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Radio Activity
 ----NEWS BULLETIN----

Official Organ of the Radium Hill Historical Association Inc.

For information of Ex Radium Hill Community and families

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The next Radio Activity News Bulletin will be published in February 2003

Hello there,

The year of Federation 2001 certainly was a very eventful year, which included the Radium Hill Reunion at Glandore, Adelaide on the 29th April, a most memorable talkfest.

Another highlight was that the Radium Hill Heritage Museum passed inspection and is now registered with the History Trust of South Australia, a lasting tribute to the life and times of those people who were Radium Hill. Its theme encapsulates an historical "window" on a planned 1950's mining centre including the industry, the multi-culturalism, social cohesiveness, and the close community spirit of its residents. Congratulations to all those folk who donated and helped in achieving this recognition.

The year 2006 will mark 100 years since Radium Hill was first pegged and worked by Arthur Smith, becoming the first radium and uranium mine in Australia. *How should this historical event be recognized?*

The following pages contain items of interest and humour for your enjoyment.

Happy reading, keep in touch, spread the word, till we meet again.

Best wishes to you and yours.

.....
 Kevin Kakoschke
 Feb 2002

EASTER 2001

Once again the Easter gathering at Radium Hill was quite interesting and very enjoyable. Some of the girls had mentioned that a wood stove would be a great thing if we could get hold of one and install it in the B.B.Q. shelter area. Well Sandy Dumont had a friend who knew a friend who new of a good Simpson No.2 wood stove which wanted a new home. We poured a concrete foundation on the Wednesday before Easter and on the Friday it arrived on site where it was bolted down, chimney installed and the kettle boiling by 5 o'clock. Many thanks to Sandy and Phil Huddy, Trevor Morrison, Bill Davis, Karen Kakoschke, Malcolm Sampson, Debbie Kakoschke, Lindsay Keam, Margot & Frank Binkowski. Would you believe that some of the girls complained that the stove was not getting hot enough, quick enough to cook the scones. Well we fixed that too. The stove is certainly a lot more economical with the wood as compared to the open fire, and the kettle was always hot if anyone wanted a cuppa.

On the Saturday night there were 26 people camped at the school camping ground. A yabby entree was enjoyed by all thanks to Bill Davis and Colin Perryman. By popular request on the Sunday we did a tag-a-long-tour to the Maldorkys. At the gorge area in the Maldorkys' the water was simply teeming with bird life, ducks, swans and waterfowl etc. It's like an oasis in the middle of no-where, very relaxing indeed. Monday afternoon and it was another tag-a-long-tour out to the Luxemburgs. Folk were intrigued by the grave of Watty McDonald, a pensioner who died out there in

1941 and the old stone house and pub ruin relics of a town, which boasted 300 people in the 1890's. The pub was later transferred to Olary when that town became established. It is also hard to comprehend that some babies were also born at the Luxemburg's (Amy Veitch), no flying Dr. or A.I.M. in those times.

While watering the cemetery trees a carefully camouflaged topknot pigeon nest with 2 baby chicks inside was discovered in one of the planted trees. Must bring the camera out the next day to take a photo. The following day I remembered the camera, but part of the nest was on the ground surrounded by a few pigeon feathers. The nest was empty, no photo. A marauding wild cat had eaten what was going to be the interesting subject of an unusual photo. "Yabby Bob" Mathies of Tarnagulla, Vic. had donated a cat trap he had made and the following morning it had a big black wild cat inside it. Thanks "Yabby Bob." We have now exterminated 14 wild cats in the camp area.

A fresh, complete, black wildcat skin certainly caused a stir in the camp. When turned outside in and pulled over the forearm as a puppet it looked like a bush version of "ET". Peels of laughter and shrieks of fear kept everyone entertained for a while.

It was hard to leave the tranquillity of the campsite after enjoying a week and a half of near perfect weather and head home to the hustle and bustle of the city.

2001 REUNION

The Glandore Community Centre in Adelaide proved once again to be an ideal location for our Sunday April 29th Radium Hill Reunion.

The pre-planning of the programme, task/action sheets and multitude of other incidentals came together on that beautiful sunny day when about 170 people attended the Reunion. Unfortunately our committee members Neil & Coralie Gobbett were hospitalised and unable to attend. Neil had just had a Coronary by-pass operation and

Coralie had a broken leg. They are now both O.K.

Many folk who were unable to attend sent their apologies and best wishes to everyone including Jim & Marg Potts, Jim & Lorna Laurie, Norton Jackson, Nessie McGovern, Bill & Mary Bennett, Annelise and Franz Kerbl, Lulu & Jim Krecu, Katherine Lezuo, Mick & Jan Roffey, Shirley & Ron "Bungey" Swain, Harry & Daphne Bale, Art Baillie, Richard Scarff, Val Farthing, Evelyn Russell and Sr. Larry Carter.

By a strange coincidence Larry Carter in Sydney and Val Farthing in Perth expressed similar sentiments, **"I wish to be remembered to those who remember me."**

People started arriving at the site before 10am even though the official starting time was 1.30. An early morning telephone call from Norm Gilberthorpe driving over from Melbourne captured some of the Reunion build-up "I'm at Murray Bridge..., I'll be there soon ..., I've prepared a plate of gourmet chicken wings for afternoon tea..." Beaut. The tea & coffee urns were in great demand as the 'talk-fest' dried many throats. Anne Rankine, Margaret Puntillo and helpers did a mighty job catering for their thirst and supervising the delicious afternoon tea.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was when Mrs. Messenger (93 $\frac{1}{2}$ y.o.) arrived in her wheelchair with her daughter Nancy & Murray Fletcher. She had a twinkle in her eyes and a smile from ear to ear. The same effect was on the face of Mary Thomson who also arrived in a wheelchair, on leave for 2 hours from the Flinders Medical Centre. They certainly were the centre of attention and were overjoyed with meeting so many old friends and recounting shared experiences. They had certainly made an effort to be there.

Some of the memorabilia on display was exceptional. Douglas and Shirley Symons with the aide of their nephew Scott Rickards had mounted a fantastic exhibit of

early Radium Hill when it was called "Smiths Carnotite Mine". Rare photographs of Arthur Smith and Sir Douglas Mawson at Radium Hill were displayed and copies of them will be exhibited in our Museum.

Allan Cresswell was there with his ex-Radium Hill purchased honey beige 1960 FB Holden ute. Terrific.

Many people brought their photos albums with them and other items of memorabilia, which were great talking points.

We have produced a **"what we have achieved"** hand-out, documenting the various projects and activities that we, as a group have accomplished this last eleven years in the interests of ex-Radium Hill folk and their families. It proved to be very popular and if you would like a copy please contact June Kakoschke and she will post you one.

Near the end of the Reunion the previously noisy hall was hushed as June Kakoschke sung a beautiful rendition of "The Way We Were." It certainly captured the spirit of what the Reunion was all about, thanks June.

In no time flat the Committee and a host of volunteers chipped in and cleaned up the Hall leaving it spick and span. Excellent.

MUSEUM

Registration:

It certainly has been a big year for our Radium Hill Heritage Museum located in an out building at Tikalina homestead. We filled in an eleven-page submission outlining our policy, aims, objectives, and mode of operation and presented it to the History Trust of South Australia. After an inspection was carried out the Museum was granted registration as a Museum, a fitting reward for those folk who have spent many hundreds of hours setting it up. Congratulations!

Sir Douglas Mawson:

To research and document the early years of Radium Hill, its founder Arthur Smith, and acknowledge the association of Sir Douglas Mawson we are preparing

a special exhibition titled "Radium Hill, a footstep in the Sir Douglas Mawson Trail" After a detailed submission I am very pleased to report that the Minister for the Arts, the Honourable Diana Laidlaw, via the History Trust of South Australia has made a small grant available to us to help complete this project. Thank you! We also appreciate the generosity of those visiting folk who have added to the donation tin in the Museum. It all helps.

New Exhibits:

Recent items donated to the museum for display include: An ex-Radium Hill rabbit trap converted to a two-tone novelty doorbell. After pressing the button on the plate the first tone is heard when the jaws close, the second when the end of the chain is reached. A small compressed air powered generator provided electricity for a 60W light globe used underground, compressed air was readily available and it was much safer than having electric cables in the damp drives. Perhaps our politicians could also use them in Parliamentary debates and see the light. This unit was kindly donated by Keith Treloar of Wia Wirra station. Thanks Keith!

An "Otis Kings" circular slide rule and instruction book, which was used in the "Geiger Room", has been donated by Ron "Kiwi" Edgar and delivered by John Wickham. It certainly brings back memories of those who worked in the Radiometric section including Don Burrows, Dave Parsons, Pat Pengilly, Betty & John Batchelor and others. "Kiwi" has also donated a unique 'Radium Hill Baseball Club' badge. Great. Nancy Fletcher has given us some Radium Hill slides, which she received from a friend of a friend of the late Jess Langhorne. Thanks Nancy!

The very nice "Radium Hill 15 Club" membership board and minute books have been kindly donated by Reg Aldridge and delivered by his son Darryl. This club certainly raised a lot of money for the A.I.M. hospital and other community projects. Terrific.

Douglas and Shirley Symons have donated early Radium Hill photos (1906 vintage) to the Museum including some of Sir Douglas Mawson and Arthur Smith. The Franco - British Exhibition in 1908, issued a Diploma for Gold Medal awarded to "Smiths Carnatite Mine, South Australia for COPPER" and a copy of it is now displayed in the Museum. Yes, Radium Hill was originally called "Smiths Carnotite Mine". Thank you Douglas and Shirley.

Les Lees, Elaine Russell, David Munn and Dawn Dwyer (nee Featherstone) have donated some early Radium Hill photographs, one of which shows the 16mm open-air pictures set-up in the "Old Camp". Much appreciated.

Those Who Served:

Some of the people who lived in Radium Hill had been previously awarded very high service awards including Phillip Davey and Reg Inwood who had both been awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry in action, Phillip Davey had previously been awarded the Military Medal. Many others had served their country in Palestine, Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam etc. A number of the women folk also served as nurses, drivers and in communications. To recognise their contributions we are in the process of making a Commemorative Roll, which will be displayed in the Museum with their names/and awards inscribed.

You could help us immensely in this task by sending us the names of those folk who you know may have served. I believe the end result will be a fitting tribute to them, and will add another dimension to the History of Radium Hill.

OBITUARY

Regretfully a number of our friends and relatives have passed away since our last newsletter including: -

Clark Norman "Nobby," Adelaide, SA

Drazil Karl, Adelaide, SA
Featherstone Lucy, Temora, NSW
Geisberger Anton, Adelaide, SA
Hill Peter, Lesmurdie, WA

McGovern Nessie, Mt. Barker, WA

Maier Arthur, Cobar, NSW
Morrison Gladys, Adelaide, SA
Pengilly Alexander, Cleve, SA
Thomson Mary, Adelaide, SA
Vanoosterhout Wouter, Pagewood, NSW
Weyer Kuno, St. Helens, Tas.

Gladys Morrison was an inaugural committee member of the Ex-Radium Hill Residents' Assn. In May 1966

Mary Thomson was actively involved in folding our "Radio Activity" Newsletter prior to postage for many years.

Alex Pengilly made history as being the only person to unseat the Hon. The Premier Sir Thomas Playford rather hastily and prematurely (when he knocked over the Radium Hill Aerodrome toilet with his ute.)

To their families we offer our deepest sympathy and condolences for their loss.

Could you please contact June, our secretary if you know of any Ex-Radium Hill resident who may have recently passed away, so that their name can be included in the next newsletter. Thanks.

CEMETERY

It was the wish of some former Radium Hill residents to have their ashes interred in the Radium Hill Pioneers Cemetery. On Easter Saturday, 30th March, 2002, we will be fulfilling the wishes of Sam and Mary Thomson and Norman 'Nobby' Clark. Very nice memorials will be placed over each resting site.

These will be the first burials in the Cemetery since 1959.

FOXES

We recently heard from Maurice Francis that the fox hunters had "harvested" another 400 foxes from Maldorky Station. Whew! A number of the carcasses were opened and the stomachs were found to be chock-a-block full of grasshoppers, high in protein and considered to be a delicacy in

Thailand. I think I'll pass and leave them to the foxes and the birds. The foxes that remain are still as cheeky as ever. One moonlight night in October when camped at the School grounds we saw one slinking around so June put some chicken bones on the caravan step and we waited inside. Sure enough that fox came right up to the van and took those bones while we watched him from less than 5 feet away.

BIRDS AND WILD CATS

So far we have identified 36 different bird species in the Radium Hill area. If you notice any of the smaller varieties please let us know. On Tank Hill there is a huge 9-foot high wedge tail eagles nest perched in a dead mulga tree. To save the tree crashing down under its load we have secured it with fencing wire to 4 star droppers. It's surprising to see the little finches and wrens darting in and out of their nests built inside the tangle of twigs and sticks. They don't have any fear of the wildcats as they have **big brother** (wedge tail eagle) watching over them. In June Trevor Morrison and I were having a late evening meal of casserole stew and left some in a covered pot on the caravan table while we ate near the newly installed wood stove. The caravan door was open, lights blazing, and the cruiser car stereo blaring. Finishing the meal I took the plates back to the caravan for washing and just as I was about to step into the lighted doorway of the van, a grey blur streaked in front of my eyes, *#*#! I had disturbed a wild cat, which had been on the caravan table trying to get into the casserole. It was the closest I've been to being shredded by a wildcat's claws. Amazingly I didn't drop the plates.

WE WERE RADIUM HILL

Many folk have asked for a copy of our book "We Were Radium Hill" but we had sold out years ago. Well, Lois Harvie has obtained and generously donated a copy of it to help us raise funds.

The book is in near mint condition and will be sold to the highest bidder. We know of a person who recently paid an all up price of \$120 for a second hand copy. Please dig deep if you would like to purchase this rare book. Advise June no later than February the 28th of your offer and mailing instructions. **Best of luck with your bid.**

Rod Lawrence has had a very professional looking new Museum sign made up to help identify the Radium Hill Heritage Museum building at Tikalina. Looks great Rod. He has also donated a street sign "The Avenue" which we will install at the start of the Avenue this coming Easter, should help make a good photo in that location, especially if taken in the morning looking along the Avenue.

XMAS FUNCTION

Members of the Committee gathered for a Xmas social to end a mixed year of both highs and lows. Every one brought along what was to be a sumptuous spread of turkey, ham and many other delights, which were enjoyed by all. For entertainment I was conned into dressing up as a younger 'Tom Jones' look alike complete with wig (to hide the grey) and performed "What's New Pussy Cat" using the tanned black wildcat's skin as a puppet, complete with big horrible fangs and glass cat's eyes. It certainly created an awesome sight and drew a few screams (not of adulation) from the girls. Change of pace saw Margot Binkowski in Austrian national dress performing "Come and have a little Schluck and a Schnitter with me" It certainly kept with the spirit of Xmas.

CENTENARY OF RADIUM HILL 2006

The next major reunion at Radium Hill will be in four years time, at Easter 2006. It will also be the Centenary Year of its discovery and the first mining of uranium in Australia. The theme of this reunion could be "**Back to School and A.I.M.**" bringing together ex-

Radium Hill folk and those who attended the Radium Hill School and the "Radium Hill Born Babes" (117 of them). It would certainly be a fitting occasion for them to make the effort and re-ignite old friendships and memories. Should be a terrific Reunion if some of the former teachers were able to attend.

MEMORY JOGGERS

- A number of folk will be camping at Radium Hill this Easter 2002. Have a holiday and join us.
- Contact June Kakoschke for your copy of "What We Have Achieved"
- Please send us the name and address of children who were born at the Radium Hill A.I.M. Hospital.
- Please send us the names of those folk who you know of who may have served in the Defence Forces.
- Please contact June our Secretary if you have heard of any ex- Radium Hill resident who may have passed away.
- A copy of our book "We Were Radium Hill" could be yours if you are the highest bidder, bids in by 28th February 2002.
- Send us your suggestions of how the Centenary of Radium Hill could be recognised/celebrated.
- If you intend calling into Radium Hill please write or phone both Andy Treloar, Tikalina St. via Olary, **and** Maurice Francis, Oulnina St. via Mannahill