



Mystery History Trip

Sunday 6th May 2018

A lovely crisp morning dawned for our trip. Meeting place the Gawler visitors centre at 9am.

People on the trip were:

- Our mighty trip leaders, Quenton and Deb
- John and Jane with friends Tony and Julie
- Max and Lyn
- Peter, Joann and Margaret
- Fiona and Wayne
- Rodger with grandchildren Alex and Brandon
- Sandra and Wayne
- Roy and Bronwyn meeting us at Bethany Reserve.



Cars ready and off we went, first stop Bethany Reserve.

Morning tea was a great delight with lots of yummy food for the tasting. A quick walk along the street just to see some of the houses with a pamphlet supplied by the Bethany Historical Committee from 1992, It would be interesting to go back and do the whole walk as Bethany was the first village established in the Barossa Valley with the land being leased in 1852 with the mortgage paid by 1857. There were originally 28 families, with some of the decadence of those families still remaining. It has some well preserve houses and an excellent example of a slab-sided, thatch roof implement shed across from the reserve.

Next port of call was a home owned by Luke and Fay Rothe they have a fantastic collection of items dating back to the 1840 to around 1970 they don't collect anything with a bar code. Luke has been collecting since he was 11yro.



The house has beautiful lamps, light shades, furniture made by local people in the Barossa and crockery.

Most impressive is the magnificent collection of tins. It must take them hours to dust.



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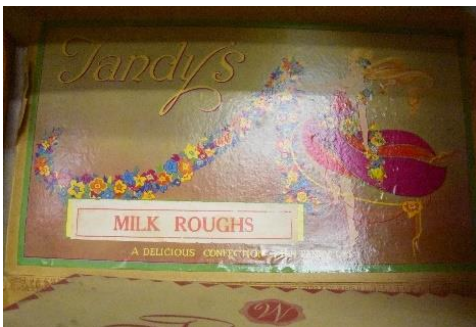
The music box that he showed us was in pristine condition and stills plays the metal disc, with such enchanting music. This is from Germany 1800's and a Christmas tree sat on top and turned around to the music, such craftsmanship. Bronwyn's said her family has one but just in a different shape.

Next the shed where we were taken back to our childhood with toys, different household items, didn't think some of those irons were real good, far too heavy for my liking.

Hate ironing now so really would have hated it back in the 1800's. Lots of furniture, boxes, fantastic collection of Shell, Caltex and Golden Fleece tins in very good condition.



Collection of weeties boxes with their little plastic toys we use to get and think it was great when we where kids.



Julie found 2 boxes of Tandy Candy, her grandfather was a partner in the company and he designed the artwork for the boxes. How magnificent for her to find part of her heritage there.

Bronwyn also found items from her grandparent's home in the Barossa. It must be heart-warming to know that some people still cherish things from the past and are helping to preserve those items.



Another garage was set up as the kitchen and lounge from around the late 60 - 70's lots of browns and orange colours there. Was hard to get us moving on from here.



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Next was lunch at the park in the centre of Angaston.



Off after lunch to the next mystery of the day and I must say did not think it could top the house we had just been too but was very wrong.

Tanunda was our next stop at the Solider Memorial Hall to see the most stunning pipe organ I have ever seen or heard. Steven Kasler was our wonderful host, very passionate about pipe organs and very knowledgeable.

The pipe organ was built by Hill & Son in London for the Adelaide Town Hall and opened in 1877. It was enlarged in 1885, rebuilt and altered in 1970 (properly butched is a better word). Then it was replaced in 1980 and put into storage. The Organ Historical Trust of Australia took on the mammoth task of restoring the organ that the Adelaide City Council allowed them to have but it had to stay in South Australia.

With Steven we were taken to the inner workings of this beautiful piece of history. Explained how it works, how it was restored and heard the most stunning music, played by Steven and even Lyn had a go, and I must say did very well. Lots of pieces had to be made, all the outer woodwork had to be sanded back as they painted it white in 1970. The pipes had to be redecorated and this has 24c gold paint on them. It took them over 20 year of work and it is the most extensive and accurate restoration of this kind.

George Stephens a master organ builder was involved in the restoration from the beginning. Many thousands of dollars was spent with many generous donations from world-wide. It is amazing what can be achieved when people work together from all over the world. We stayed for quite a while and it took Quenton a bit to hurry us up for our next mystery.

Our next mystery was at Shea Oak Log where we met Bob Arhens, Edlin Lienet and Tony Forthingham and John the border collie dog. Edlin gave us a talk about how Shea Oak Log was founded in 1844.

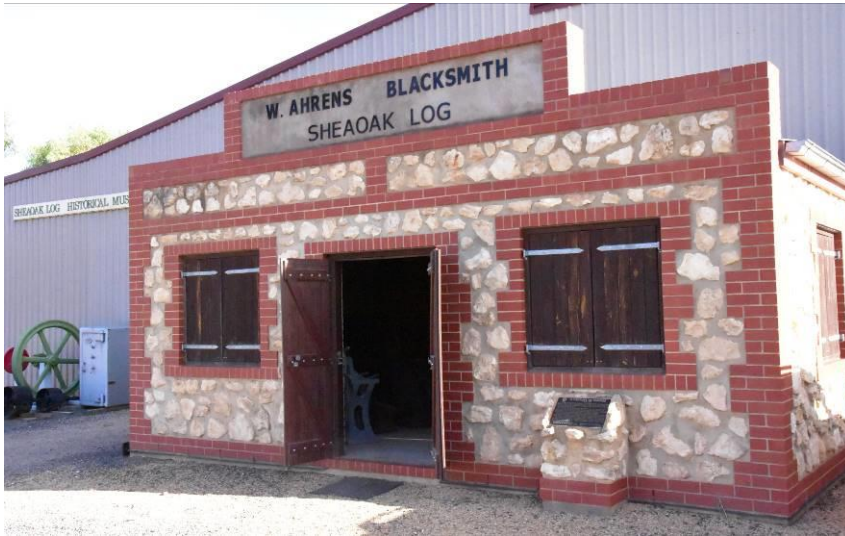
Mr C H Bagot with bullocks and dray with a plough attached was returning from Kapunda with a load of ore on a pre-marked route when the plough broke and was substituted with a limb from a sheoak tree.



This started the beginnings of a town; a school was started in 1858 and closed in 1957. This now is on Max and Lyn's property as Max's office. I must have once been a thriving town as it supported 3 pubs.

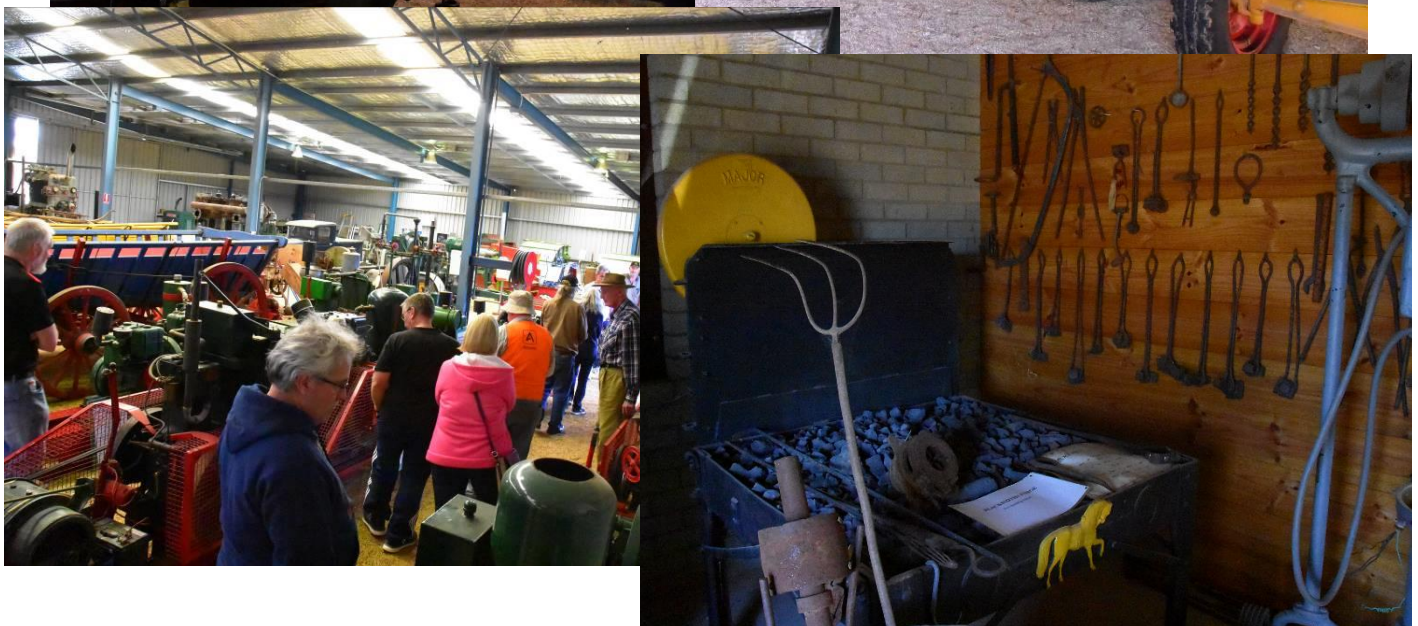


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Next on the agenda was to see a restored blacksmiths shop that belonged to Mr Arhens great grandfather, then walking into the biggest shed I have ever seen.

This shed was used in the Sydney Olympics and just was lying around waiting to be used; it is massive and filled with a very impressive collection of engines, toys and tractors.



The 3 men walked around mainly with the men on the trip to show how the machinery worked and what they were. They have one machine that was a generator for a radar but it has bullet holes in it when it was taken out so the radar didn't work, a massive steam tractor, a huge collect of tractors and many more.

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A trailer with lots of toys that are run by compressed air that was fantastic.



The coffee van then turned up and that was just what the doctor ordered as well.

We then ventured out to the old house that has been restored and they must have been really short in those days as the door frames where not very big.

Thank you Quenton and Deb for a fantastic day.

[Sandra Heintze]

