

Gwalia Newsletter

Chairperson's Report

Gwalia ghost town & museum is currently a hive of activity with a number of projects taking place at Gwalia. You can read all about it in this edition of the newsletter.



Gwalia ghost town & museum on the edge of the open cut mine.

We are pleased that many readers now contribute to the newsletter. As a result of the number of articles we are receiving and activities taking place at Gwalia, we will trial producing the newsletter bi-monthly.

The Gwalia Reference Group (GRG) has expanded to include more community representation and the members are now;

Matt Taylor (Chairperson); Richard Cotterill; Tralee Cable; Cheryl Cotterill; Gail Ross; Gary Ross; Elaine Labuschagne (Secretary); Denise Lorentz and Debbie Hall (St Barbara Ltd.). We are waiting for two more members to confirm their involvement.

The Gwalia Reference Group Terms of Reference are to make recommendations to the Leonora Council in relation to:

- ◇ All activities associated with the operation of Gwalia including building conservation, collections management, exhibitions and public programmes, marketing and public relations, visitor services and management and administration;
- ◇ Policies, plans and guidelines for the management and operation of Gwalia and other heritage places and collections within the Shire in line with industry standards;
- ◇ Priorities for activities and to assist with budget allocations and sourcing grants;
- ◇ Other matters referred to the Group which would assist the decision making process of Council.

I would like to personally welcome the new members who bring a lot of experience and knowledge to our committee. I also extend an invitation to other community members to become involved at Gwalia.

Matt Taylor

**Chairperson:
Gwalia Reference Group**

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WA Heritage Award 2014

Elaine Labuschagne

The Shire of Leonora received a High Commendation in the Western Australian Heritage Award 2014 for **Outstanding heritage practices by a local government.**



The Shire of Leonora was acknowledged as "A small and dedicated Shire which is achieving impressive results by taking a holistic and proactive approach, while working with limited resources."

Shire of Leonora President Cr Peter Craig said: "The Shire of Leonora is pleased to have received recognition for the Shire's endeavours to preserve the heritage in its care with limited available resources. As recipient of the award the Shire's profile within the heritage and tourism industry is raised, promoting both Leonora and Gwalia."

As custodians of a significant part of Western Australia's mining heritage, the Shire of Leonora takes its responsibility seriously and believes in investing financial and human resources in the conservation and maintenance of buildings, structures and other significant heritage assets. This investment will ensure the continuing existence of the Shire's heritage for the enjoyment and education of the community and visitors and provides a financial income for the Shire.

The Shire of Leonora understands the importance of preserving the Western Australian goldfields miners' cottages associated with the Sons of Gwalia Mine between 1898 and 1963. Gwalia Ghost Town & Museum, comprising 40 buildings including Patroni's Guest Home, VB & MM Mazza Store, and a group of miners' cottages, is the responsibility of the Shire of Leonora to maintain and manage. The Gwalia ghost town is of cultural heritage significance and has aesthetic, historic and social value.

Over the past year, the Shire contributed substantially to conservation work to Patroni's Guest Home, De Rubeis camp and the Pink House. Assessments and reports on the 1898 Sons of Gwalia timber headframe is another heritage project the Shire is focusing on.

Recently an interactive on-line map was launched to increase the visitor's knowledge and experience of the heritage buildings in Gwalia.

"The Shire takes pride in making a valuable contribution to the preservation of heritage in the goldfields through an effective management approach in a practical and sustainable manner". said Shire of Leonora President Cr Peter Craig.



Marion Fulker (Chair Heritage Council, of Western Australia), Elaine Labuschagne (Manager Heritage & Economic Services, Minister for Heritage the Hon. Albert Jacobs MLA)

Gwalia State School

Arlene Collings

It's twilight. The sun slips toward the horizon, cushioned in amazing colours... red, orange, pink and gold. The shadows lengthen and I watch them dancing along the edge of Mt. Leonora.

Suddenly all is still and quiet. The silhouettes of old Gwalia are stark against the evening sky. As I stand transfixed by its magic my mind flies back, back to the year 1899.

Somewhere along the track near Half-way Creek, Miss Wigg has her private school. The gold mine in Gwalia is successful and busy. Gwalia and Leonora are growing rapidly with families and children arriving. There is great need for a Government school close by. In August 1899 the Methodist Church is jinkered from Malcolm some 20km away and is put on mulga stumps on mining lease 491c on the Eastern Precinct of Gwalia. This little building becomes the first Government school in Gwalia. Student numbers grow to 70 children there and the building became unsuitable for a school.



Gwalia State School c1906

Artist: Arlene Collings

After much haggling a new school is built not far from Half-way Creek between Leonora and Gwalia and opened 25th November 1901 as the Central Government School. Excited children were given free rides to school when the Leonora-Gwalia tramway was opened in 1903. However this school building was too remote from both Leonora and Gwalia and two new Dominican Convent schools opened, one in Leonora and one in Gwalia. Many parents decided to send their children to the closest local convent school. The remote location of the Government school finally meant its demise and both Leonora and Gwalia needed their own local school, not one in between trying to serve both places. April 1906 saw this Central school building moved to Leonora with Mr. Ulbrich as head teacher.

As a temporary solution the Gwalia school was housed in the Australia Workers Union (AWU) hall just next to the 1903 State Hotel, which oddly enough, was built on the first block of land designated for the Gwalia school which never happened. Mr. Chambers Thompson from Menzies was the head teacher. Again after a lot of quibbling, a new school was to be built in Johnston Street.

By 27th July 1906 the new school was opened – at last a suitable building. Of course many changes and additions

happened and a suitable teacher's house was built next door by 1912. This school grew in numbers so that in 1916 the little corrugated iron school from Niagara was transported to the Gwalia campus. Both the teacher's house and the new school were of weatherboard with brick chimneys, quite a step up from hot corrugated iron buildings.



The relocated Central School behind the Christian Fellowship Church in Gwalia Street c2004 before it was demolished



The AWU hall used as temporary school 1906. Photo taken in 1959



Gladys Beatty (Arlene's mother) in front of the Gwalia School she attended 1911.

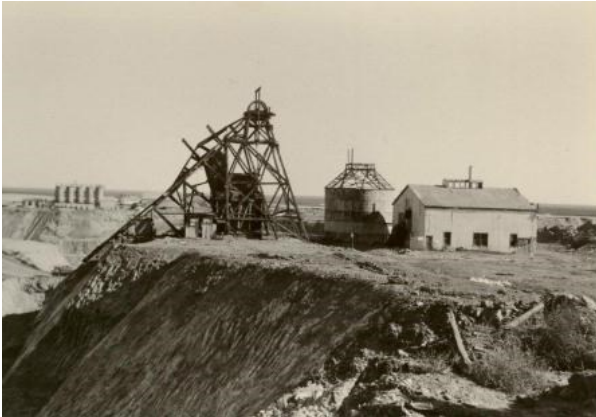
Sadly, the Gwalia School in Johnston Street never re-opened in 1964. The materials were re-used elsewhere but the teacher's house remains. This is such an important relic.

And so my musings finish. Gwalia's rich, diverse history is very precious but fragile. May we continue to research and catalogue and save this unique history while we can.

Sons of Gwalia Timber Headframe

Elaine Labuschagne

The Shire of Leonora is busy for the preparations of conservation work to the Sons of Gwalia Timber Headframe. This Oregon incline headframe was designed by Herbert Hoover in 1898.



The Headframe c1987 prior to its relocation the current location.

The height of the headframe was extended to 62 feet (18.9 metres) in 1913 to accommodate the installation of the Fraser and Chalmers steam winder engine.

The expansion of the Sons of Gwalia NL open cut mining operation forced the relocation of the headframe in 1987 to its current position in the museum precinct.

Since then the harsh environment has taken its toll and the headframe's timber structure is becoming unstable. Many a photo was taken standing in the shadow of the headframe or with the headframe as

backdrop. However due to safety reasons visitors are no longer allowed access close to the headframe.

The Shire of Leonora recognises the significance of the headframe and has invested considerable financial resources in structural engineers' reports and state-of-the-art technology of 3-D scanning to determine the weak points and condition of the structure. The first stage of a project spanning a three year period will start later in the year.

Before any work on the headframe could commence, a geotechnical investigation was carried out recently to determine recommended foundation depth and systems. The investigations identified soil profile classifications, soil sampling, rock testing, ground water levels that would pose a problem to site access and construction of a new structural steel frame within the existing timber frame to provide support.



The Headframe in its current location is a well-known Gwalia landmark



Workers from SGS Engineering Services drilling holes to conduct geotechnical investigations

French town farewells POW after agonising death

Anne Skinner

He may have been an anonymous prisoner of war, but when Joseph Jenkins died alone and in agony in the Spring of 1917, the deputy mayor of a small town in northern France rallied local residents to his graveside.

Pte Jenkins died of an untreated illness in a German military hospital in Maubeuge on June 18, 1917. The town had been under German occupation since its capture in September 1914.

Two days later, according to Pte Jenkins' military file, his funeral at Maubeuge-Central cemetery was conducted by Maubeuge's deputy mayor M. Meuilles. The file adds that there was "(a) wreath from the town, the public were present and the Protestant Chaplain gave an address... a party of 16 Roumanians attended".



1877 Private Joseph Jenkins lies in the Maubeuge-Central military cemetery. Photo: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Sydney-born former Sons of Gwalia fireman was captured at Bourcies on April 15, 1917, after serving with the 11th Battalion since his enlistment at Blackboy Hill on November 20, 1914.

He was interned in Limburg prisoner of war camp in Germany but was part of a forced labour gang building a railway near Berlaimont in northern France when he became ill with what fellow prisoner Pte Leslie Powell described as "a sort of acute colic", from which he later died.

Another 11th Battalion POW, Pte Victor Perrie of Perth, said in a statement made to the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Bureau after the war: "... I saw 1877 Pte Jenkins, 11th Battalion, reduced to such a low physical condition that he dropped from exhaustion" and had to be "carried back to camp".

Pte Powell, who shared a Maubeuge hospital ward with Pte Jenkins for several days, later told the Red Cross: "The Germans made no attempt to give him medical attention until about the 16th of June (four days after he was admitted) and then the doctor did nothing for him at all... (He) had been in great pain, was almost unconscious when I last saw him."

Another prisoner, Pte A Musgrave, reported: "Pte Jenkins was taken very sick while working behind the lines ... he lay for days without medical attention and when he was finally taken to hospital I heard that he had died". A report by the German Red Cross described the cause of Pte Jenkins' death as "a twist in the bowel".



The Limburg prisoner of war camp, where Pte Jenkins was interned after his capture in northern France in 1917.

Twenty-two-year-old Pte Joseph Jenkins embarked at Fremantle aboard HMAT Argyllshire with the 11th Battalion on April 19, 1915. He survived bullets and influenza at Gallipoli and was sent with the battalion to France the following year, where was wounded in action on July 2, 1916.

Ten months later, just before dawn on April 15, 1917, the battalion came under a fierce German counterattack in Louverval Wood not far from Bourcies. The battle lasted until dusk and the battalion held the line, but losses were heavy on both sides.

Pte Jenkins was reported missing in action on April 16, 1917 and it was later confirmed he had been taken prisoner with other 11th Battalion soldiers the previous day.

His effects, consisting of just his army paybook and a "housewife" (sewing kit), were returned to his next of kin, his sister, Margaret Stewart, in Adamstown, NSW.

World War 1 Exhibition

Elaine Labuschagne



The Shire of Leonora will be hosting a World War 1 centenary exhibition opening in August 2015 and concluding in November 2018. The Shire has linked in with the Western Australia Museum *Remembering them...* project.

Each organisation participating in this project will receive a showcase, 5 panels (2 set with text), a pull-up-banner and design work. There is also funding included for research assistance which will be organised by the Royal Western Australian Historical Society.

The Sons of Gwalia Roll-of-Honour will contribute to the visitor experience and help tell the stories of men from the goldfields mining towns of Gwalia and Leonora who enlisted in World War 1 and the impact of the War on local residents. Anne Skinner is in process of researching the 85 men whose names appear on this Roll-of-Honour.

The emphasis of the exhibition is the impact the war had on the gold industry and the workers on the Sons of Gwalia Mine. Aspects of the home front efforts by local school children will also form part of the exhibition. The exhibition will be held in the Assay Building where the Honour Board will be installed, providing it the necessary protection from climatic damage and vandalism. Objects and digital stories will enhance the exhibition. The exhibition will start with 6 digital stories and each year, for the duration of the commemorations, more stories will be added. This will ensure that there is new content for repeat visitors and expand the museum's collection.

If you have any items, photos or stories relating to Gwalia and Leonora men and woman during the world War 1 please contact Elaine Labuschagne mehs@leonora.wa.gov.au

Vintage Vehicle Shed

Elaine Labuschagne

Construction of a new shed to accommodate the vintage vehicles in the collection started on 9 April 2014. The construction of the shed at the museum precinct follows a plan to consolidate historical items for improved tourism and heritage operations.

The facility will house the 1927 Hearse and International Mail truck. Both vehicles are significant to Gwalia and Leonora and still operational. There will be enough room in the shed to accommodate future acquisition of vehicles. Visitors will be able to view the vehicles while appreciating their history and condition.

The shed will offer a protective environment for the vehicles and will also house a small office for staff. Access to the museum precinct will now be gained through the shed entrance. A grant for this project was received from the Department Regional Development and Lands: Country Local Government Fund (CLGF) The project is due to be completed by the end of this financial year.



My time at Leonora Convent

Jean Lyneham, nee Moriarty

I attended the Leonora Convent School from 1950-1953. Lessons for 50-plus children of various grades took place in the poorly lit hall-cum-classroom. Classes were held in two rooms at first, then one was moved to Gwalia for lower grades. The older children walked or cycled to Leonora.

Sister Bernadette was a good teacher and looked after the boarders as well. In later years I found that, unusual for the times, she had a degree from UWA. Sister did her best to follow the new curriculum, catering for all grades and levels of English literacy when a flood of immigrants attended the school from about 1951-2. One of the two-week holidays was spent giving religious education to really remote students ("Bushies") who stayed at the convent, so little time off for the nuns.



Sister Bernadette in St John of God nursing home, 2010.

Singing lessons with the ABC radio on Fridays were a favourite and I still sing some of those songs to myself. "Soft as the Voice of an Angel" is still a favourite. Religious education included daily prayers, catechism, the liturgical calendar, biographies of saints and preparation for the sacraments. All that we did was to be our best and offered up to God, so every page of schoolwork was headed with A.M.D.G., translated as "All For the Greater Glory of God".

We were unwittingly taught appreciation of classical art by being given holy pictures, copied from great artworks and Latin by reading Mass with the Latin in one column and the English translation in another - and singing in Latin!



Sister Patrick taught Jean to do embroidery work and she still uses this skill today.

The Catholic religious life was very strong in Leonora-Gwalia, especially when the migrants came in large numbers. The Gwalia church looked magnificent at Easter, with embroidered altar cloths, polished candlestick holders and marvellous flowers, mostly huge dahlias grown by migrants.

Parents bought everything. I don't remember there being a P&C and no Government funds were available for Catholic schools in those days. Sporting equipment was minimal, consisting of a few old tennis balls, one basketball, one softball and bat plus a few skipping ropes. We trained for the annual interschool sports, and on one occasion I came second in a race against Mt Margaret Mission kids, an error, I am sure, as I could not run well and they were all fast.



At Sunday Mass older Girls wore a Children of Mary Solidarity medal on a blue ribbon, a blue cloak over a white dress, and a net veil on their hair.

There was at least one tennis court, but no-one ever taught us to play. I came to love recess and lunch because we raced to the vacant land between the tennis court and the Masonic hall, just behind the toilets, and played endless, dusty, enthusiastic games of softball/rounders. The smell and dirt must have been unpleasant when we lined up, but a quick handwash had us ready for class. After school we cleaned the classroom, but it always smelled dusty. There

were no cleaners in the convent or school.

We survived and many of us later finished High School, Teachers' College and University, with careers and jobs.

Pest Management

Elaine Labuschagne

Late last year a termite infestation was discovered at Gwalia causing severe damage to the timber structure of the miner's cottages and Mazza's store. The Shire of Leonora therefore made the decision to install below ground baiting stations and in some of the buildings additional baiting bags have been installed. The benefit of this system is that the termites take the bait to the nest and therefore the colony is eliminated. This is also a more cost effective and a long term solution.

Over the past few months 300 termite baiting stations were installed across Gwalia in an effort to curtail the extensive termite problem and to prevent damage to the existing buildings and the newly renovated Patroni's Guest Home, Pink House and de Rubeis.

Site plans of Gwalia indicate the location of the stations and each station is numbered to help with identifying the stations during inspection and recording the termite activity. The monitoring is done every 4 to 6 weeks by Gary with the help of Curtin Volunteers.



Mandy and Kirk from Mobile Pest Control preparing the ground for the installation of the baiting stations.



Active termites in a window frame at Major's Boarding House

Pergola at Hoover House

Gail Ross

The long awaited work has finally commenced on the rather dilapidated Hoover House pergola. All the second hand timber has been sourced locally and now is being prepared, sanded, sawn, cut and painted ready to be erected.

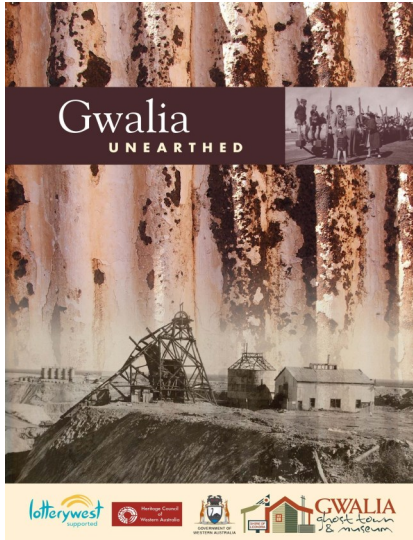


Stephen Peacock from PMCC busy constructing the new pergola.



Gary Ross pointing out the termite damage to the pergola

Gwalia Unearthed



The booklet ***Gwalia Unearthed*** was recently reprinted by the Shire of Leonora with minor changes. It contains beautiful photographs and a short history of the Sons of Gwalia mine and Gwalia. The second part of the booklet includes a site map and information on 18 buildings at Gwalia.

Gwalia Unearthed was researched and written by Denise Cook and Jacqui Sherriff and first published in 2008. This popular booklet consisting of 59 pages is available from Gwalia Museum at a cost of \$13.95.

Please contact Gail Ross to order a copy of the booklet.

Friends of Gwalia Renewals

Gail Ross

A friendly reminder that the renewals for the Friends of Gwalia are due from the 1st May until the 30th June each year. Any one who became a member or renewed their membership in January and February are now not required to renew until May 2015.

Please contact Gail Ross to renew your membership or join up. You will find a membership form at the end of this newsletter.

Newsletter contributions

If you have memories to share, are looking for a past friend or seeking information on something relating to Gwalia or Leonora, we would be pleased to include it in our newsletter. Please forward them to **Elaine Labuschagne, Manager Heritage & Economic Services**, along with any suitable photographs. *We reserve the right to edit or to decline to publish depending on the content.*

If you have family, friends or colleagues that would like to be included on our Newsletter mailing list, please contact our Museum Manager Gail Ross.

Gwalia Museum + Hoover House B&B

Shire of Leonora

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GWALIA MUSEUM + HOOVER HOUSE B&B

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Friends of Gwalia Museum

Subscription Form

museum@gwalia.org.au

By becoming a Friend of Gwalia Museum you will play an important role the preservation of buildings, machinery, objects, photographs and documents associated with Gwalia, the Sons of Gwalia Mine and the Leonora district.

You will also help Gwalia Museum share fascinating stories associated with these significant items through your support of public programmes and events.

Our mission

Gwalia Museum's mission is to conserve, explore and share the cultural heritage of Gwalia and Leonora. With your support, we can achieve our mission.

Gwalia Museum Collections

Gwalia Museum contains significant collections of buildings and machinery from Gwalia townsite and the Sons of Gwalia Mine, as well as objects, documents and photographs to these and the wider Leonora region covering mining, pastoralism, commercial enterprises and community facilities. With your support, we can continue to collect, conserve and enhance our collections for today's and future generations.

Learning and public events

Through our buildings, exhibitions and displays, public programmes and events, we aim to share the history and heritage of Gwalia and Leonora. With your support, we can continue this work.

As a subscriber, you will receive a quarterly newsletter, updates of important events and the satisfaction of knowing that you are supporting Gwalia Museum.

Funds generated through the Friends of Gwalia will remain separate from other Shire funds and will be used for specific targets set by the Gwalia Reference Group each year.
The target for 2013/14 is to help with conservation work to the cottages.

I wish to subscribe to the Friends of Gwalia Museum

Annual Subscription \$20.00 (inc GST)
Other donation \$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____

Title _____

Name _____

Address _____

Suburb _____

State _____ **Postcode** _____

Home Phone _____

Mobile phone _____

Email _____

I have enclosed a cheque/money order for this amount payable to the Shire of Leonora <input type="checkbox"/>	
OR I wish to pay by credit/debit card	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard
Card Number _____	
Name on card _____	
Signature _____	
Expiry date _____	Today's date _____
Do you require a receipt? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	

How may you be able to assist Gwalia Museum? (please circle)

Volunteer museum work / Volunteer for activities and events / Other _____

What is your association with Gwalia/Leonora? (Where you lived and/or worked, with dates etc)
