

Soundings

EDEN KILLER WHALE MUSEUM

Established 1931

Newsletter, September, 2023

EKWM Out and About

Notwithstanding the workload at EKWM, the crew represented us admirably, over what proved to be a quite busy period, district-wise.

August heralded not only the Quarterly SEHGI meeting, but also the AGM of that, dare I say, august body?

Our colleagues at Bermagui led the charge over the time, arranging that function as well as a professional development session on a separate date. Our Merimbula friends followed on, and arranged a further development programme on a different subject of collection management. Both the host groups warmly welcomed our members, as is their custom. The exchange of knowledge and the strengthening of friendships will enhance all attending organisations and the strengthen the safety, security and the exhibition of their precious collections. I'll try to round up a bit of detail, here.

The AGM of SEHGI, saw President Peter Clancy and Secretary, Jenny Drenkhahn re-elected, with Jenny combining the treasury in her domain. Thanks to those who accepted office

After many years, Margaret Sheaves did not make herself available as a candidate for office. Marg held various portfolios and the office of Treasurer for umpteen years. She held the office of Co-ordinator of the organisation when it was under the auspices of M.A., attending a national conference in Sydney, while holding that office. She was a great encourager on the home front, urging members to attend quarterlies and special events.

I thank Margaret for her efforts over the years and wish her good health and happiness into the future.

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Bermagui was again to the fore with a professional development workshop. Our Merimbula colleagues joined with them the next day, furthering the knowledge and knowhow of museum skills. Our reps. Collections Manager, Angela George and her reliable offside, Stephanie Rawlings, enjoyed the programmes and further strengthening bonds over the couple of days.



Many thanks to Ange and Steph, for flying our flag while supporting our neighbouring organisations

Volunteer Expo

To cap off a busy couple of weeks, with Jenny Drenkhahn, David Sinfield, Leone Fairweather and Robert Whiter, we were well represented at the BVSC's Expo for Volunteers, held at the Bega Community Centre on the 8th September. There were many and varied volunteer groups, from all around the Shire.



As well as museums, Animal Welfare, Cancer Assist, Meals on Wheels, Nursing Mothers and many others had information tables showing what they do so well.

• continued over leaf

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- Mayor, Russell Fitzpatrick opened proceedings at 10AM and a ladies choir sang beautifully.
A very worthwhile and informative day was the consensus of our team
Thanks to Jen and Leone for copy and pic

ABOUT SEHGI

One trouble with familiarity, in small communities, is that it is often easy to overlook the fact that the other party may not have knowledge of a local subject under discussion.

I further thought that some of our people must wonder what the dickens are we talking about when we talk of an organisation with the strange acronym, SEHGI. With this in mind, I thought I would give a potted history of the group.

SEHGI it took its rise about forty years ago under the auspices of Museum's Australia.

Berti Egan and I attended a meeting of Museums Aust NSW, at Wollongong, towards the end of the seventies.

Representatives of regional museums were invited. It was said at the time, that it was the first meeting of that organisation to be held outside a capital city. Regional chapters were formed. We became the S.E. Chapter



Berti L. M. Egan, Citizen of the year.

The Chapters were to be largely autonomous, with direct access to M.A., aimed at support and advocacy. In some areas their continuity did not last. In our corner of the world, our lot has never faulted, with few quarterly meetings missed. Recent events of the pandemic and monster bushfires, rained on our parade and sullied our meeting record like no other.

With monotonous regularity, the subject of boundaries was on our agenda. Initially, Braidwood was at the extremity of our territory and we were not aware of any meeting held north of Cobargo. in that town.

Another of my old coppers, Beryl Bowler OBE, came with me to a very early chapter a meeting at Moruya. It was obvious even in those early days that the tyranny of distance would have a impact of the ongoing success of the



Beryl Bowler O.B.E.

group. No meeting of our group tht far north ever followed

The boundary eventually settled on representatives from Berridale, Cooma, Bombala, Cobargo, Bermagui, Merimbula, Bega Pambula and Eden. Though across that line the map, Mallacoota accepted our invitation to join us.

I venture to offer, but there could be a case for a look at the boundaries again. Sure the roads are better but the distances are no shorter and I further venture, the average age of the participants, are even further up the scale than they were at the outset. The amalgamation of local government areas too, can have a bearing on the cover on an organisation such as SEHGI.

The autonomy worked well for twenty odd years. Without forewarning, M.A. decided they would take over whatever funds the Chapters held and apply to them when we wanted to spend some of our own money. None of the cash we held had had originated from M.A

Laden down by riches (we had about \$600) we agreed they could take a running jump (among other crudities) and we would go it alone. We felt bold enough to determine we could manage all that money. It was also noted that as far as support and advocacy, it was left somewhat wanting.

With a name being required, that chosen was suggested by staunch supporter, Shirley Bazley. This was followed by incorporation.

A further milestone was when the state government decided to combine all the visual arts and collecting institution matters, funding etc. would come under the one body styled, Museums and Galleries NSW. No doubt this was a money saving episode. It was oft repeated that it was a manoeuvre to lessen the cash pie and cut what remained to favour a particular branch of the arts, which had lobbied strongly for such outcome.

So in a way, we were ahead of the pack, believing we had little to lose. The organisation has endured for nearly half a century. Great friendships have been formed, knowledge exchanged and fellow groups respected. It speaks for itself. 2

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II A Sunday gold rush.... In 1976 I was the entertainment arranger for Lodge Baddeley, which group was where I first met Bert Egan. Never short of a yarn. Bert would speak of Yambulla gold mine and as a young bloke; prior to WW1, he would work with his father who had a bullock team. Egan Sr had an understanding (which was all you needed in that era) to keep the mining camp provided with its needs. He told of Mrs Hite, some of whose descendants remain in Eden, who operated a boarding house.

There was no liquor licence. Unimaginable is a mining camp without booze Mrs Hite, being an astute business woman, offered a free beer with every orange bought.

The beer flowed. I doubt if much of the very healthy orange juice, did. I have often thought how much of Mr Egan's wagon space was given over to oranges and how much to alcohol. Then again, Mrs Hite may have re-purchased un-used oranges at a favourable price. The lady could go down in history as the original recycler!

So with Bert as guide, I set to organise the day and made it open to anyone that was interested. Yambulla had been abandoned for decades. Before the Forestry Commission undertook its major road building programme which included the Imlay Road. the "roads" were just tracks. There were probably some who took one look at the tracks rather regretted their decision to join us.

A glance at the pics (a) Jo-anne O'Callaghan'(I think), in the thrall of Bert, c/w Panama hat, walking stick and an appropriate a yarn.

The stampers in the background remained in situ for several more decades There were attempts to open the mine up again, but the price per ounce seemed to always sink just as it was reaching an equitable level, that would allow the project to get underway. Fred Dawson of Wonboyn and Les Strickland of Eden were among those who I knew, who were interested at "firing the old site up".

Photo (b) gives an idea of the support the trip received. The creek crossing was a no bridge too far, for some. The bloke in the shorts and back to the camera is Peter Keough. Peter was a very talented manufacturing jeweller who came to Eden from north



Sydney. His shop was in Imlay St around about where Mark Anthony's apparel shop is today. Pete came here through friendship of the Cedric and Thelma Cocks family. He was funny, generous man and an active member of Apex. An all round great citizen of the town. He traded here for about ten years then moved to Dubbo. Sadly he passed away while still relatively young.

With the Committee's blessing, I asked Peter would he design and quote on an appropriate life member's badge for presentation to Bert Egan. He did neither. Instead he designed and crafted a magnificent jewel, commensurate with the esteem in which he, we and the town. held Bert Egan. Gold and silver were the choice of material Peter used. When it came to the payment side

of things, there would not be one. He would not even discuss the matter. The engraving on the front says EDEN KILLER WHALE AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.....LIFE MEMBER. On the back of the boat; Bert Egan ... 22-4-1978, The pattern has been adopted for life member badges for those who have followed.

George Staley, a respected President of this organisation, was Peter's protégé and went on to acquire the business. It was there that his daughter, Georgina became fascinated with the trade and now has a chain of jewellery stores across the far south coast. And as the circle of life engages its wont, Peter's middle son, Kord, manages the Bateman's Bay branch of Georgie's Jewellery, where I was really pleased to catch up with him.

I leave the last word on Yambulla to Bert. On arriving at the site in the native bush and not being there for sixty odd years Bert exclaimed, seemingly somewhat surprised "Gee. Its changed a lot!"

We had a booklet on Yambulla available at the shop but I think it is out of print and we may not be able to contact the author. It's one local book that I don't have, but ask round, someone would have one that they might lend.



Bert's L.M. badge

PEOPLE

A hearty welcome to the latest member of our crew, **Trish Brown**. Trish has had a wide experience in the retail trade and will fit easily into our system. Hope you enjoy your time with us, Trish.....

One time committee person and lifetime supporter and donor, **Kevin Turnbull** has had a run of indifferent health of late. We hope it's all behind him and now recovering to his former robust health.....

Mum, **Kirreley Mitchell**, tells me that her talented and dedicated football player **Charli**, managed to see several World Cup matches, during those recent events. Charli is nursing an injury of her own and is taking things a bit quiet, looking forward to the next season.....

Ben Neville has looked at cruising from both sides now. He and a few mates enjoyed the four day Music Tour out of Sydney, recently.....

Good to catch up with **Susie Sarah** and **Brian** a few days ago, enjoying a quiet cuppa at the Plough. Both are looking well after each having had some health problems. Pleased to report their wellbeing is heading in the right direction. They had just returned from a trip visiting a bunch of towns which are filled with history, and outback life and the romanticism that goes with it. They told me of the entry prices at some of the well known attractions in those western towns.

You'd nearly need a bank loan before you left home, if you intended to take the family there.

Marg Sheaves is back behind the wheel having had the time out necessary, post-op, after getting the green light from her specialist.

EKWM donor, **John Downton OAM** is having a Solo Exhibition, "Joyful Experiences", from 9—22 October at the Fern Street gallery. The gallery is in Gerringong and may be contacted on 0418. 463 207.

'There'll be bushfires for sure, me man,
There will, without a doubt;
We'll all be rooned" said Hanrahan,
"Before the year is out."
.....John O'Brien

Sep-
14th

Our Calendar

tember
Regular
Monthly

board meeting

18th Curatorial meeting 2PM, Library, all welcome

18th Start NSW & Vic School holidays

17th "Tom" remembrance day

20th Friends meeting, 9AM, Theatre, all welcome

29th—1st October Wanderer Festival, Pambula

October

2nd NSW Labour Day

2nd Vic schools resume

3rd NSW Schools resume

12th Regular Board meeting

13th - 15th Eden Whale Festival

16th Curatorial meeting. Library 2PM

18th Friends meeting. Theatre. 9AM

23rd Brilliance of the Seas Arr. 9AM

Birthdays

25th Jennie Burdett

29th Leone Fairweather

November

6th Majestic Princess, Arr 7.00AM

9th Brilliance of the Seas. Arr 9.00 AM

11th Ovation of the Seas Arr 8.00 AM

12th Pacific Adventure Arr 7.00 AM

26th Majestic Princess, Arr 7.00 AM

December

7th Seabourn Odyssey Arr. 7AM

13th Silver Whisper Arr.11AM

18th Brilliance of the Seas Arr. 8AM

19th Silver Muse Arr.8AM

22nd Silver Muse Arr 10AM

30th Azamara Journey 10AM



*That's all for September
Go Safely Jack*

