic position to gain a head start in Newcastle coal industry, shipping and rail network development from multiple mines also favoured by additional strategic grants in inner Newcastle.

Today, the Company has grown so large that it claims that its premium beef feeds a million people in the world each day, whereas coal is under a cloud.



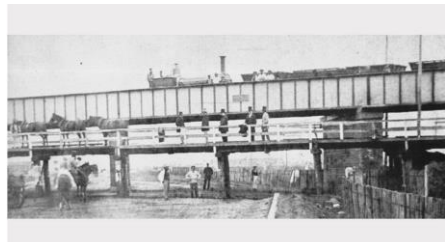
NAA Co mine in 1875, with the ships' masts in the distance. Source: State Library of Victoria.

While the Company, no longer mines coal, in the 19th century, the AA Company was a dominant player in Newcastle and the Hunter Valley, and this was the coal centre of Australia. Between 1870 and 1930, Newcastle

'Newcastle and Rail – The Never-ending Story' Continued...

was exporting 70% of Australia's coal production.

It needed an expanded rail network to do so. Its discovery and exploitation of the Borehole Seam (in inner Newcastle), in 1848, saw 140 million tons of coal was produced over a period of 50 years.



The opening of the new AA Co rail bridge over Hunter Street and the Great Northern Railway to the coal staithes at the wharves in 1865. Source: Newcastle Herald.

As part of the AA Company's private railway started back as Australia's first in 1831 with a low wooden structure taking wheeled coal hoppers over Newcastle's main thoroughfare, Hunter Street, the old bridge was replaced with an iron bridge sent out in parts from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

Never a company to miss a chance to make a quid, the AA Company sold advertising rights to a breakfast cereal business to plaster the Newcastle CBD entrance with a massive sign on the rail bridge within a year of its opening.



In 1865, a steam tram trundles under the AA Company's bridge while a steam train heading to the coal loading wharves adjacent to the Newcastle CBD passes overhead. The bridge lasted for 56 years before removal. Source: Newcastle Herald.



Coal wagons being hauled across the AA Co's bridge in its last years. Source: Newcastle Herald.

Highly-intrusive and an eyesore in what became the second largest city in NSW, Government reluctance to provide Newcastle with electric trams until 1923 was a reason why the bridge wasn't demolished earlier.

The AA Co had 10 city and suburban pits over the years exploiting their Borehole and other seams. Amongst them, the 'Sea Pit' was



Dismantling of the 1865 iron bridge with horsepower in 1921. In the 19th century the bridge marked the boundary of the city and A.A. Company 2,000 acres of coal land it received in a Government grant. Source: Newcastle Library.



The AA Co's 'Sea Pit' Colliery in 1894. Source: NSW Records.

probably the second most famous after its first shaft, the 'A' Pit just below Church Street, The Hill, which also operated Australia's first railway.

The 'Sea Pit', opened in 1887, was located off Darby Street in Cooks Hill, a Newcastle inner suburb. It had come into existence as coal reserves at the AA Company's Hamilton pits on the other side of the town began to dwindle in the 1880s.

The development of the pit arose from the AA Company exploring coal workings in its early 'C Pit' mine. What was particularly daring was that the underground miners worked the new lease out from the old, running along a seam about 4 kms out to sea. Working miners could hear the propellers of steamships overhead!

Another incentive for the innovative approach by the AA Company, was that the coal extracted from the 'Sea Pit' was ideal for gas making where there was a growing world demand. The colliery was also renowned for the intricate fossil specimens unearthed far below the ocean.

At its peak, the 'Sea Pit' had 790 men working underground. Another 160 were surface workers, who operated machinery and worked the rail network with its fleets of small, wooden coal wagons.

In 1906, when Australia's Governor General, Lord Northcote, visited Newcastle, a feature of his welcome was a reception by 100 official guests below the ocean in the 'Sea Pit'.

After the mine closed in 1916, the pithead area was gradually redeveloped into a housing estate and most people forgot about the once renown 'Sea Pit'. That was until the 1989 Newcastle Earthquake!

A home unit built on top of a cement capped former air shaft suddenly erupted as long accumulated mine water hurtled like an approaching steam express train up the shaft, to shatter the concrete cap and suck back down

the shaft the furnishings of a lounge room. Fortunately, the owner was not at home to experience the heritage flush.



Newcastle Station squeezed between the city and the Harbour and part of a 160-year argument. Source: Flickr.



Newcastle Station in England in the 1950's from where much of its Australian namesake's design and practices came from. Source: Flickr.

MORE NEXT MONTH...

Contributed by Mel...

Train from Maitland to Newcastle 1986



On 04/09/1986, we boarded a State Rail Authority (SRA) of New South Wales (NSW) railcar 732 (Candy car) and trailer car at Maitland Railway Station for a commuter trip to Newcastle (NSW) and return. Click/tap on hyperlink to watch the old VHS video tape that I took of the trip...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFLQPAZ92Sg&t=475s>



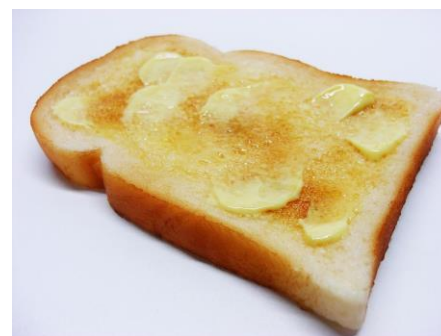
Contributed by Augie Gray...



Massive Geode - Quartz var. Amethyst and Calcite crystals on display at Tucson 2019

Contributed by Augie Gray...

Irish Miracle



At last, confirmation of Murphy's Law with a wonderful Irish explanation.....

Murphy drops some buttered toast on the kitchen floor, and it lands butter-side-up.

He looks down in astonishment, for he knows that it's a law of nature of the universe that buttered toast always falls butter-side-down.

So, he rushes round to the presbytery to fetch Father Flanagan.

He tells the priest that a miracle has occurred in his kitchen. But he won't say what it is, so he asks Fr. Flanagan to come and see it with his own eyes.

He leads Fr. Flanagan into the kitchen and asks him what he sees on the floor.

"Well," says the priest, "it's pretty obvious. Someone has dropped some buttered toast on the floor and then, for some reason, they flipped it over so that the butter was on top."

"No, Father, I dropped it and it landed like that!" exclaimed Murphy

"Oh, my Lord," says Fr. Flanagan, "dropped toast never falls with the butter side up. It's a miracle. Wait... it's not for me to say it's a miracle. I'll have to report the matter to Bishop and he'll have to deal with it. He'll send some people round to interview you, take photos, etc."

A thorough investigation is conducted, not only by the archdiocese but by scientists sent over from Rome. No expense is spared. There is great excitement in the town as everyone knows that a miracle will bring in much needed tourism revenue.

Then, after eight long weeks and with great fanfare, the Bishop announces the final ruling.

"It is certain that extraordinary event took place in Murphy's kitchen, quite outside the natural laws of the universe. Yet the Holy See must be very cautious before ruling a miracle. All other explanations must be ruled out...

Unfortunately, in this case, it has been declared a 'No Miracle', because they think that Murphy may have buttered the toast on the wrong side!"

Contributed by Augie Gray...

So, I'm in a bar and two very large women with accents are sitting across from me. I say, "Cool accents, are you two ladies from Scotland?" One of them yells, "It's Wales, you idiot." So I said, "OK, are you two Whales from Scotland?" I don't remember much after that.

Contributed by Augie Gray...

Dear God,

So far today I have done all right. I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overly indulgent.

But in a few minutes, Lord, I am going to get out of bed, and from then on, I am probably going to need a lot more help.

Contributed by Augie Gray...

In The Wisdom Of Solomon

Two women in a bus fighting bitterly over the last available seat.

The conductor had already tried unsuccessfully to intervene when the bus driver shouted to the conductor, "Let the ugly one take the seat"

Both women stood for the rest of the journey

Argument done!

Thought for the Day

'Bread is like the sun. It rises in the yeast and sets in the waist.'

Contributed by Tony Holloway...

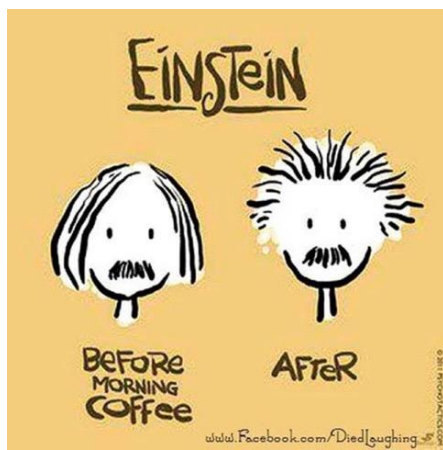
An Analytical Approach to Life

Arguing with a women is like reading the Software License Agreement.

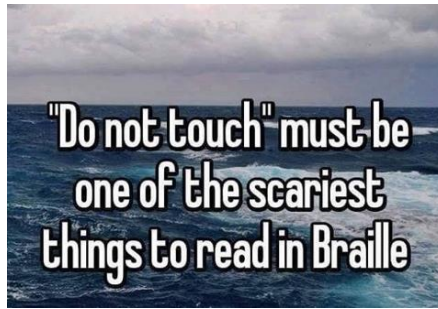
In the end, you ignore everything and click "I agree".

IF A WOMAN SAYS
"DO WHAT YOU WANT"
DO NOT DO WHAT YOU WANT
STAND STILL. DO NOT BLINK.
DON'T EVEN BREATHE.
JUST PLAY DEAD.

www.Facebook.com/DiedLaughing



www.Facebook.com/DiedLaughing



Question - "What would you call us if we all drove red cars?"



Answer - "A Red Carnation."

Contributed by Doug Walker...

Lawyers Don't Lie

A lawyer, who had a wife and 12 children needed to move because his rental agreement was terminated by the owner, who wanted to reoccupy the home.

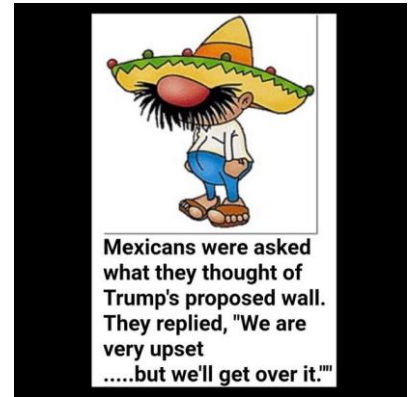
But he was having a lot of difficulty finding a new house. When he said, he had 12 children, no one would rent a home to him because they felt that the children would destroy the place. He couldn't say he had no children, because he couldn't lie (as we all know, lawyers cannot, and do not lie).

So, he sent his wife for a walk to the cemetery with 11 of their kids. He took the remaining one with him to see rental homes with the real estate agent. He loved one of the homes, and the price was right.

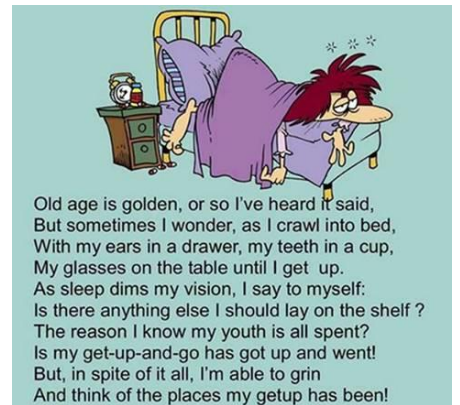
The agent asked: "How many children do you have?" He answered: "Twelve." The agent asked, "Where are the others?" The lawyer, with his best courtroom sad look, answered, "They're in the cemetery with their mother."

MORAL: It's not necessary to lie, one simply chooses the right words. And, don't forget, most politicians are lawyers.

Contributed by Wendy Purdie...



Contributed by Doug Hughes...



Contributed by Augie Gray...

Clever

Monday – Greg

Tuesday – Ian

Wednesday – Greg

Thursday – Ian

Friday – Greg

Saturday – Ian

Sunday – Greg

The Gregorian Calendar

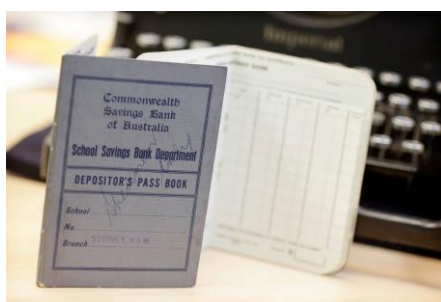
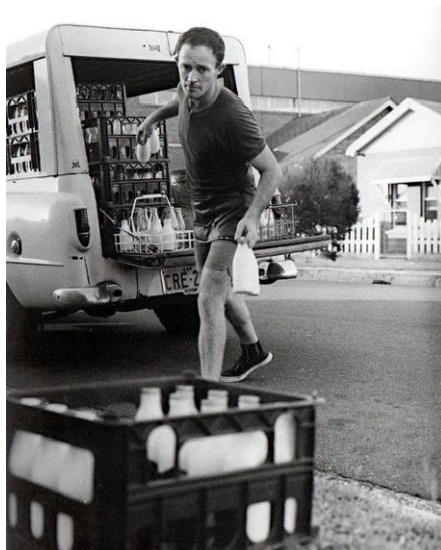
Contributed by Augie Gray...



Contributed by Doug Walker...

A Lot of Memories Here...

Yes, some of these don't seem to be all that long ago. Still fresh in my mind.



A Lot of Memories Here Continued...



Contributed by Mike Mabbitt...

The Gay Nevada Cowboy



A successful rancher died and left everything to his devoted wife.

She was a very good-looking woman and determined to keep the ranch, but knew very little about ranching, so she decided to place an ad in the newspaper for a ranch hand.

Two cowboys applied for the job. One was gay and the other a drunk.

She thought long and hard about it, and when no one else applied she decided to hire the gay guy, figuring it would be safer to have him around the house than the drunk.

He proved to be a hard worker who put in long hours every day and knew a lot about ranching. For weeks, the two of them worked, and the ranch was doing very well.

Then one day, the rancher's widow said to the hired hand, "You have done a really good job, and the ranch looks great. You should go into town and kick up your heels."

The hired hand readily agreed and went into town one Saturday night. One o'clock came, however, and he didn't return. Two o'clock and no hired hand. Finally, he returned around two-thirty

Upon entering the room, he found the rancher's widow sitting by the fireplace with a glass of wine, waiting for him. She quietly called him over to her...

"Unbutton my blouse and take it off," she said.

Trembling, he did as she directed. "Now take off my boots."

He did as she asked, ever so slowly. "Now take off my socks."

He removed each gently and placed them neatly by her boots.

"Now take off my skirt."

He slowly unbuttoned it, constantly watching her eyes in the fire light.

"Now take off my bra..." Again, with trembling hands, he did as he was told and dropped it to the floor.

Then she looked at him and said, "If you ever wear my clothes into town again, you're fired!"

Members' Noticeboard

Sat 9th – Sun 10th March 2019.

GEMKHANA – Vic.

The Combined Victorian Gem Clubs Show is this year hosted by the Warragul & District Lapidary Club at Logan Park, Howitt Street, Warragul. Opening hours are 9.30am to 4.30pm. For more information contact **Carol Kirby** on 0411 055 297.

Sat 30th - Sun 31st March 2019

Canberra Rock Swap – ACT.

8:30am to 5pm (Sat) 8:30am to 4:00pm (Sun)
Wagtail Way, EPIC - Exhibition Park in Canberra, ACT.

Features: Fossickers & dealers. Crystals, minerals, rough & cut gemstones, opals, fossils, lapidary supplies, jewellery. Sieve for sapphires. Food available - No entry cost

For further information in the first instance on any of these events please contact the Club's Show Convenor, **Norm Menadue** on (02) 6258 6631

Contributed by Wendy Bailey...

Gemmasta

On retirement of Andrew Shelley, the manufacture of Gemmasta Machines has been taken over by Brian and Liz Boyle of Gemcuts, Ballina, NSW.

Telephone: 02 6681 1686

<http://www.gemcuts.com.au>



NOTE: It will be a while before they are fully up-and-running. They have a lot to organise!

Fri 3rd - Sun 5th, May 2019, Murraylands Gem and Mineral Club Rockarama "Crystal and Craft Fair", Collier Park, Palmer, SA.

Features: Exhibits of gems, minerals, fossils, jewellery, lapidary machinery and more...most being for sale. Meals, snacks, and drinks available. Public Entry to all the weekend events is FREE.

The Rockarama also includes the 2019 South Australian Metal Detecting Championships which will be held at Collier Park, Palmer, South Australia, on Sunday May 5th, 2019 (Session 1 - Morning competition 10.30am - 11.30am, Session 2 - Afternoon competition 1.00pm - 2.00pm, and the competition prize presentation is at 2.45pm.).

Click/tap on link...[MGMC Website](#)
MGMC President (Kym): 0427 054 336






Tea Tree Gully Gem and Mineral Club Inc.



2019 Biennial Exhibition

Tea Tree Gully Primary School
Memorial Drive, Tea Tree Gully

Saturday 20th July - 9am to 5pm
Sunday 21st July - 10am to 4pm

Demonstrations
Bone Carving
Gemstone Identification
Light Meals and Refreshments
Raffle

Sales
Hand Crafted Jewellery
Mineral Specimens
Fossils
Gemstone Rough
Cut and Polished Gems
Tools and Equipment
Books

Admission Prices
All entry - \$5.00
Children under 12 with an Adult are Free

For more information contact:
Ian Everard 0417 859 443

PLEASE NOTE: To preserve the floor, NO STILETTOS or STUDDED FOOTWEAR.

Mineral Boxes and Flats Price List

(Prices may be subject to increase, due to the price of cardboard)

AA	3.5 x 3.3cm.....	per 100	\$12.00
		Per 10	\$1.50
A	4cm x 4cm.....	per 100	\$13.00
		Per 10	\$1.50
B	5cm x 5.2cm.....	per 100	\$15.00
		Per 10	\$2.00
C	6.2cm x 7.5cm.....	per 100	\$18.00
		Per 10	\$2.50
D	7cm x 7cm.....	per 100	\$19.00
		Per 10	\$2.50
E	7cm x 9.5cm.....	per 100	\$20.00
		Per 10	\$2.50
F	8.5cm x 9.5cm.....	per 100	\$22.00
		Per 10	\$3.00
G	9.5cm x 9.5cm.....	per 100	\$23.00
		Per 10	\$3.50
H	13cm x 9.5cm.....	per 100	\$25.00
		Per 10	\$4.00
I	13cm x 12.5cm.....	per 100	\$30.00
		Per 10	\$4.50
Flat	395 x 265 x 50mm.....	(lid & base)	\$2.50
Flat	398 x 290 x 98mm.....	(lid & base)	\$4.00

(All boxes and flats fold together, no staples required)

Greg Vort-Ronald 0413796279
Email luv2paint@iprimus.com.au

Useful Internet Links

- 2019 Australian Gem & Mineral Calendar: [Click here...](#)
- Adelaide Gem and Mineral Club: [Click here...](#)
- AFLACA-GMCASA: [Click here...](#)
- Australian Federation of Lapidary and Allied Crafts Association (AFLACA): [Click here...](#)
- Australian Lapidary Club Directory: [Click here...](#)
- Australian Lapidary Forum: [Click here...](#)
- Broken Hill Mineral Club: [Click here...](#)
- Enfield Gem and Mineral Club Inc: [Click here...](#)
- Flinders Gem, Geology, and Mineral Club Inc: [Click here...](#)
- Gem and Mineral Clubs Association of South Australia: [Click here...](#)
- Lapidary World: [Click here...](#)
- Metal Detectors - Garrett Australia: [Click here...](#)
- Metal Detectors - Miners Den Adelaide: [Click here...](#)
- Metal Detectors - Adelaide Agent for Garrett Australia: [Click here...](#)
- Mineralogical Society of SA Inc: [Click here...](#)
- Murraylands Gem and Mineral Club Inc: [Click here...](#)
- NQ Explorers: [Click here...](#)
- Prospecting Australia: [Click here...](#)
- Southern Rockhounds: [Click here...](#)
- Tea Tree Gully Gem and Mineral Club: [Click here...](#)
- The Australian Mineral Collector: [Click here...](#)