

EDEN KILLER WHALE MUSEUM

Home of Old Tom - Est. 1931

SOUNDINGS

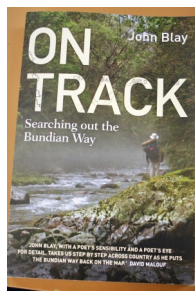
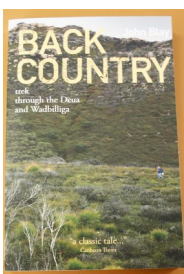
NEWSLETTER June 2023

Here we are to June, the month which signals the winter solstice and the halfway mark of the calendar year. It also summons the cold weather of which we have had a little taste, over past weeks. It brought us up with a jolt and cast its shroud on the travelling public. Visitor numbers held up extraordinarily well until Easter and the first term holidays. When they passed, the fall off was noticeable. Quieter times create opportunities to undertake tasks with minimum discomfort of our visitors.

May saw our turn to host the SEHGI quarterly meeting. Thus on the 13th, some thirty people, after having partaken of a welcoming cuppa, gathered under the sails to reflect on the progress and doings of each of the member groups over the three months.

Our spotlight on the occasion, was on local resident, John Blay, as guest speaker. He didn't disappoint.

John, through his wanderings over the south eastern landscape of Australia, particularly, became enthralled by the movements of the indigenous communities, how they survived and how they endured over millennia. He was particularly captured by those tribal groups who in season, sought both the coastal bounty and that of the highlands. Thus was created the opportunity to trade and engage in personal matters. The tracks that these stout hearted people used became of special interest to John with the result that he began consulting aboriginal elders and people with knowledge of earlier Euro-



pean times, who had personal contact with First Nation inhabitants.

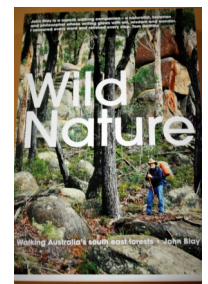
So John, now captured by the history and a certain amount of romance for the subject, tramped the tracks, well aware that he was in footsteps laid down over thousands of years. He noted flora, water, signs of indigenous agriculture, culture sites and of course, water availability.



There are quite a number of these tracks between coast and hinterlands. The track from coast to Gulaga was replicated many times. Then there was Bundian. Balgala to Balawan and further to complete the 365KM on to Targangal. Some of our towns and villages stand where aboriginal living places had been. Many of the tracks became roads of the white man, following that of the original inhabitants and their choice of grades, food and water resources.

But his special interest, was this track that intrigued most of all. And while he had found traces of the existence agriculture and tools, shield trees etc, the whole of track, between Twofold Bay and Kosciusko presented a challenge.

Then, into the picture came Harold Farrell. A chance meeting in a Bombala pub, with Harold with his intimate knowledge of the Track's whereabouts, became the catalyst for John to become prime mover of the Bundian Track project the journey of which he still travels. We wish him continuing success.



John Blay's books are available at the Museum Shop

The Collection

Month by month the collection continues to expand From the seemingly insignificant to more visible items. These important gems are being catalogued and secured for future generations.

Of course, space is limited thus requiring considered application before acceptance is decided. This selection is at the discretion and consideration of the Curatorial Committee.

The C.C. meets on the third Monday of the month at 2PM in the Library. Collection Manager Angela George is in attendance to advise and guide on the the item's collection value. Importantly, it needs to be aligned with the collection direction or theme. Ours are within the parameters of is whaling, fishing and timber industries and general local history. At times the decision to collect is somewhat difficult to keep faith with our plan and equally that with the prospective donor.

With all donors, those who are being asked "if the Museum wants it", needs to explain to the person that as an institution we have a system that is followed world wide. Among other things the paperwork delivered to the donor provides, among other things that their gift is part of the EKWM collection, as directed. We adhere to the basic system, modified for particular relevance to our institution as required.

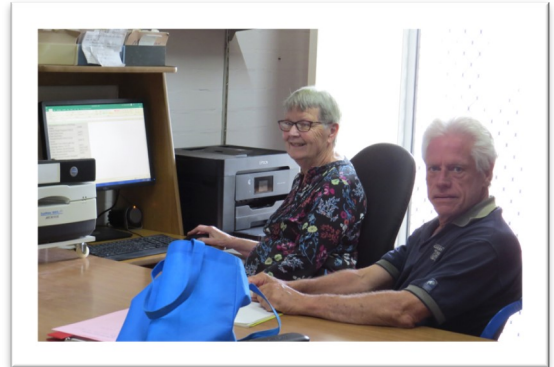
It is well to remember that no individual has authority to accept donations as a done deal, in the first instance. The method is to explain that we require to have a gift Proposal Form, completed and signed. Following its receipt the item will go before the Curatorial Committee and the donor advised.

Relevance is at the core of our being. Importantly for today, more so into the future.

So, too is the library. After the turn of the century building of the C.M.'s office, the library was being established. We had aimed to have 2000 books by A.D. 2000. The initial course we set our sights upon was to buy two copies of any volume was of particular relevance, one for careful keeping in the collection and one to loan if called upon.

Events soon overtook us. Space was readily consumed. I'm not sure if we attained the goal we set ourselves, as I don't believe we have ever carried out a count. Or the compatibility of Mozaic with a library structure

All is to be revealed in the very near future. Celia Hannan and David Sinfield have set to, to review the library collection and bring the whole into a much more professional, physical and recorded situation.



They grasped the opportunity presented to change collection programme, Mozaic, to that of E-Hive. While we were very early users of the former, the latter has greater flexibility, more library friendly, easier to use and will accommodate a greater number of nominated users.

Celia and David have followed their challenge with their regular Wednesday sessions. They have made great strides to date. We look forward to their final report.

It's rather a pity that the library is not convenient for members and the public to make use of it. Were it at street level, it would present a great resource to the town, offering a wider choice of area specific books for the student and readers, generally The geography of the site makes a service such as this extremely unlikely.

If you are interested in helping below decks, give Angela a call at the Museum, she would be pleased to hear from you. Work there is certainly unending. Equally, it is challenging and absorbing. Ange might be able to organise a time for you to go and have a look around and get the feel of the place. Perhaps a meeting with Celia and David on their day, would be a good way to start. Ange would certainly arrange that for you;



Continuing A Water Story

As the fifties emerged, materials gradually became a little easier to obtain. Serious work settled into the Snowy Scheme, creating quite a demand on earth moving contractors among other trades. Equipment was not easily obtained, with limited supply coming into the country. Snowy became the priority. I remember, I was working in a garage on Hume Highway and shipment after shipment of the billet buildings passing, en route to Cooma and the regions'.

Those early fifties proved to be quite wet years, with floods along the east coast of NSW, creating floods in their wake. Earth works were affected. No mention of "climate change and its effect on weather "events". In those days people were led to believe it was ""nuclear tests causing the "problem". A new "ice age" was in the offing. It's easy to excuse my generation for being a little agnostic, regarding today's dire warnings.

Another impediment was that of the Menzie's Government which put a squeeze on borrowings, which brought the phrase "credit squeeze" into the jargon. Time dragged on, so the gloss and fanfare of the Foundation Stone for The Tantawanglo Water Scheme, faded. It was not until 1953 that the patina that had formed in the interim, was able to be polished up and the project was set back into motion.

In the meantime Eden and the other towns which were to benefit, continued to rely on various methods to gather water for domestic and commercial purposes. Angela George joins me in the lament that few, if any, of these sites are marked for their historical importance. Many are all too quickly passing from living memory.

Angela has made a study of many sites around Pambula-Merimbula to lessen the foregoing and loss of record. The Pambula well site is still quite visible and has noted some creek venues, around the Merimbula village.

There were signed water sites on each of the Brown Mountain and Mount Darragh roads which were quite visible until quite recently, They may still be there. Smile you might, but in consideration of the age of these particular courses, these sites may have been partly for early motorists whose gallant vehicles boiled frequently on mountain climbs. My first-hand experience of that

occurring was in Dad's Essex Super Six. With the boiling came the stern warning to stay back. And though the radiator cap was on the outside, the butterfly bonnet was lifted, sometimes both sides. Maybe it was thought the old donk might cool more quickly as a result. Meanwhile the steam hissed!

If you pass through Nimmitabel, the town well is very visible. And too, I know of one out of Bombala on the Gunningrah Road. This road was the early coach route to Cooma.

The terrific 1910 Hall photo shows the, a, town well on the lookout hill. Can anyone pin point its location? Is that the corner of the Customs House on the right hand side?

In the late 70's early 80's builder, Percy Rimington found a well

that had been forgotten. He was building the now Great Southern Inn bottle department as well as reno's to the main building, when part of the job fell into an old well, with disruptive consequences. So too, a metal detector would find the remnants of a steel pipe that appeared to have run to the G.S. Hotel parallel to Chandos St from the vicinity of the sewer pump station, opposite the gate site of the cannery.

The cannery itself had a dam on the creek that runs parallel to Cattle Bay Road. It's former existence is easily confirmed with just a stop, leave your car and look through the scrub.

With the factory being established in the forties, the dam would have been pre-reticulation. The tragic drowning of local lad hastened its end, with a deliberate breach was made, to drain it. Speaking with Rob Whiter, it appears that the water was captured and piped to tanks adjacent to the boiler room. Maybe this water was used for steam generation, it being not suitable for food manufacturing. First hand knowledge is fast being lost to living memory of this site as well.



Soundings May 2023

About People

A hearty welcome to two new members in the persons of John Walker and Stephan Tatham. I am sure you will enjoy your time with EKWM.

Ben Neville is heading along on his journey to attain his teaching degree as a remote student. We have pledged to support him as we are able.

Ben 2/12 years still to complete with Macquarie, but is advanced enough in to enjoy a little of what it is all about. He had his first two week placement at, his alma mater, EMHS.

Ben completed the fortnight flying solo for some periods, sitting in on others, and experiencing a variety of subjects. He finished the time with his enthusiasm not only intact, but quite stimulated.

The ready help of the staff and the courtesy shown him by the students, left a very favourable impression.

Nice words about our hometown, public school!

The Calendar

June

8th Board meeting

12th Kings birthday

19th Curatorial meeting 2PM Linrary.

21st Friends meeting 9AM Theatrette

21/22 Winter solstice

(should have another murder mystery night)

23rd Vic School Hols commence

30th NSW School Hols commence

30th End of EKWM fiscal year.

JULY

10th NSW Schools resume

17th Vic schools resume

Great Excitement on Monaro

There was excitement in the atmosphere at Cooma over the past month. A much anticipated, refurbished steam locomotive arrived at Cooma station, bringing a look into the future and memories of nearly four decades ago. Again Old Smokey might soon be seen coming around the Bunyan Bend as John Scott (?) would call, on 2XL about 7-30AM on train days.

Avast store of vintage memory would have been flowing back and the young will carry the the sight of loco number 3203, arriving at its new home ,by road transport.

The Cooma Monaro Railway group have a very ambitious and progressive plans. 3203 steam locomotive is sitting on rail and under cover. Members stoking up their own, personal boilers ; for what is full steam ahead. We send every good wish. (Great SEHGI venue ?).

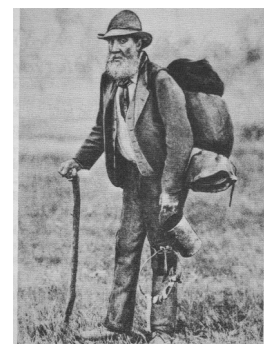


In 1891 Henry Lawson wrote "On the Wallaby".

Now that the poles are rotting, the camp-fires are dead,
And the possums may gambol in trees overhead
I am humping my bluey far out on the land
And the prints of my bliuchers sink deep in the sand:
I am on the wallaby humping my drum,
And I came by the tracks where the sundowners come

A glance along the Museum car park at some of the rigs the nomads use for their Wallaby escapades, it certainly bears no resemblances to Henry's day!

Picture, Complete Works 1984



Keep

Well.....

Jack

