

---THE---  
**RADIO ACTIVITY**  
---NEWS BULLETIN---

For information of ex-Radium Hill Community and families

Official Organ of the Radium Hill Historical Association

February 2005

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This newsletter design is in keeping with the original style used in Radium Hill and was produced by June Kakoschke

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**Hello there,**

Leap year 2004 was a big year in more ways than one. The Radium Hill Heritage Museum certainly was the main focus of our efforts this last year, but the end results proved to be very worthwhile as detailed later in this news letter.

**A number of people gave donations, sent letters of thanks and E mails, made phone calls, offered best wishes and just helped in so many different ways. It's just great and really appreciated by your Committee. Thank you.**

We have updated the list of our achievements since forming in 1990. It's amazing really and certainly makes for compelling reading. Copies are available for you.

Events held to mark 50 years since Radium Hill was officially opened proved to be very successful. The year **2006 Centenary Reunion** commemorating 100 years since Radium Hill was first mined is shaping up to be an outstanding event and one not to be missed.

The following pages outline some of these events and contain items of interest and humour for your enjoyment, especially if you were feeling off colour and unable to attend the gatherings.

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

Best wishes to you and yours.

Kevin Kakoschke  
Feb. 2005

**UNBELIEVABLE?**

The Cruiser was loaded with Margot Binkowski, Pam Barratt, June Kakoschke and myself plus the caravan on our way up to Radium Hill at Easter time. We called in to the Ampol service station at Yunta to top up with diesel. Mesmerised by the spinning dollar numbers on the pump I heard a vehicle pulling in for petrol behind me. Casually I looked over my right shoulder and lo and behold...**an aeroplane nosing in to fill up with petrol.** The girls reckoned that they hadn't seen anything like it before, **...doesn't happen in the city.**

[www.radiumhill.org.au](http://www.radiumhill.org.au)

Thank you to those folk who sent in comments about our web site. Yes it is quite good and very informative.

As you may notice the address is now changed slightly to make it more **user friendly**. We hope you agree. The site is being updated thanks to Joni Krecu and his company A.B.M.S. Pty Ltd. who have also donated the costs associated with getting a web site up and running. Previous newsletters, historical information, our Museum, great photographs, breaking news and future events are highlighted.

Some aspects of the website will be changed every few months so **click on occasionally** to view the latest. If you are not connected to the internet just go to your local Library and use their Internet facilities. Pleasant viewing.



"leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but photographs"



## EX-R.H. BUILDINGS

The “Wet Canteen” is now located inside Yatala Labour Prison where it serves as a workshop. I suppose that where once **the talk was how to get into it**; it is now, **how to get out of it**. If you call into Olary when traveling that way, the old **Radium Hill lock-up** is just behind the Hall and is used to house the power generator. The original **Golf Club shed** is used as a drinks storage area behind the Yunta Pub, while the **clubhouse** was transferred to Medindie on the Darling. **Sheehan’s store** went to Cockburn and the **Buff Hall** is at Peterborough. At Wilmington you will find the **United Church Building** behind the Ampol garage where it is used as a workshop. The Cross from this church is claimed to be “lucky” and is at our Radium Hill Heritage Museum. Some folk including Bill Mellen bought their **garages** when Radium Hill closed and had them re-erected at their homes in Adelaide.

Ex Radium Hill houses were sold and transported all over the State to towns including Yunta, Mannahill, Greenock, and the Riverland. Many of them also finished up on some of the nearby sheep stations including Wadnaminga and Wia Wira where it was used to house the Royal Flying Doctor clinic before the floods of 1997 swept it away. The two man cubicles went far and wide including the Police Academy at Largs Bay.

## LOST AND FOUND

At a recent gathering at Radium Hill some of the youngsters went down to the old single men’s cubicle sites to look for old coins and other “interesting things and what nots”. They weren’t disappointed. Besides a haul of coins young Cameron Underdown found an old **set of false teeth**. Yes, and they can be claimed if they fit otherwise he will donate them to the museum. John Furga found a gold plated belt buckle with the name Wyatt Earp and two crossed six shooters embossed on the front. Finder’s keepers in this case.

## AS IT HAPPENED

Radio Activity, **Sat. 6<sup>th</sup>. June 1959**  
“**Putty Pickers**”

“The window glass at the change rooms (and the Wet Canteen too!!!) is normally held in place with **Putty**. Itchy fingers persist in picking out the **putty** from around the edge of that glass, with the result that the glass is left hanging in the frame without any **putty** at all. “**Putty Pickers**” will be given the job of putting a new supply of **putty** back in all the windows, if it becomes known who is responsible for *picking out the putty*”. Reminds me of “Peter picked a peck of pickled peppers....”.

## EASTER 2004

Prior to Easter the bindii lawn of the cemetery was mown by Kev’s lawn care service and the Museum building stabilized. More on this later. A “headstone” rock from the old Mine area containing golden chalcopyrite flecks in a black biotite and davidite mass capped with a 3” band of white quartz was selected for Horton Kakoschke’s ashes site in the cemetery. Tony Averay selected a granite boulder from their old rifle range homestead area to be a “headstone” for his late father Bill.

For Easter the weather was simply perfect to enjoy a most memorable break and to celebrate fifty years since the Radium Hill mine was officially opened on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Nov. 1954 by the Governor General of Australia, Field Marshall Sir William Slim.

Folk started arriving from Monday onwards and about sixty people were camped there on the Easter Friday and Saturday nights including about a dozen children who had a ball.

By Friday night the Australian and Radium Hill flags were flying from the cemetery entrance portal flag pole, the ashes interment sites were ready and the temporary toilets at the camp site had been re-doored.

Saturday lunch time and Neil Gobbett spoke of the early Radium Hill days before cutting the ribbon to

officially open the new Radium Hill Pioneers Cemetery Portal. A great sight indeed beneath the two flags. (Neil had been a committee member of the old Social Club).

## BURIALS

Les Perryman and Pam Barratt delivered eulogies for the late Bill Averay and of his life in the Outback. To the strains of “Time To Say Goodbye” his son Tony unveiled the plaque on the stone containing his ashes. The plaque reads “**Returned to the Outback the place he loved best**”.

Kevin delivered the eulogy for his late brother Horton and spoke of some of Horton’s “past adventures”. To the strains of “Lara’s Theme” Barry Kakoschke interred the ashes. Horton had been a bit of a lad and his favourite saying, “**come on toss you for it, double or nothing**”, can be read on his plaque.

Three very moving ceremonies.



After lunch a tag-a-long tour to view the “environmentally friendly” solar and wind powered water pumping units at Gall’s Well proved to be very interesting. The drive onto the old Luxemburg mines proved to be very rewarding for some of the youngsters who took home some big “**hunks of gold**”.

Five year old Lucy Keam had caught an **earless dragon lizard** that afternoon and Gary Reeves used it to great effect that evening in his presentation on local reptiles, spiders and amphibians. Questions by the children were simply fantastic. We all learnt a lot about these **beasties of the bush**. Thanks Gary.

A group sing-a-long followed by miming and the singing of old favourites, then Rock n Rolling to the tunes of the 50’s completed a terrific evening. It was hard to believe how young everyone had

become until reality hit home next morning, ouch. Easter bunny had been busy and the children found a lot of Easter eggs around the camp next morning. A popular four wheel drive to the Maldorkey's in the afternoon where about 150 goats were seen at a stretch of water in Olary creek together with hundreds of ducks and other birdlife. Terrific scenery.

Monday and another tag-a-long, this time to the old Wadnaminga gold fields where I showed folk the dugouts where I had lived as a babe. Real pioneering stuff they reckoned especially as my mother had **six kids under seven** to look after, no motor car, no electricity and having to cart buckets of drinking water on foot from a dam a mile away. Pam Barratt said that they were the **"unsung heroes of the depression era"**. We've certainly got it easy today in comparison. Regretfully after spending a week or so in perfect weather lapping up the peace and tranquility of the bush at Radium Hill it was time to leave.

Since Easter Ron Tame has provided us with a 100 gal. water tank and canvas wind break which he carted up there from Ararat in Vic. To lessen the smoke in the B.B.Q. shelter Neil Gobbett and Rod Lawrence put a new chimney on it. Thanks to all of you.

### **SCOTTISH VISITORS, "och aye"**

Early in May we took Sandy Graham, a broad speaking Scottish cousin of June's up to Radium Hill to experience a bit of outback Australia. We had mentioned to him that we would be sleeping in a caravan up there. He was quite taken with the **vastness of the country and the straightness of the roads** Leaving Tikalina and still no caravan hooked up.

He was worried.

Surely they're not going to camp in the open and sleep on the ground **with all the beasties around at night?** It was a very relieved Scotsman who bunked down in our onsite caravan that night.

He was most impressed with trips out to the Luxemburgs and going through the sharp steep creeks on the way out to the Maldorkey's. He said afterwards **"Ma heart was in ma mooth"**.

He only took **223 photos**, some of them being real beauties As Sandy said afterwards, "A wonderful experience, the place was so tranquil

### **OPPORTUNISTS OF THE BUSH**

When there were plenty of rabbits around they were the main diet of the foxes. In the recent drought they lived on grasshoppers. Lambing usually takes place in about April/May. Last May **1200 foxes were harvested** from the five stations near Radium Hill and on examination 90% of them had been living on young lambs. The examination of a wild cat revealed 13 various lizards had been its recent food supply.

### **HERITAGE MUSEUM**

Rabbits, white ants and goannas (R.A.G's) had destroyed the wooden stumps on which the Museum building was built causing it to slump 7 1/2 ins on one corner and the northern wall to bow out by nearly 4". Repairable? Mmm, yes.

Barry Kakoschke, George Grabb and I dug out and progressively stripped the lower galv. sheeting, jacked, leveled and brick piered under the wall studs and floor joists. A good dose of anti-white ant mixture, rabbit and goanna proof wire netting around the base and we were ready to pull in the bowed wall with a special fixture which I had made. Re-newing the lower galv. iron sheeting finished the job.

Inside the building we cut an opening between two rooms to expand the display area, **puttied and scraped, some coats of paint** and after 130 man hours of effort it looked better than new, God bless it. We also pruned a low branch off the tree at the back of the museum which had given us a few cuts, lumps and headaches in the past.

Through the thoughtfulness and generosity of folk a number of terrific items have been donated to enhance the Museum's displays including:

An impressive looking framed set of **Buff Lodge Jewels** donated by Jim McDiarmid. Jim had received many of these Jewels while in Radium Hill. They will fit in nicely with the **Buff Lodge horns** previously donated by the late Alec Pengilly.

Jane Debaecker (nee Hillier) sent over from Canberra the **embroidered Radium Hill supper cloth** which she had framed. One hundred and seven ladies paid two bob each to have their signatures embroidered on this cloth to raise money for the Church building fund in 1958.

Hans Mathias donated a copy of his **Naturalization Certificate**, the ceremony having been performed by Terry Rodgers. About 100 people were naturalized in Radium Hill. He also sent over the book **"We Were Radium Hill"** to raise funds. The book raised \$100.

Eriks Velins sent in a copy of the 1956 Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Conference paper on Radium Hill as well as the **souvenir booklet on the Port Pirie Uranium Treatment Plant**.

We were fortunate in obtaining a grant from the S.A. History Trust to help us purchase floor coverings to help control dust in the Museum. I happened to pick up a desk, storage shelving and a swivel chair for the work room cum store and the ongoing task of cataloguing items. The S.A. History Trust, Community History Unit has invited us to participate in **"Our Place, Our Part"**, a migration history exhibition at the Migration Museum Forum with our group focusing on Radium Hill. We are preparing an interesting story line for this event which will be **officially opened in June 2005, by Dora Wilkin**. If you want to come along to this opening **please let June know A.S.A.P.** as numbers are limited.

We may also be participating in the History Week conference being held at Whyalla in May.

## OBITUARY

Regretfully some of our friends have passed away since our last newsletter including:

Abbott Margaret	Adelaide S.A.
Bale Harold	Brisbane Qld.
Batchelor Kathleen	Adelaide S.A.
Chapman Alice	Adelaide S.A.
Cooper Robert	Berri S.A.
Dickinson Dorothy	Woodside S.A.
Glasson Margaret	Sydney N.S.W.
Gobbett Mrs. (Snr.)	Mannum S.A.
Hughes Frank	Bendigo Vic
Kakoschke Horton	Adelaide S.A.
Kornecki Norma	Adelaide S.A.
Krecu Evanthisa (Luola)	Adel. S.A.
Lacey Patricia	Armidale N.S.W.
Malchow Gehard	Peterborough S.A.
Miller Bobby	Spokane Wash. U.S.A.
Milling Margaret	Sydney N.S.W.
Parisi Angelo	Cobar N.S.W.
Rackebandt Rolf (Mick)	Adel. S.A.
Scullion Peter	Adelaide S.A.
Stocco Bruno	Adelaide S.A.
Supperi Vaino	Wynnum Qld.
Ware Julie	Adelaide S.A.
Windysz Bronislaw	Adelaide S.A.

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

Frank Hughes was awarded the D.F.C. in WW2

## XMAS PARTY CATCHUP

The Adelaide, Glandore Community Centre on Sat. 27<sup>th</sup>. Nov. proved to be a great venue for what was a fantastic Xmas Party. A lot more people were able to attend than when we were having them in someone's home.

About a 100 people remembered the date, **braved the 100 deg.F. temperature** and joined in to have a great time. Using our Radium Hill Flag as a backdrop a group photo was taken outside the Hall by Jon Krecu. What a beauty it turned out to be, so much so that a number of folk have asked for a copy of it. O.K. at \$4 an A4 size print to cover costs.

Neil Gobbett supplied cool drinking water and 40 litres were consumed along with cups of tea, coffee and cool drinks.

The entertainment items presented brought back memories of the concerts we used to have in Radium Hill where both June and myself were actually in the first concert held in the Main mess in 1953.

Joyce Drazil set the ball rolling with the song "Oh what a beautiful morning". I bet some were then thinking, "**Oh what a blooming hot day**". Well done Joyce.

Margot Binkowski dressed as a black stockinged Marlene Dietrich complete with an unlit cigarette and holder sang in both English and German the nostalgic "Lillee Marlene". She did it so well that you could even imagine her **blowing smoke rings into the melody**. The hall was so hushed you could have heard a pin drop. "**Disgusting to have such lovely legs**" commented Ann Rankin. Terrific performance.

Allan Cresswell was next and he recited a real memories lane poem that he had written called: "**My Ode to Radium Hill**".....

"the hill the tank seems far away  
of course we know, its there today  
Open theatre on your right  
movies, watched by us at night ...."

A very good poem Allan.

I then recited my poem about the escapades of the pet pig at Tikalina homestead: .....

"...was a corker porker  
she got into things  
that she shouldn't oughta.....

Jumped into the cars  
when folk arrived  
scared the poor ladies  
clean out of their hides..."



The ever popular June Kakoschke then sang, "Dream a little dream". Well done June.

The rock n rolling Bill and Barb Davis then took to the floor and to the strains of, "A thing called love"

and "Nothing but a hound dog", they performed slides, air lifts, **neck breaks, hand shakes, figure eights, yo yo's, coat hangers and the duck**. Eat your hearts out Tony Firmani, Hans Mathias and Rhonda Pudler. Whew !

Time for a break and afternoon tea.

When all the plates of goodies for afternoon tea were put together on the tables by Ann Rankin, Margaret Puntillo and helpers, the resultant spread **looked simply scrumptious** and tasted even better. Thank you to everyone who helped.

During the course of the afternoon Trevor Morrison and Jim Krecu had been busy busy selling tickets for a raffle of prizes donated for the occasion. Good work fellahs.

A house number plaque complete with lighting and worth \$150 had been donated by Jim's company, "Moonlite Lighting" for the occasion. Other prize donors included Lois Harvie, June Kakoschke, Sandra Dumont and Trevor Morrison.

Betty Rodgers was called upon to draw the first winning ticket which happened to have been bought by Margaret Schulte who had just previously mentioned that she was never lucky in raffles. Well,.. Xlotto next Marg?

Besides some museum memorabilia displays Sandra Dumont had brought along some **huge aerial photos** of Radium Hill. The Radium Hill (**107 signature**) **embroidered supper cloth** was also displayed.

Many thanks to all of the prize donors and congratulations to the prize winners. A big thank you also to Alex Szucs the "sound engineer" Everyone bogged in afterwards to clean up the hall. Great.

Summing up the occasion:

Romans, "**Very well organized**". Pat Syrus (nee Lambert), "**it was lovely, we really enjoyed it**".

"...really nice seeing Mrs. Rodgers ....and Peter (her son), isn't he so handsome". This last sentiment was echoed by a number of the ladies and

envied by some of the fellahs who **had lost their bloom.**

#### **XMAS SOCIAL 2004**

The Committee Xmas social held at Jim Krecu's was most enjoyable and very entertaining. Once again the feast left everyone feeling as if they were wearing clothes a couple of sizes too small and this was only after the main course.

Margot dressed in traditional Austrian Alps costume and hat (dirndel und lederhosen) **sang, slap danced and yodeled** "The Lonely Goat Herd". She certainly looked, sang and acted the part. Beaut, "Chicago", was chosen by a 1920's looking Lois Harvie for her performance. Wearing a silver tasselled costume, head band and feathers, **she tap danced her way through "Chicago"** on the tap board she had brought along for the occasion. Terrific Lois.

An assortment of sweets, Xmas pud with brandy custard, and Rani tablets completed a most enjoyable evening.

#### **BURIALS AT RADIUM HILL**

A number of sites within the Radium Hill Pioneers Cemetery have already been reserved for people to be buried or their ashes interred in them. Drop a line to June to obtain information about reserving a plot or on burial details. By the way Mark Francis of Maldorkey Station reckons that the Radium Hill Cemetery "**must be the best looking and most cared for Cemetery in Outback Australia**".

#### **EASTER 2005**

Well, there is certainly going to be something for everyone at Radium Hill this coming Easter.

Some folk will already be arriving there on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>. March. No doubt the **yabby** nets will be out On Fri. p.m. there will be a tag-a-long trip out to Galls' Well and to the Luxemburghs. **Don't forget to bring along your UHF radio** communication set so that you can join in and talk to the other vehicles. If you haven't got one yet Jon Krecu

should be able to help you, just contact him on 0412 835616.

A Saturday morning **oral history and heritage tour** of the Radium Hill area. The kids will probably search for coins and whatnots down at the old cubicles site.

Near lunch time the interment of **Nessie McGovern's ashes** will take place at the Cemetery. They will be placed in the grave of her infant daughter Morag who accidentally drowned in the bath during a hot spell back in the 1950's.

Lunch and then a very popular trip out to the Maldorkeys to see the rugged terrain and wild life there.

In the evening Gary Reeves will tell us all about the **local marsupials** and "Bob" will enlighten us on some of the **36 local bird varieties** Sunday and over to Wia Wera where Jenny Treloar will show us **the old Cobb & Co. coach house**, the R.F.D.S. clinic and other artifacts. James and Alex Morgan of Outalpa Stn. have given us permission to see the **miners' dugouts at King's Bluff** and just maybe the youngsters will find some **real gold with their gold detectors. Picture show at night?**

#### **EASTER 2006**

**The Centenary of Radium Hill celebrations. Possible Events?**

Some ex Radium Hill teachers may be returning including Pat Syrus (nee Lambert), John Clements, Ann Barlow (nee Wallis), Chris Barratt, Jan Raftery (nee Lowrie) and Noreen O'Connell. I'm sure that they would love to see some of you again. **Get your mates together and make up a class** for them just for old times sake.

We've already heard from some people who will be attending from overseas

Jim & Margaret Potts, Orlando Bertocchi and members of the Andrews' family will be coming over from W.A. Great.

Mounting a memorial plaque in the cemetery for the late Tom Andrews. Will "Macka" from Australia all over be there on Sunday morning?

**A re-enactment of Arthur Smith and Douglas Mawson at Radium Hill** in 1906 could be very interesting, what.

Let us know what you think may be a good thing to do to celebrate and enjoy this occasion and how you can help us. It will be appreciated.

Tag-a-longs and oral history tours.

#### **MEMORY JOGGERS**

A number of folk will be camping at Radium Hill this Easter 2005 (Easter Fri. March 25<sup>th</sup>). There certainly will be plenty of things to see and do to enjoy ourselves.

# Please contact June our Secretary if you have heard of any ex-Radium Hill resident who may have passed away.

# If you take rubbish in please take it out with you and keep the place looking tidy. It is appreciated

# Centenary of Radium Hill, Easter 2006. Try and **organize a born in Radium Hill, class, or family re-union** to help celebrate the occasion. Should be fun Accommodation is available at the revamped Olary Hotel so book early.

# Let June know if you want to attend our Migration Museum official opening ceremony by Dora Wilkin for the Radium Hill section of "Our Place – Our Part" Migration History Exhibition. June will then be able to send you the exact dates and times etc. when they become known. Please send in for your copy of "**What we have achieved since 1990**" Very interesting reading. Let us know if you change your address

# If you intend calling into Radium Hill please write or phone both Andy Treloar, Tikalina Stn. Via Olary Ph. 08 80911529 and Maurice Francis, Oulina Stn. Via. Mannahill Ph. 08 86505901.

# If unable to contact June or myself by phone leave a message with Margot Binkowski who will pass it on



**Radium Hill  
Christmas Party Catch Up**  
Saturday 27th November 2004

## **Easter 2004**



The kids & stars from the movie Napoleon, (the dogs, Teddy & Bengi), at the Radium Hill School Grounds



Margot Binkowski & Lois Harvie, dressed up at the Xmas Party Social



Bill & Barb Davis, Rocking & Rolling, at the Xmas Party Catch Up 2004