

...THE...  
**RADIO ACTIVITY**  
....NEWS BULLETIN....

For information of ex-Radium Hill Community and families

Official Organ of the Radium Hill Historical Association Inc.

February 2012

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**Hello there,**

Our events to help celebrate various milestones in South Australia's history and of Radium Hill, were certainly appreciated by the many who participated. The 'Ghost Town Cabaret 2, 4u' proved to be most spectacular.

It's amazing how some people have 'bucked in' to help us. Mick and Jan Roffey transported their sound system and electronic keyboard all the way from Melbourne. Ron and Maria Tame also from Melbourne carted their stage lighting, big generator and cinema equipment to help out. Karen Kakoschke brought an entertainment item all the way down from Tennant Creek, N.T. To them, PIRSA, History SA and to many others who have supported our efforts, thank you.

**An exciting program for the Easter 2012 Reunion at Radium Hill** is shaping up to be another event not to be missed. See page seven for more details.

A big thank you is extended to all those who sent letters of thanks, phone calls, e mails and helped support our efforts in so many ways.

Pleasant reading, keep in touch, spread the word, till we meet again  
Best wishes to you and yours.

Kevin Kakoschke  
February, 2012

**THE 2011 CELEBRATIONS**

South Australia celebrated one hundred and seventy five years of settlement. Teetulpa Goldfields were discovered one hundred and twenty five years ago and the Radium Hill Uranium Mine closed fifty years ago.

To commemorate the mine closure, one hundred and eighty ex-Radium Hill residents and family members made the pilgrimage back to their former home town to take part in the planned festivities. The weather was perfect

They arrived from Scotland and all states of Australia. Leith Singe, an eighty one year old ex-Radium Hillite and Luxemburg miner travelled by bus, hitch-hiked and walked, carrying his swag all the way from Lightning Ridge in N.S.W. His swag weighed 35kg.

Kevin Kakoschke's book, 'Women of Gold', a mining/social history of the region during the depression years was launched to commemorate the discovery of the Teetulpa goldfield in 1886.

**OUR NEW WEB SITE**

www.radiumhill.org is the address to find out the latest news relating to Radium Hill. Please view and then add your comments in the guest book. More than 1,400 have already used the site.

Live in hope and die in despair.

### MARCH BUSY BEE

Kevin and Barry Kakoschke together with Rod Lawrence and Ian Husband rolled up their sleeves and carried out a number of tasks at Radium Hill in preparation for the Easter festivities. The camp area was cleaned up and the BBQ flower bed extended with the planting of more shrubs and irises from Bill Mellen's Hawksley garden bed. More garden seats were installed at the cemetery and the whole one and three quarter acre cemetery site was skimmed of weeds. **What a back breaking job!** However it did look good when finished.

Headstone foundations for the Easter ashes burials were then poured with the aid of a number of concrete deliveries, courtesy of 'On the Spot ready mixed concrete', servicing the North-East.



A batch of concrete from 'On the Spot ready mixed concrete' about to be unloaded by 'operator', Ian Husband.

### EASTER 2011

A Doctor and six nursing Sisters were on hand to treat any emergencies. You can never tell when such a large number of people, many elderly, are gathered in such an isolated spot.

### EASTER FRIDAY

Trevor and John Morrison ably supported by Keith Jones, Pauline Harratt and team, made sure that those visiting the reception tent were warmly welcomed with a cup of tea.



'Iron-on' Radium Hill Monogram.

Irene Thomson had designed the iron on monogram for tee-shirts, jackets etc, to commemorate fifty years since the mine closed. They really look great when worn on various clothing items. We still have a few which can be purchased for \$5 ea. The price also includes postage.

The 'Non conformists', alias 'Mick the Mexican' and 'Janny on the Pianny' (Roffey) led the gathering in a song-fest after tea. They had compiled a very colourful sing-a-long booklet for the occasion. The brilliant movie, 'Long Long Trailer' was screened to a packed assembly ground.

### SATURDAY

Four historic commemorative plaques were unveiled on the Saturday morning including one which was unveiled by Margaret Fleming, a former nursing Sister who had worked at the Radium Hill A.I.M. Hospital. This plaque was inscribed with the name and birth date of the one hundred and seventeen babies who were born in the Hospital between 1953 and 1961.



Born in Radium Hill babes: L to R: Brian Tattersall, Kurt Kube, Kim Ford, Betty Perry, Margaret Fleming, Ian Tattersall, Anne Fleming, Gary

Franklin, Cheryl Carss. Not in the photo were Margaret and Roslyn Gobbett and Bill Davis.

Leith Singe felt privileged to unveil the Plaque noting the 23 historic legacies attributed to Radium Hill in lieu of Norm Gilberthorpe who was unable to make the journey from Melbourne.



Leith Singe unveiling the plaque.

Kevin Kakoschke unveiled the town map and 1960's house resident's stainless steel plaques on behalf of Les Roberts who had surveyed the town layout in 1950. They are a significant contribution to the preservation of Radium Hill's history.

### PIONEER CEMETERY

At noon, the ashes of five former residents were laid to rest in the Radium Hill Pioneers Cemetery.

The ashes included those of Jim McDiarmid (our former secretary), Wally and Susan Lawson and Jack and Laurel Andrews.

The cameo photographs on the plaques certainly personalise the headstones at each grave site.

Before the eulogies were given, favourite songs of the deceased were played at each site which added that little touch of nostalgia and evoked fond memories. Very moving indeed.

Les Andrews had travelled across from Perth, WA, for the occasion.



Wally and Susan Lawson's ex-mine rock head stone and inset plaque.

**Where there is a will,--- there is a relative.**

### THE WEDDING

Barry and Sylvia Kakoschke celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary which took place exactly fifty years ago to the day when living in Radium Hill. They re-affirmed their wedding vowels in "Our Lady Queen of the World" Catholic Church ruins which had been solemnly blessed and opened on October 2, 1956, by Rev. Mon. M.B. Clune.

The Church was packed out and every window and doorway was filled with faces. Even the confession booths were full. Jan Roffey arranged the delightful wedding music and Pam Barratt conducted the ceremony. Pam was beautifully dressed in a **stylish, deep blue two piece suit with ankle length skirt complemented by a dazzling multi-coloured chiffon scarf.** When the crucial question was asked of Sylvia; **she promised not to obey.** The medical brigade was not needed. The bride was given away by her grandson, Cameron Underdown. Eleanor Westaway (McFadden) was the bridesmaid supervised by the original bridesmaid Laurel Obrey (Clark). Confetti and handfuls of rice for good luck were thrown over the happy couple as they departed for their

photo shoot, wedding reception and 'honeymoon'.



The wedding before a packed Church of well wishers.

**Marriage is one long conversation, chequered by disputes.**

The wedding wasn't the only excitement at the Church.

Tony Averay's spare battery in the back of his ute had come adrift, 'shorted out' and started a fire. When trying to quell the fire, molten plastic from the battery case stuck to the back of Tony's hand.

**Ouch! what a skinless mess.** Luckily, Dr. Ken Leahey had his medical kit with him and tended Tony's wound. Terrific job, no later infection and it healed up beautifully. Thanks Ken.

After the wedding ceremony and photo shoot, June Kakoschke had just two hours to **modify the size of the 'wedding gown'** to fit 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert'.

### BOOK LAUNCH

Following the wedding reception, Andy Treloar launched Kevin Kakoschke's social/mining history book of the North-eastern Goldfields of Waukaringa, Teetulpa etc, titled, 'Women of Gold'. It certainly brings together many items of historical interest relating to the early gold mining activities of the region as well as the harsh living conditions experienced by the women in those times.

An auction, raffle and cutting of the anniversary cake by Bill Paul followed. Bill first arrived in Radium Hill from Mt. Painter in 1950 and left in 1965, the longest serving resident.



The Anniversary cake with an 'icing Headframe' decoration.

### GHOST TOWN CABARET

The 'Ghost Town Cabaret' got off to a spectacular start when the night air was rent asunder by the theme tune of 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert' heralding the arrival of Priscilla perched high on the top of a Nissan Patrol wagon. **A huge glittering head dress designed by June, a three metre flowing veil and an array of sparkling lights bordering the 'Queen',** was captured for posterity by the flashing cameras. A change of pace to settle the crowd, saw June Kakoschke singing 'Slow Coach' for the 'wee yuns' before their bedtime. A sing-a-long with the 'Non Conformists' 'geed up' the gathering crowd for the arrival of Marlene Dietrich (Margot Binkowski).



Perched on a stool and dressed in black while smoking a cigarette, Margot wailed the words of 'Lili Marlene' over the delighted crowd.

'The Schmidt Family' poem read to perfection by Dr. Ken Leahey **had the audience in stitches.** What a poem!

Possible 'Pop Stars' little Lara and Isabella twisted and shook to modern hit tunes as a prelude to the arrival of the 'Me and My Shadow' singer, June Kakoschke and dancers, Pam Barrett and Lois Harvey. Very professional.



L to R: Pam, Lois in black jacket, top hat and cane, with June in top hat and jacket gold lame.

Songs were sung by Josie Fedrizzi followed by June singing a medley tribute to Connie Francis. Marie Tame read a poem which she had composed about Radium Hill. Very nice.

**And then all hell broke loose.** The 'Can Can Girls' burst onto the 'stage' swirling their brilliant costumes, and revealing lovely legs as they weaved their way through the enraptured, cheering crowd. They had to do an encore. **Gee, they're good.**

'Janny on the Pianny' Roffey composed music for the poem '**One Last Look**'. She certainly is 'multi-skilled' and very talented. 'Mick the Mexican' sung the fitting and **poignant words of this powerful poem.** It was most appropriate as the final Cabaret act.

The night's entertainment concluded with a **huge pyrotechnic extravaganza** donated by Karen Kakoschke and supervised by fire fighter Colin Peryman, pyrotechnic

technician Robert Bennett and team. Simply amazing.

A big thank you.

**Sunday**, and after the kids had found the Easter eggs it was up to the Church for a thanks giving get together. Jan and Mick Roffey had made a nice booklet for the proceedings.

Welcome to  
Our Lady Queen of the World  
Catholic Church  
Radium Hill  
Commemorating  
50th Anniversary  
since its closure



*This church was hand built, including the 42,000 bricks, with community help. Started by Father V. Stiel in 1903 and dedicated in September, 1906.*

*Still serving the Radium Hill community*

Booklet cover.

The 'Pom's v's the Aussies' **cricket match** saw the local boys defeated with the Radium Hill Cricket Embers trophy heading off shore. A pity.

A Tag-a-long tour to the Maldorkys and Lake Maldigo, proved to be both exhilarating and exciting. **Vehicles slipped and slid** on the muddy banks of Gall's Well creek before bogging down in the wet sand. It proved to be quite a spectacle and drama as the bank bound audience witnessed vehicles moving sideways unexpectedly before sinking into the slushy sand and mud. Various techniques for retrieving bogged vehicles were demonstrated which delighted the spectators, especially those from Scotland. **They had never seen anything like it before. Och aye.**

The rest of the trip was cancelled and the group went on

to the old Mildaltie copper Mine area which once boasted shops and a pub for the 140 people living there in the 1890's.

### 'SPUD GUN'BALL CHASE

What an entertaining game. Jim Krecu had a 75mm pipe with firing attachment and tennis ball projectile. '**Start ya bastard**' propellant was squirted into the firing chamber, a piezoelectric starter was activated with a trigger and '**POW**', the ball shot nearly 150m into the air. The younger ones would then rush and try and catch it as it neared the ground.

**Problem.** With the eyes on the ball and racing to catch it, salt bushes and bindii would get in the way and many finished up sprawled on the ground and covered in bindii. **No ball, but prickles and scratches aplenty.**

Movies, sing-a-longs, dampers, yabbies, drinks and talkfest ended an exciting day.



Giant Blue Claw yabbies make a terrific supper.

### ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE

On Monday morning, 25 April, 2011, and just before **six am** or '**piccaninny dawn**', the track leading to the Radium Hill Pioneer Cemetery was lit with "glow worm like" twin beams of light piercing the dust laden air as the convoy of four wheel drives slowly made their way to the Cemetery for the Anzac Day

Dawn Service. The flag was limp at half mast above the one hundred and one strong crowd gathered for the Remembrance service to honour those who had served their country and for those who fell in the theatres of war. Many from the surrounding pastoral stations including James Treloar, Wadnaminga, James Morgan, Outalpa and Andy Treloar, Tikalina made the journey to be with us for the occasion.

**More than 356 ex-Radium Hill men and women had served in the armed forces of their countries.** Exploits of Phillip Davies and Reg Inwood who had received Victoria Crosses in the first World War, Guido Moderianno the French Medaille Militaire and two Croix de Guerres, Franz Kannermann the Iron Cross First Class, and other award recipients were read out by Pam Barratt.

Geoff Parker conducted the ceremony where 'Reveille' and the 'Last Post' were played along with the laying of the Sandra Dumont created Anzac Day wreath by Trevor Morrison. The raising of the flag concluded a most moving Anzac Day Dawn Service.

Jack Geer was the bugle player at the 1950's services and couldn't make it (88yo). However he was represented by his daughter Kay at the ceremony. He will be 90 on June 4, 2012.

#### **GUNFIRE BREAKFAST**

Back at the camp site, the fires had been stoked for hot tea and coffee followed by the traditional 'Gunfire breakfast' and a rum 'chaser'. The bacon and eggs on a slice of toast were cooked to a turn by the "**Bush Super Chefs**". Wolf Fellegger,

Rod Lawrence and June Kakoschke. Score, 10/10.



Wolf, June and Rod taste testing the tucker for the 'Gunfire Breakfast'.

A 'tag-a-long' to the old Luxemburg gold and copper mines in the afternoon was an adventure. Along the way Kevin Kakoschke demonstrated water divining at Gall's Well with a couple of pieces of wire. Some found it hard to believe. At the mine ruins, Leith Singe explained the 'leaching of copper process' where **he and Lea Brown were the biggest producers of copper for South Australia in 1956.** They produced 1<sup>1/4</sup> tons.



Karen Kakoschke all hung up on a creek bank in her Suzuki. A few 'Yo, Heave Ho's' by Ron Tame and Rod Lawrence pushed it over the 'edge'.

Kevin Kakoschke told some stories of the early mining families from his recently released book, 'Women of Gold'. The group was glad that they didn't experience the harsh conditions as those of their forebears.

An evening of song and tales around the campfire before enjoying a damper supper concluded a most extraordinary holiday week end.

**Tuesday**, and the workers had to return to the grind while those in the grey-power brigade were able to linger a little longer before they too had to make their way home. A week-end of friendship and entertainment had come to an end, but memories of it will last forever.

#### **AIM HOSPITAL**

In 1958, our little AIM hospital was extremely busy, in fact it was the busiest AIM Hospital in Australia at the time.

The hospital **nursed 153 inpatients for a total of 622 patient days. They also tended 3,591 outpatients who received 10,469 treatments.** Nursing Sisters Dulcie Gibson and Connie Savage were also on call 24/7. They were responsible for the cooking, washing, cleaning and home visits to the sick. All of the 117 babes born in the little hospital didn't sleep through-out the night. **Neither did Dulcie nor Connie in 1958 when 18 babies were born.** They were also heavily involved with the Youth and Church groups. They both finished up marrying local mine workers.

**The year 2012 will mark one hundred years since the Australian Inland Mission (A.I.M.) was first formed and fifty years since they closed the Radium Hill Hospital.**

What a milestone.

At a later date the A.I.M. was incorporated into the Frontier Services organization.

**Frontier Services (A.I.M.)** will be celebrating the occasion by holding a number of functions to commemorate the event. A book will be published outlining the history of the organization. Radium Hill may be mentioned for its part, including some photos which I have sent in for possible inclusion. (If not too late?) Should be a very interesting book.

### AN UNUSUAL SIGHTING

On a recent 'working bee' visit to Radium Hill, we went to get a load of water for the Pioneer cemetery trees from Teasdale's Dam near the old Radium Hill mine site. On cresting the dam bank we were confronted with the sight of sixteen beautiful big black swans serenely floating on the water.

What a sight.

**Luckily we had our cameras with us to snap the moment.**

They had apparently touched down for a rest during their migratory flight as three young signets were in their number. The next morning, as if by a swan song signal, **they ran on water and flapped off, up, up and away** with necks stretched out as straight as gun barrels, heading South. Their black bodies and white wing tips contrasted beautifully with the golden hues of dawn as they formed their 'flying vee'.



Swans floating serenely on Teasdale's Dam.

### OUR HERITAGE MUSEUM

The 'Women of Radium Hill' display was a great success. Twelve stories from former women or girls were displayed which gave a very interesting 'take' on how they viewed living in Radium Hill. Your contribution is appreciated.

Thanks to a grant from History SA we were able to upgrade an interpretive panel depicting the role migrants played in the multicultural Radium Hill community. At Easter, Noel Hiern presented an ex-Radium Hill artist, Alec Smith's painting of the Mine site to the Museum. This painting

had previously been hung in the S A Director of Mines and Energy office and later, in the Mineral Foundation manager's office.

A display will be set up in the museum featuring the role of the A.I.M. at Radium Hill as part of **their centenary** and for History SA's, **History Month 2012.**



Kevin Kakoschke receiving the painting from Noel Hiern.

### MANY MICE MAKE FOR A MISERABLE LIFE.



'Swatter Rod' ready to strike at any chokey 'Wee Courin' Timorous Beastie' (Rabbit Bums), if they dared to show their face.

They were here, there and everywhere, mice that is. Millions of them. Our Scottish visitors had never seen anything like it and hoped to never see anything like it again.

**The 'horrible hairy beasties'!**

They were certainly a great talking point.

On a later visit in September they had virtually disappeared, except for a couple of native desert mice.

Every now and then, one particular mouse kept us entertained by rolling around in front of the fire.

**We concluded that he was suffering from brain damage** as part of his skull seemed to be slightly depressed. Unfortunately

he ran out of luck, rolled through some hot coals, badly singed himself and had to be euthanized. In May, I had sprayed the Cemetery grounds for weeds. Unfortunately some trees were affected and looked very sick in September. Hopefully they will pick up, otherwise 20years of hard work is down the drain?

### OBITUARIES

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

Baxter, John, Adelaide, SA

Carmaggi, Carlo, Tuross Heads, NSW

Featherston, Ron, Yerong Ck. NSW

Fleming, Margaret, Sydney, NSW

Gillard, Eric, Georgetown, Tas.

Goode, Carolyn, Adelaide, SA

Gruen, Nils, Adelaide, SA

Hull Inga, Melbourne, Vic.

Hamilton, James, Adelaide, SA

Innes, Betty, Adelaide, SA

Lavery, Ada, Adelaide, SA

Lord, Irwin, Cohuna, Vic

Lovis, Kevin, Broken Hill, NSW

Murach, Sonja, Burnie, Tas

Murawsky, Borys, Kadina, SA

Pignitter, Franz, Adelaide, SA

Wilson, Stephen, Melbourne, Vic

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

### MINE SALVAGE

Thanks to some detective work by Ross Mainwaring we were able to establish that some underground Atlas type "Q", class H7748, 25" gauge locos were sold to The Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Co, Tasmania for the sum of **£200 ea.** A bargain when you consider that they **originally cost £1,750 ea.** Other Radium Hill mine closure items purchased in the deal were loaders (boggers), air augers, U/G fans, rock drills, etc.

**The 131' 7 1/2" (40m) high Main Shaft head frame design** was based on the Irwin Shaft head

frame. Roan Antelope Copper Mines, Nth. Rhodesia. It was partly salvaged in 1963/64 by Jim Spiers and Bill Paull (Stage 1 as per photo). The final demolition was then completed by Kakoschke Earth-movers.



The once striking Main Shaft head frame partly demolished.

#### AN UNUSUAL SIGHT

In May 2011, the Channel 7 News helicopter, thumped in low over 'Tank Hill' before landing on the School assembly ground. Tim Noonan did a special report on Radium Hill which was shown on the 6.00pm News.



The 'chopper' coming in to land.

#### EASTER 2012 PROGRAM?

A warm welcome and talk-fest. Pick up name tag.

Camp sites, **first in best dressed**. Help set up camp area.

**Friday pm**, setting yabby nets etc.

**6.30** Sing-a-long with the Non conformists.

**7.30** Drive-in movie, 'RED DOG'.

**Saturday** Tag-a-long heritage trail.

**12 noon:** To the Cemetery for the ashes interment of the late John Baxter and Franz Pignitter.

**2.00pm** 'Basic life skills' class.

**3.00pm** Fire extinguisher display.

**7.00pm** auction and giant raffle. More items needed.

'**Ghost Town Cabaret**' 3, 4U **7.30pm**.

Including: RED DOG ? and cast member. 'Mick the Mexican and Janny on the Pianny'.

**Beautiful BERKA Belles**, 'Sailors Ahoy'. Sensational singers including Ann, June and Margot, dancers galore and a 'helluv-a-lot' more, including 'your special act'.

**Finale: Should be a spectacular event using the latest 'magnesium wire' technology.**

**Sunday 8.30am** Easter service.

**9.30am** Battle for the 'RH embers' trophy.

**After lunch** a Tag-a-long, 'beat the bog' adventure to the Madorkys.

**Evening** Tall tales and true, plus kangaroo stew with damper to chew. Tea and coffee on tap.

**Monday, grey power brigade's** farewell to the workers.

#### MEMORY JOGGERS

**\*Never get so busy making money that you forget to make a life.** Relax at Radium Hill instead.

\* Please contact June, our secretary if you change your address or hear of any ex-Radium Hill resident who may have passed away.

\***Fill up with fuel** at either Yunta or Broken Hill. (Some engines will run on gas but not on fresh air). A fridge is available at the Radium Hill campsite for food and drinks.

\***Order your Iron-on Radium Hill-monograms** from our Secretary, just \$5 each which includes postage. A nice souvenir Radium Hill cap (\$10) and DVDs (\$25) will be available at the camping ground.

\* Put in your bid for the **Radium Hill book**, 'We Were Radium Hill' by **Friday, 16 March, 2012**. The highest bidder gets it. (\$100 +?) (book donated by the estate of Franz.)

**\*Write a comment in the guest book section of our new web site. View it at [www.radiumhill.org](http://www.radiumhill.org)**

\*The Olary Oasis Hotel host is Sam McLeod, 08 8091 1856. Dianne Hight Ph, 08 8650 5904 hosts the Mannahill Hotel. They are nice people providing ice, drinks, eats, and accommodation.

\*Sign the visitor's book at the Museum, pick up your RH site map and **Heritage trail brochure** from the map box at the 'R. H. bitumen'.

\*Bring along your **UHF set** (we communicate on channel 30), golf clubs, prospecting pick, binoculars, bathers, cameras and chair (40 chairs are on site) etc.

\*Bring your **sailor's cap, white trousers and striped top** for 'Sailors Ahoy'. Join in the fun.

\*Pick up and **pin on your name tag**, it helps to 'break the ice'.

\* **Rubbish, you bring it in, you take it out.** Leave the camp site neat and tidy (its appreciated).

\*Contact Andy Treloar if you want to stay in the shearer's quarters over Easter.

\*If unable to contact June or myself by phone, please leave a message with Margot Binkowski who will pass it on.

\*If you intend calling into Radium Hill other than at this Easter, please write or phone both Andy Treloar, Tikalina Stn. via Olary, Ph.08 8091 1529 and Maurice Francis, Oulnina Stn, via Mannahill Ph. 08 8650 5901.



Ben, James and girls 'roaring along' in their old jalopy at the Radium Hill dump.



Going down at a creek crossing: thrilling, so chilling.



Anzac Day Dawn Service: Trevor Morrison laid the wreath at the Cemetery cairn before a crowd of 100.



'Priscilla, Queen of The Desert' (Betty Smith), all lit up like 'King's Cross' at night, arriving atop Rod Lawrence's Patrol to start the 'Ghost Town Cabaret'.



Pauline, Pam, Margot and Lois on 'stage' under Ron Tame's spotlights kicking up to the 'Can, Can'.

A colourful Barry Kakoschke dressed as the 'Cabaret Clown' kept the crowd entertained during Saturday night.



81 year old 'Swaggie', Leith Singe with his 35 kg swag of bed, clothes tucker and tent, on the downhill track from 'Tank Hill' to the camp.