

# AUSTRALIAN MINING HALL OF FAME OFFICIAL OPENING

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## INTRODUCTION

Have any of you ever lost a pet or an animal? If you have, you will know how the two old time prospectors felt when their donkey fell down an open mine shaft, not far from here.

It fell about 10 metres but it was still alive and after a few moments started braying and snorting in anguish.

The two old prospectors had no chance of rescuing it but they couldn't bear to see it suffer, so they decided the right thing to do was to bury it by shovelling dirt down the mine shaft.

After an hour of shovelling, there was no sound, and with tears in their eyes they looked over the side and peered down the shaft.

What they found, to their amazement, was that each time a shovel full of dirt landed on the donkey's back, he simply shook it off and stamped it underfoot to get him closer to the surface.

After two more hours of shovelling, the donkey gratefully scrambled from the filled shaft.

I am telling you this story today because our team at the Mining Hall of Fame feel very much like that grateful donkey.

When we set the target of raising \$21 million to establish this spectacular building, people said that it couldn't be done.

We felt for a while that we were down that mine shaft without a ladder, but each time you gave us a cheque or any encouragement at all, it brought us closer to seeing daylight again.

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In welcoming you all here today, let me start by saying how sorry I am that I only have ten minutes to tell you how the project came into being, its reason and purpose, and its future.

I really need about an hour just to thank all the wonderful people who are responsible for the finished product, but I will do the best I can in ten minutes.

How did this building get here and exactly what is it?

It got here because on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1994 a group of 28 volunteers, selected and brought together by Kris Laurie, decided to put into action the idea that several people had mentioned over the years, of starting a Hall of Fame in Kalgoorlie, Kambalda or Coolgardie. Those at the meeting went to work and recruited an ever-widening circle of activists, much like the ripples created in a pond from a single stone.

Will Kris and those attending that original meeting please stand so we can see who you are.

Well, that was 7 years ago, and this is where we start thanking all those people, all those volunteers, who shared the rapidly expanding vision and stepped forward to actually make it happen.

As you know, a good idea is worthless without action, and the early financial supporters deserve special thanks. We did not have much to show them but they simply said, "here's some cash, so just get on with it". This led to the formation of the company, the Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame Ltd, and to the appointment of a Board of Directors and the impressive patrons to our organisation.

Those patrons with us today are Sir Arvi Parbo, Mark Creasy, Robert Champion de Crespigny, Jack Mackenzie plus those unable to be present, Prof. Geoffrey Blainey, Sir George Fisher and Rt. Hon. Doug Anthony.

A national architectural competition followed, which was won by Ferguson and Associates of Perth and Gus Ferguson, Doug Harvey and Ahmad Abas are here today. I think you will agree that their work has been outstanding.

This was accompanied by 14 months of negotiation with the Federal Government to have us included as a Centenary of Federation project. We had Richard Court in there batting for us, and the State Government adopted the project some months earlier than Canberra. Our sincere thanks to both Federal and State Governments for their significant support.

When people realised that this project was not just about money, that it was really about leadership, our task became easier. Leadership should start at the top, with leadership by example.

We then started taking fundraising seriously with the formation of campaign committees in all States.

Our two national fundraising chairmen are David Reed for Finance and Business and Richard Tastula for Prospecting and Mining.

The individual State campaign chairmen are Graeme Smith in W.A., John Horan in S.A., Ross Fardon in Qld, Sir Eric McClintock in NSW and John Barr in Vic, with Denis Gee in the N.T. and Harry Stacpoole in Tas.

They were, in turn, supported by 61 campaign committee members. Natalie Campion has been a wonderful Campaign Manager and we continue to enjoy working with her, Brian & Carolyn.

Congratulations on a magnificent achievement. Ladies and gentlemen please recognise our superb fundraising team.

Midway through the project we received a real boost when Normandy and Homestake donated this eight hectares of mining precinct and operating tourist mine, to our project. It all now is one single entity. Without the support of Normandy and Homestake, this integrated project would not have been possible.

Naturally, once our campaign gained sufficient momentum, we went out to tender. DeVaugh Pty Ltd of Bunbury were the successful tenderers. We have enjoyed working with Merv DeVaugh and Graham Teed, and our site representatives, Rapallo Pty Ltd (Andy George and Warren Redmond) and the many contractors and suppliers who were also involved.

We have had interesting local support. One example being the Kalgoorlie Rebel Road Builders, who seeing that we needed a new direct road, just turned up one morning and built it in true Kalgoorlie fashion. It will be surfaced and ready for your next visit.

Rapid progress has been made over the last year and gallery sponsors have worked with us on the exhibits. Our thanks to all our gallery and exhibit sponsors, all listed on our display today. In particular, our patron Mark Creasy has worked tirelessly with us on the Minerals Gallery. The work done by Mark and his team, including David Vaughan, Peter Clark, and more recently, Bob Noble, with further valuable input from Normandy, has resulted in us being at the forefront of any mineral collection in Australia.

Two of our galleries are already completed. They are the Mark Creasy Minerals Gallery and the Peter Wright Prospecting Gallery. The timetable for the other three galleries, (the Business of Mining Gallery, the Mining in Context Gallery and the Energy Gallery) is displayed on our magnificent website, provided and supported by WMC Resources, <http://www.mininghall.com> which is being demonstrated in the foyer by Nancy Bonnici today. This will be developed further and updated regularly as the educational material and databases are developed. It will be our prime mode of communicating and will incorporate current material including our Pick & Shovel Newsletter, so capably compiled by volunteer Faye Jones. Our website is where we are acknowledging all our supporters, including the many that I've been unable to mention personally today. I desperately wanted to mention every one of our 306 donors today as each donor is as

important as the next. There are signs acknowledging you that you'll notice as you walk around.

Talking of thanking people, the special sponsors of today's event are:-

- Nationwide Facilities Management
- Mustard Catering
- Colibri Pty Ltd, which is Daniel Martin Hill
- Carlton & United Breweries
- Coca Cola
- Brinks Aust. Pty Ltd
- The Gold Stealing Detection Squad
- Qantas Airlines

I would encourage you all to be here again next year because you will be astounded at the surprises we have in store and the plans we have yet to bring to fruition.

This gallery for example, has only one exhibit so far.

Above us is a similar Auster aircraft to the one flown by Lang Hancock over his Pilbara iron ore discoveries (Gina, is it true that you risked your life by flying it up there onto that hook?). Thanks Gina for your support and encouragement. In a short time this gallery will be filled with many similarly impressive exhibits.

Let me tell you about another exhibit just finalised this week.

We have just received a \$300,000 pledge from the Simon Lee Foundation in conjunction with the WA Chinese Chamber of Commerce, to establish a Chinese Garden of Remembrance (on the south side between the building and our new entrance road).

This garden complex will commemorate and tell the story of the significant role played by the Chinese community in every major Australian mineral field.

This will be yet another reason to bring you back next year.

Another last minute inclusion. Again, too late to be listed with our other key sponsors so I'll mention now Alcoa World Alumina Australia, who helped us to submit an international grant request to the Alcoa Foundation in America, have just advised that the Alcoa Foundation will support the Environmental Exhibit within this Business of Mining Gallery with a contribution of A\$350,000 over the next three years. We thank our Alcoa friends here in Australia and the Alcoa Foundation in America for their global generosity.

This is doubly significant as we are the first ever recipient of a grant from the Alcoa Foundation to a non-profit organisation in Australia – it also emphasises the international support that has been a significant feature of this campaign.

To summarize: has the project all been plain sailing? Pretty much—apart from the occasional cynics who are always there when an innovative and visionary project gets under way.

Things may have been moving too fast for them, so they decided to just sit there. They shouldn't have been so surprised when they got run over!

In true Kalgoorlie fashion we have also turned a \$21M project into a \$25M project by adding, among other things, an Energy Gallery. An option is held over this by the Australian Energy Industry. We are still about \$2M short to enable completion so there is still room for some more heroes to step forward.

What I have enjoyed most about the project is the momentum it has generated and that's been driven by the directors who have shared the load over the whole period.

I will mention in particular the current Board, Deputy Chairman, Dick Scallan, Vice Chairman, Andrew Caulton, Bruce Harris and Martin Albrecht because the workload for them has been intense, especially over the past six months. I'm also proud to announce a new board appointment, Dr. Ian Burston. Please reserve any applause until they are now joined by all the former Directors and Alternate Directors over the past 6 years. Please all stand and receive our applause.

I look forward to serving under a new Chairman from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> and I'm sure the new Chairman will receive the same wonderful support as I have enjoyed.

But what about Norma did I hear someone say?

Norma Latchford is our extraordinary Project Manager and she has been with the project from day one, from that very first meeting.

I know of no other person who could have achieved so much on such a lean administrative budget.

Norma's complete belief in the continuing vision, and her tenacity, have been an example to all of us. She has maintained excellent communications with us wayward bunch of volunteers. We are usually immersed in our daily jobs.

Norma has earned our team's admiration and we give her our full support in completing the task at hand.

Norma also has a wonderful Personal Assistant in Tabettha Rogers, and I would like them both to come forward for a presentation from the Board. (Give them the ovation they so richly deserve).

Now, what is this project and why did we build it?

The opening of the Mining Hall of Fame celebrates the most ambitious and visionary project of this type in the world. This project is a true reflection of the importance of the mining industry to the Australian and world economies, and has the potential to change the way the world looks at minerals and their importance in everyday life. Like all successful projects, the Mining Hall of Fame has been born out of a vision, developed with a clear purpose, and will prosper as it establishes a new level of communication between the mining sector and the general public.

The opening also celebrates the work and support of hundreds of people across Australia and, in particular, the small group of people in Kalgoorlie who have supported this from the very beginning, seven years ago. Kalgoorlie itself is a living, breathing, vital community that clearly demonstrates what mining can do for a community, and it is the ideal home for this national symbol.

The Mining Hall of Fame is a gift to the people of Kalgoorlie.

I hope they will accept it, use it and develop it, because if they do, it will repay their investment many times over by bringing hundreds of thousands of new visitors to the City on a continuing basis.

It is also Western Australia's first recognizable national icon, so it brings this added dimension to the State.

This truly national project will educate, entertain and explain the important role that Australia's mineral-rich regions play in improving the living standards of all Australians, and how it brings opportunities and new employment choices to Australians of all ages.

The project is an extremely successful joint venture between the Federal Government, the State Government, the mining industry, and hundreds of supporters. It will bring all these parties together on a regional basis and promote the mutual benefits of removing some of the obstacles that prevent our industry from achieving its true potential.

My biggest challenge today, as Chairman, has been to thank everyone involved, particularly the 500-or-so supporters, members and helpers who have poured the cash, time and, most importantly, their enthusiasm into this exciting project.

In so doing, they have joined with the legendary heroes who have given us so much by providing us with so many new opportunities and career choices that will take our prospecting, exploring and mining industries proudly forward into this new century.

My task is really to welcome you here today, but I just needed to get those thoughts over to you before I extend to you the warmest of Kalgoorlie welcomes.