

# MAREEBA MEMOIRS

*A news periodical for Mareeba and District  
Far North Queensland*

**AUSTRALIA  
DAY  
EDITION**



*James Venture Mulligan 1837-1907*

Published quarterly by

**Mareeba Historical Society**

*345 Byrnes Street, Mareeba Qld 4880*



TO HONOUR THE PAST

No. 33

February 2007



## COVER STORY

James Venture Mulligan arrived in Australia from Ireland in 1860. At the age of 30 he came to Queensland with the Gympie "rush" of 1867. Mulligan's distinguished career as an explorer began with his Palmer River expedition in 1873, during which he found payable gold. He headed two more expeditions to the Palmer in 1874 extending his third visit to include the Walsh River.

That same year he embarked on a fourth trip this time to the St George and McLeod Rivers, as well as investigating the heads of both the Normanby and Palmer Rivers. A fifth expedition in 1875 involved a journey from Cooktown to Junction Creek, near Mount Surprise, and in June that year discovered tin at Wild River. Mulligan discovered payable gold at the Hodgkinson River during his sixth expedition in 1876. He did numerous trips during 1881 and 1883 between Herberton, Kingsborough, Tate and Valley of Lagoons Station.

He died at Mount Molloy August 24, 1907.

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**MEETINGS:** Monthly meetings are held every fourth Thursday 7:30pm, Writers Forum every third Saturday 9:30am, and Family History workshops every fourth Saturday 9:30am at the Research Centre, Centenary Park, Mareeba.

**MEMBERSHIP FEES:** Due June 30, annually

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**OPENING HOURS:** The Research Centre is open every Wednesday 8am to 2pm, plus Saturday morning on Market Days. Appointments can be made outside these hours.

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## ***FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK***



Welcome to the first of our 2007 newsletters.

In the previous edition you may recall mention of material outstripping available space for once. Well, it looks like we are back to normal. Nonetheless, readers can look forward to the same informative format that saw last year's *Memoirs* so successful.

This edition is highlighted by our contribution to Australia Day (page 2); notes from the Secretary (page 3); the usual News and Views (page 3); an interesting article on conservation (page 6); another frank and informative member profile (page 7); and a travel destination of historical importance (page 10).

And don't forget our new-beaut Bulletin publications. Bulletin number 4 deals with monuments of the Mareeba Shire. Now that we have started producing these quarterly bulletins it would be an asset to have them continue. If anyone is interested in producing a bulletin we need around 1400 words preferably on disk: family history, past events, people of interest, or whatever. Research will prove a rewarding experience for anyone with time on their hands.

Sharing information means we can look forward to yet another exciting chapter in our publication endeavours.

As usual, if you have something to say or to include in *Memoirs* please phone, fax or e-mail us. Better still, drop in to the Research Centre, have a cuppa and air your comments personally.

See you there!



Co-editor  
John Hay

*Practise does not make perfect, it simply makes one aware of past mistakes. Ed*

## **AUSTRALIA DAY AND A RELEVANT DISPLAY**

On July 9, 1900 Queen Victoria signed the Bill which established the new Commonwealth of Australia.

On January 1, 1901 Australia celebrated the birth of a nation. Representatives from all parts of the British Empire arrived to join in the street celebrations in Sydney. Under Federation women were given the right to vote, but Aborigines were excluded and had to wait a further 60 years for that right.

John Adrian Lilly became Australia's first Governor General and Edmund Barton, a New South Wales politician, was sworn in as Australia's first Prime Minister, along with the first members of the Federal Cabinet. The first Federal Parliament was opened by the Duke and Duchess of York two months later thus officially ending the colonial era of Australia.

In May 1901 the Australia flag was raised at Melbourne's Exhibition Building for the first time. Australia was finally "One Nation"!

Andrew Fisher was the first Queenslander to become Prime Minister of Australia. First elected in 1908, Fisher went on to fill the post three times after leading his Labour Party (sic) to victory in 1910 and again in 1914. He resigned in 1915 to become High Commissioner for Australia in London.

To coincide with the anniversary of that momentous occasion, the theme of this year's Australia Day display was the life and times of James Venture Mulligan. An extensive array of photographs, documentation and maps gave visitors the opportunity to learn of Mulligan's impressive career.

As a forerunner to our August 26 "Mulligan's 100th" remembrance service to be held at the Mount Molloy Cemetery, where Mulligan was laid to rest a century ago, the enthusiastic public interest generated by our Australia Day display could be a sign of things to come.

Top marks to Helen and David for putting the display together and for manning the post on the day.

### ***Word from your Secretary***

In order to augment our files, how about taking the time to jot down details about your house and property. For example:

- Who first owned the land (see deeds, etc)
- When was the house built
- Who was the house built for and who did the job
- What material was used: timber, masonry brick
- Is it low or high set
- Was it altered or added to over the years
- Was it initially other than a residential building
- What was the occupation/history of the owners
- List previous owners plus any other relevant data
- What about an old photograph, plans, deeds, etc

All this information will be tremendously valuable in years to come. Pass it on!

Helen

### ***NEWS AND VIEWS***

Everyone scrubbed up well for our annual break-up (December 9). This was yet another fine spread with hosts Helen and Walter providing the perfect venue for such a gathering. A good rollup of members ensured a pleasant night.

Congratulations to the winner of our Christmas Hamper, Alison Girenti, from Bibbohra.

Another wonderful effort by Pat, Helen and Dolly and to everyone who participated in the raffle.

Volunteers are urgently required to assist Pat with the Easter raffle from February 22 to April 3. Help is needed every week for two days, Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 12am, and on Market days. Please Help!

The latest news on Wolfram Camp is that Queensland Ores Limited (QOL) is on track to open what they term as "Australia's richest tungsten-molybdenum mine" in the third quarter of 2007.

The Chairman of QOL stated: "Now we move from being an explorer to a resources producer – this is a significant milestone in the company's development. We also have some most prospective exploration tenements in the Bamford Hill region south-west of Wolfram Camp and look forward to more closely assessing their potential in due course."

With a new Chief Executive Officer at the helm, QOL's outlook is bright. Their application for a Mining Lease is anticipated to be granted by March 2007.

It seems that the Editor's comments regarding reader reaction, featured in the previous edition of Memoirs, received a boost at last November's meeting. The general consensus was that Memoirs was a good read.

Makes it all worthwhile!

Our two "Monster Book Sales" have gone over well. Held in conjunction with the Mareeba Council Library, the public response was gratifying yet not surprising. "Nothing over \$5" meant that book bargains were there for the taking. Another mighty effort by all concerned.

It has become more than evident that our spacious venue is ideally suited for such occasions. The astute organising and setting out of sales material and displays by our volunteer staff is also apparent. As future operations transpire the value of this unique combination will prove to be a financial asset and should not be under estimated.

A four-man group including your scribe and Jeff, our Gordonvale member, recently visited the Fossil Brook Cemetery. Located near Burlington Station, south of Almaden, this small and isolated Cemetery is just one of the 38 in the Mareeba Shire.

The group went on to visit the Einasleigh Gorge, the Kidston battery and the Emuford battery. A society field trip to the Kidston battery and mining area has been proposed for later this year, with an overnight stay at the nearby accommodation facility. Those interested in this excursion should attend mid-year meetings.

Our normal monthly book sale days continue to be well patronised. Gerry and Bill continue to be the main stalwarts turning up every market day to assist with setting up. The smooth operation of the day could well be attributed to "secret men's business", according to Helen. The donation of books and magazines by members of the public may end up contributing to perpetual book sale days. It is an excellent source of much-needed revenue.

There was some degree of drama early January when our front glass door was smashed during the night. Thankfully nothing inside the building was interfered with. A neighbour quickly informed Helen who organised the broken pane to be replaced the following day.

It was quite appropriate to see our recent publication *Images of Wolfram Camp* previewed in the December 2006 edition of the monthly magazine, *Australian Family Tree Connection*. A cover shot and text was included in the "recently published reference books" section.

Mareeba's 2007 Australia Day Celebration at Centenary Park proved a particularly special day for our organisation. Previously nominated, we picked up the Australia Day Community Event Awards issued by the Mareeba Shire Council for outstanding work in the Shire. The event was the "Welcome Back to Wolfram Camp" Monument Day October 15, 2006.

Congratulations to all those involved.

Via the generosity of the Cairns Historical Society we have acquired a second map cabinet. Unforeseeably, the problem of transporting it to Mareeba proved challenging. Thanks to Bruce and Jeff for the initial assessment which saw the arrival of the drawers minus the heavy timber cabinet itself.

Literally as we went to press, Jeff and Ann arrived on our February Market Day with the cabinet in tow. Apparently many helpers and a car trailer were needed. Extra thanks must go to Jeff for organising the final pick up and delivery to our premises.



## **THE CONCEPT OF HERITAGE CONSERVATION**

*An analysis by John C. Hay*

Heritage conservation takes on many forms. A photograph or a newspaper can be just as historically important as that of a building or heritage site.

The one difference with this simple analogy is the way in which the retention or maintenance of the article is constituted. For example, in Australia there are two predominant sets of guidelines dealing with conservation: the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, and the ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of places of cultural significance.

Within the framework of a Museum or Historical Society, conservation and preservation of articles refers mainly to "collections", while conservation and preservation under the ICOMOS Charter refers to "places". The execution of the safekeeping method is relevant to the item.

In this edition we deal with the latter, abovementioned:

In 1966, the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was formulated in Venice. Following the 5th General Assembly of ICOMOS in Moscow in 1977, the *Venice Charter* was reviewed and adopted by Australian ICOMOS. This resulted in the *Burra Charter* being formulated under guidelines of the Australian ICOMOS on August 19, 1979 at Burra Burra (later truncated to just Burra) in South Australia. The revised Charter was adopted February 23, 1981, revised in 1988 and then again in 1996<sup>1</sup>.

The *Burra Charter* was based on the heritage conservation of Australia's first mining town.

Ian Auhl, a school teacher, was so impressed with the Cornish architecture and Welsh construction of South Australia's original mining town of Burra Burra that in 1971 he mooted the conservation of the place. Touted as the predecessor of gold-fever in the Eastern

states, "Coppermania" in the early 1840s was responsible for South Australia being the first Colony to have mines.

Burra Burra copper ore was discovered in 1845 and by the time the Victorian gold-rush began six years later, the mine employed almost 1000 miners ... mostly Cornish. Described as likened to a Cornish mining town, Burra Burra became the largest inland Australian town but lost its source of income when the smelters closed in 1877 leaving in its wake a snap-shot of an early Australian mining industry<sup>2</sup>.

Few public buildings have been erected since and many of the Cornish cottages are still occupied. The town has preserved much of its past by living in it. But the buildings gave the town permanency – and an architecture unified by the strong texture of the local stone and the fine workmanship of local masons<sup>3</sup>.

It was the architectural and aesthetic value of Burra Burra that cemented its place not only in Australian history but in the pages of Australia's first conservation agreement. It was this standard of conservation that became the archetype to today's retention of cultural heritage.

The most significant aspect of the *Burra Charter* is the universal phraseology: conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance; maintenance means the continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of the place; preservation means maintaining the fabric of a place; while cultural significance means the aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations<sup>4</sup>.

Yet before the *Burra Charter* can be applied a nomination for a heritage site or building must be approved by the governing body. In the public arena, there is a general reluctance to accept heritage listings where commercialism enters into the equation.

Short term commercial gain often sets the criteria for objections. Moreover, stringent controls over historic buildings and site management make some listings unpopular.

<sup>1</sup> *Understanding The Burra Charter*: Australia ICOMOS Publication, 1996

<sup>2</sup> *The Palmer Legacy*, John C. Hay 1998 p.209

<sup>3</sup> *Burra Sketch Book*; Maurice Perry and Ian Auhl p.52, p.63. First published in 1969

<sup>4</sup> *The Australian ICOMOS Charter*. Queensland National Trust, 1981

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## **MEMBER PROFILE**

*An informative interview with Max Croft*

Max and his wife moved to Mareeba from Atherton about 4½ years ago. "We were in Townsville before that," Max said, remembering life before retirement. "I served my apprenticeship as a diesel fitter in Brisbane. That type of work took me all over the place. In the 1950s I was in Atherton working on earth moving machinery and tractors. I was the local tractor mechanic around the farms. That's how I got to know the place and like it. I've always been around the Tableland."

Q: What prompted you to join the Society.

A: I've always been interested in history, particularly the local history about where I live. I have heaps of books on local history. It's something I think should be kept and handed down. The aims of a society such as ours are just so important.

The first four or five meetings I attended were at Lyons Street. There's a vast difference now; room to set out records, leave them out and finish off research the next day. Unlike the old place there's room to do that now.

Q: What about organised activities

A: I like the field trips – gives everyone a chance to see some of the places where our heritage started.

Q: What about improving meetings

A: I think meetings are already improving. I can remember when there were just a handful of members turning up ... now look at it! I like at the end of meetings when each member gets to have their say. I don't know all the members, not that they all attend, but that helps to see what they've been up to and gives them a chance to get involved.

I reckon if people are interested enough to join then they should keep up with what's going on and attend more meetings. That would be an improvement!

Q: What about between meetings

A: Same thing! Trying to involve people is probably the hardest part. But if they don't come to meetings you won't drag them along in between. I'd also like to see us more in the public eye. The media is not always the answer, although that Wolfram Camp article was great. The book sales have lifted our profile.

Q: Do you think research is important

A: Yes I do! Research is another way of involving people. Everyone should do it. Either go along and lend a hand, or pick a subject and make up something for the newsletter. I'll have to see if I can make a better effort myself. That can be my New Year's resolution.

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A quote from *Looking to the Future*, a booklet from the Federation of Australian Historical Societies.

"Local history is a most valuable asset that contributes not only to the local community but more importantly to our State and National history and our Australian sense of identity."

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Ever wonder about the meaning of those seemingly nonsensical acronyms that govern our computers? For anyone using a scanner the word TWAIN would be familiar. It's a hardware specific driver allowing most programmes to access scanners. In the absence of a highfalutin term they came up with *Technology Without An Interesting Name*. Who would have thought of that?

## ***HISTORICALLY SPEAKING ...***

For anyone interested in Queensland's heritage, a visit to the Caboolture Historical Village is a must. It is without argument one of the greatest attractions dedicated to our past one is ever likely to see.

The local historical society that runs the Village commenced operations in 1957. The Caboolture Shire Council gave them the four-hectare site in 1979, and the society has been building ever since. As present time there are over 70 historical buildings to visit with displays covering all aspects of early-day life from lawn mowers to lavatories and morgues to motor cars.

According to the management of the complex, "Most of the buildings have been relocated from the shire of Caboolture. They have been restored by the Caboolture Historical Society's 'Dad's Army' with help from Woodford prisoners, community service workers, community groups such as Apex, Lions, Rotary and Quota, and volunteer helpers. All the buildings are furnished with thousands of items which have been donated."

The complex is located on Beerburrum Road (the old northern access road) not a great distance from the town of Caboolture. Partaking of smoko will be a rewarding experience in the "Boiling Billy" tea room. Don't be surprised to have a member of the volunteer staff jump the counter and join you for a good old fashioned natter. Two days should be set aside in order to do full justice to the visit.

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### ***Looking Back: February 2000 Memoirs***

On Saturday January 8, 2000 the Mayor of Mareeba, Chris Lewis, dedicated the opening of the Honour Roll in the Costin Street Cemetery. This project took members four years to bring to fruition, with one person stopping the research clock at 2500 hours.

A suggestion has been made that the bulletins read out at the monthly meetings should be filed under "*The Bunny Sides Collection*".

## SEMINARS

With technology advancing daily it is becoming more evident that members need to be involved with what we do. Processing images are a large part of our archival system, so the methods employed need to be passed on.

A photographic "search and record" seminar was held to coincide with February's Writers' Forum during which interested members availed themselves of the opportunity to learn the system. This included finding images on the computer and learning the programme, locating the images in storage, and a basic understanding of the recording and scanning process.

With the number of acquisitions continually growing, further seminars dealing with processing will prove compulsory. None of us will be here forever, so the need to share information is abundantly crucial.

After all, we are looking after tomorrow's past.

A grants seminar is to be held on Sunday February 25 at Malanda. The seminar has been designed to help volunteer organisations to access the best source of funding, and when and how to make applications.

We have two members attending this very important tutorial. More information in May Memoirs.

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Don't forget, we handle six publications all by local authors. Contact Helen for these books:

*Riches of Wolfram Camp*

*Images of Wolfram Camp*

*The Lone Wolf*

*Demise of the Typewriter*

*Beyond Hell's Gate*

*The Mecca of my Desires*

And speaking of books, the next edition of Memoirs will feature a book review by Eddie Sheerans. Eddie has just finished what he has described as "a great read". Stay tuned!

\*The word of the day is "Rebarbative". Answer page 12.

### ***DID YOU KNOW!***

The discovery of payable gold at Nashville, later to become known as Gympie, was formerly advertised in the *Brisbane Courier* on October 17, 1867. Although a number of people claimed to have found the first gold, James Nash was credited with the discovery and paid £1000 by the new Queensland Government for initiating the find.

The alluvial gold was quickly worked out and reefing became the long-running source of the precious metal. More than 100 reefs opened during the 60-year gold production of the field. The richest of these was the *Scottish Gympie* mine. After 30 years production up to September 30, 1917, 1,472,542 tons of stone was crushed for 568,497 ounces of gold to the value of £1,999,207.

The sum total of the mine when it ended its days as a producer was 1,589,162 tons of stone for 608,279 ounces of gold. Source: *QGMJ Number 741, July 1963*

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Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson went on a camping trip. After a good meal and a bottle of wine they lay down for the night. Some hours later, Holmes awoke and nudging his faithful friend said, "Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

"I see millions and millions of stars," Watson replied.

"And what does that tell you, my dear friend?" asked Holmes.

"Astronomically," replied Watson, "it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions and billions of planets.

"Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small.

"Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?"

"Watson, you idiot," replied Holmes, "it tells me somebody stole our tent!"

\*A: Unattractive, fearsome or repellent

## RESEARCH ENQUIRIES

**ASSISTANCE:** A research officer will assist by searching society records

**NON-MEMBERS:** A minimum fee of \$11 per hour (GST included) and includes up to five A4 photocopies. \$5 per hour or part thereof D.I.Y.

**ADDITIONAL EXPENSES:** If a visit to a cemetery or library is deemed necessary, travelling expenses will also apply

**ENQUIRIES:** All enquiries should be in writing and include a stamped, self addressed envelope

### Research at the Centre

Rates of payment for research at the Research Centre have yet to be decided. Contact the Secretary for further information

### MEETING DATES 2007

February 22, March 22, April 26

### *Birth of the computer – part 2:*

In 1947, two employees of the CSIR Division of Radiophysics started building Australia's first computer. In terms of advancement, Australian was up there with the British and the Americans at the beginning of the digital age. By 1949, CSIRAC, as it was called, was running simple programs. It was the fifth electronic computer ever built, the first computer in Melbourne and in Australia. Its primary hard drive had a memory capacity of around two thousand bytes (2mb) of storage: about ten thousand times less than that of a laptop PC.

By 1964, Melbourne University had purchased a transistorised computer of vastly greater power. CSIRAC was decommissioned, carefully dismantled and despatched to the Museum of Victoria.

In 1996, this seven-tonne computer was delivered to the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Building in Carlton, Victoria.

Filling a large room, CSIRAC still exists in its entirety. It is the only "first generation" computer left in the world.