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| NEXT EVENT #72: SHEPPARTON CANNERIES: 18-20 FEBRUARY 2005: SEE BELOW |

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E-mail members please see the attached help file for recommended software settings.

E-MAIL POLICY

We will send the Newsletter by e-mail if we have your e-mail address, unless you ask us not to. We will send it by snail mail if we do not have your e-mail address, or if you ask to get it by snail mail, or if we sent it by e-mail and you did not acknowledge receipt of the e-mail within a week. (You may decline that automatic follow up if you are confident that your e-mail always gets to you). If we send you the Newsletter by snail mail, we will charge you 70 cents each time towards the cost of printing, postage and stationery.

We keep records of the number of snail mails we send you, and we will tell you when you owe us \$10.00 or more. If you have a credit with GEMS, we will use that up first.

MEMBERS' ADDRESSES LIST

Please advise us of any changes to your details.

BOOKINGS

Please send us your bookings by e-mail or snail mail. Verbal bookings may not be recorded. We prefer to receive the form with your selections shown. This can be done in a text editor (such as Notepad or Word), or by writing on the printed form and snailing it back to us. An email will do if using the form is too much bother. Remember to add your name and any suggestions fo future events.

BANKING

We can make payments directly into bank accounts rather than sending cheques. We also have a cheque book for the time being, but if we find that we don't need it we will cancel that facility to avoid the BADT. You can pay for events etc by EFT, GEMS' bank details are shown on the booking form.

RECENT EVENTS

71. Disk Bowls - 1st January 2005

The ninth annual disk bowls championship was a moderate success, with reasonable weather but a smaller than usual attendance (10 players). Several of our regular contestants were away as expected, some being overseas. The winners were - singles, Phil Evered and doubles, Rob and Bev Huntley. Thank you to those who were able to attend. Next year will be our 10th anniversary Disk Bowls Championship, there will be extra prizes so plan to attend now!

FUTURE EVENTS (Note: event numbers and dates may have changed)

72. Shepparton Weekend - 18-20 February 2005

Another annual event. Make your own bookings for accommodation, there are several alternatives, caravan parks with cabins and powered or unpowered sites, also motels for those who prefer a slightly higher standard. Get factory seconds from Campbells Soups and Coke/SPC/Ardmona at real bargain prices on soups, preserved fruit, other canned goods, and general household supplies such as cleaning products. We usually stock up for the year on tinned Fray Bentos pies, soups, jams etc. There may also be a Farmers Market on the Sunday with fresh fruit and vegetables available. Also enjoy a pleasant weekend social GEMS event at minimal cost. No GEMS charges for this one, just pay your own way. We will probably meet for dinner at the RSL on Friday and/or Saturday night.

73. A Day In The City - Saturday 19 March 2005

This is the weekend between the Labour Day long weekend and Easter. Hopefully not too many of you will have other things on, sorry to those that do. As there was no clear consensus on what to do, we have decided not to make a group booking for any of the possible activities. Instead we ask that you make your own bookings through the contacts shown in the following descriptions. Note, no typos have been corrected, and the several mistakes in these descriptions are as they were found on the various web sites shown and they do not represent News 42 DMs. Some of the irrelevant info has been deleted for the sake of brevity, such as non-Saturday operating times.

Ride around on the FREE City Loop trams.

We will meet for dinner at a location to be advised at 7:00 pm. Let us know if you will join us for dinner so that we can book if necessary.

If none of the items below excites you, there are plenty of other things to do such as go for a stroll along Southbank, visit the shops, have lunch in the park, you name it.

a) Chinatown Heritage Walks

http://www.melbournechinatown.com.au/attractions_walk.html

Melbourne's historic Chinatown comes to life with guided tours arranged by the Chinese Museum. A Chinatown Heritage Walk is an ideal way to familiarise yourself with Melbourne's most interesting precinct, just five minutes walk from the centre of the city. Commence with a guided tour of the Chinese Museum, experience the life and times of Chinese goldseekers last century, journey from Hong Kong to Australia on board a sailing ship, view the new permanent exhibition showcasing the history of the Chinese in Australia with wedding gowns woven in gold, the furniture and tools of master cabinet makers, temple regalia, and antique calendars, just some of the artefacts that can be seen. Then take a walking tour of the area and bring back to life the 150 year history of Chinatown.

Visit some of the local retailers and learn the history of the precinct. A delicious banquet lunch will complete the tour in one of Chinatown's world class restaurants.

Tour with lunch - (duration 3 hours) Full price \$31 Concession \$28

Tour only - (duration 2 hours) Full price \$15 Concession \$12

Tours daily from 11 am

Bookings and enquiries - Chinese Museum, 22 Cohen Place, Melbourne. 9662 2888 business hours.

b) Chocoholic Brunch Walk

<http://www.chocoholictours.com.au/>

Explore Melbourne and discover some exciting cafes. Relax with your favourite drink-hot chocolate, tea or coffee-at Laurent Boulangerie & Patisserie. This will be complimented by petits fours...chocolate of course! We then wander through the elegant Block Arcade, home to Haigh's Chocolates, where we have tastings and a chocolate chat. Take a walk-up Collins Street with its fashionable boutiques and historical buildings. Then we enter another hidden arcade, to munch on chocolate from some of Melbourne's top chocolatiers. We then wander up Collins Street and visit one of Melbourne's heritage buildings, the Manchester Unity Building, which is home to Caffe Mediterraneo. This lovely venue is beautifully cosy, full of charm and is tucked away in the buildings decorative arcade. A delectable chocolate dessert awaits and yet another hot chocolate if your heart so desires. Relax now at your leisure, as there is no rush to leave.

Time: Saturday 10 am to 12 noon

Meet: Laurent Patisserie, 306 Little Collins Street Melbourne

Cost: \$28.00 all-inclusive. Bookings essential.

c) Chocolate Indulgence Walk

<http://www.chocoholictours.com.au/>

Explore and talk about Melbourne through a chocoholic haze. Indulge chocolate fantasies with tastings from some of Melbourne's finest chocolate specialists. At the same time discover some hidden arcades and laneways. These are full of history and lively activity of local Melburnians enjoying themselves.

Build up your glucose levels with delicious tastings from Cadbury. The wickedly yummy chocolate icecream from New Zealand Natural Icecream is followed by chocolate tastings of Callebaut, one of Belgium's finest. Surprises await!

The oldest arcade, The Royal Arcade is home the new chocolate salon, Koko Black where the chocolatier can be seen making beautiful chocolate creations. A discussion and truffle tasting is all part of the tour. The Chocolate Box nestles in the Australia on Collins Arcade and their chocolates will delight your taste buds with delicious results. A short stroll takes you near Federation Square which is the gateway of the Arts Precinct and St Kilda Road, one of the world's great boulevards and close to the walk's last stop.

The Sheraton Towers Hotel Southgate is where the tour finishes with a perfect afternoon of indulgence - chocolate dessert and drinks in the elegant Tisane Lounge plus a chat to one of the talented chefs. Here you are surrounded by the Arts Precinct of Melbourne and delights of Southgate. Your senses will be delighted, visually and taste wise!

Time: 12.15-2.15 pm Saturdays

Meet: New Zealand Icecream, Ground Floor, Queen Victoria Building (QVB)- Entrance near corner of Swanton & Lonsdale Streets on Swanston St.

Cost: \$28.00 all-inclusive. Bookings essential.

d) Chocolate and Other Desserts Walk

<http://www.chocoholictours.com.au/>

Melbourne is seen from a 'sweet tooth' viewpoint. Visit some tempting chocolate and dessert makers who are hidden away in the lanes, arcades and side streets.

Tastings, talks and tales of Melbourne starts at Charmaine's Ice Cream at Southgate with a choice of icecreams - chocolate, lemon cheesecake, Baci and more. Suga at Southgate demonstrates the art of old-world tradition of lolly making and reveals some secrets of the art whilst you taste some of their creations.

Stroll across the Yarra River to Haigh's Chocolate in the Block Arcade where your taste buds will be seduced by the delectable flavour of their chocolates and your eyes by the designs. Enter the snug and old fashioned world of The Pancake Parlour where rich pancakes will hit the taste buds in just the right spot.

At the Paris End of Collins Street the tour finishes with a behind the scenes tour of the pastry kitchen of the Grand Hyatt Hotel where the chefs chat about dessert making and you get to feel the sweet atmosphere of the place. Then afternoon tea at Hanzelmann's, The Grand Hyatt with desserts and drinks will complete this sweet experience. Now just relax and dream of sweet indulgences or the next chocolate treat!

Time: 2.15pm-4.30pm Saturdays

Meet: Charmaine's Ice Cream, Southgate Food Court

Cost: \$28.00 all-inclusive. Bookings essential.

e) Queen Victoria Market Tours

A 2 hour guided tour starting at 10 am on Saturday.

Foodies tour \$25 includes generous samplings and coffee. Meat and Fish Hall, Vegetable Aisles and Dairy Hall.

Heritage Tour \$16.50 explores the 125 year plus history of the market and includes morning tea.

The following tours are only available for groups of 10 or more -

Combination tour combines the two with a coffee break between. Ideal for Seniors.

Multi-cultural tour emphasises the ethnic variety of Market produce.

Breakfast with the Vegies - an early morning progressive vegie tour.

Healthy eating for diabetics - adaptation of the foodies tour.

f) Melbourne Aquarium

<http://www.melbourneaquarium.com.au/information/index.html>

Adult: \$23.00 Child: \$13.00 Concession: \$15.00

9.30am~6pm (last admission 5pm). Allow 2 - 2.5 hours for your visit

Cnr Queenswharf Rd & King St, Melbourne. 9620 0999.

NEW "Glass Bottom Boat Tours"

Take a behind the scenes tour and a glass bottom boat ride over our 2.2 million litre Oceanarium. Get up close to sharks, stingrays, turtles and over 3,000 fish of the Southern Ocean. You will get an in depth educational tour of the 'behind the scenes' action at the Melbourne Aquarium and a chance to talk to the divers and marine biologists.

Tours: 11.00am, 12.30pm, 1.15pm, 2.00pm

Maximum of 7 people per tour. Minimum of 2. Bookings at Information Desk

Cost (Additional to general admission above)

Adult: \$13.50

Child: \$7.50 (4 - 16 yrs)

g) Rialto Towers Observation Deck

www.rialto.com.au

Melbourne is changing everyday! Rialto Towers is Melbourne's most recognised building and the Southern Hemisphere's tallest office structure. Views from our Level 55 Observation Deck are nothing short of breathtaking! When you visit Melbourne, make a point of experiencing stunning 360-degree bird's-eye-views of the fabulous city and 60km to the horizon. It's the perfect place to discover another side to "the worlds most livable city." Facilities include gift shop, licensed cafe and 'Zoom City' live action cameras.

Admission charge includes a 20-minute sight and sound extravaganza, 'Melbourne the Living City,' shown in the RialtoVision Theatre and free use of high-powered binoculars.

Adult \$12.50

Child \$7.00

Concession \$9.00

Pensioner \$8.00

Family (2 Adults and up to 4 Children between the ages of 4 and 15) \$35.00

OPEN Every day, 10am until late.

525 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000. 9629 8222.

h) Polly Woodside

www.nattrust.com.au

The restored iron barque Polly Woodside is afloat as the main exhibit of Melbourne's extensive Maritime Museum. Built in 1885, she made 16 voyages around Cape Horn before sailing for 20 years in Australasian waters. Come aboard, smell the tar and rope in the forepeak store and listen to her creaking and heaving on her mooring ropes. Open 10am - 4pm, 7 days a week

Lorimer Street East, Southbank 3006. 9699 9760 or 9699 9761.

i) Melbourne River Cruises

No visit to Melbourne would be complete without an award-winning trip on the Yarra with fantastic views and informative commentary in the comfort of a Melbourne River Cruiser. Choose from the Scenic River Gardens up river cruise, the Port and Docklands down river cruise, or for the complete city experience, why not consider the Melbourne Highlights up and down river cruise? All vessels are fully enclosed with on board amenities and snack bar.

Princes Walk, Corner Princes Bridge & Batman Avenue, Melbourne 3000. 9614 1215.

j) Crown Entertainment Complex

www.crownltd.com.au

The Crown Entertainment Complex is located on the north facing banks of Melbourne's Yarra River. The Complex combines gaming, hotel, convention, restaurant, retail and comprehensive entertainment facilities in one of the most innovative and technologically-advanced sites in the world. Crown is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week except on the Christmas Day, Good Friday and Anzac Day. On these days Crown is closed from 4am and re opens 12 noon. Customer Information Centre 9292 5505.

k) IMAX

<http://www.imax.com.au/nowshowing.asp>

Current IMAX prices are shown below. Program on March 19 is not available. Movies start on the hour. Aliens of the Deep starts in March, day not stated. Check the web site nearer the date.

2D 3D

ADULT	\$16.00	\$17.00
POLAR EXPRESS ADULT		\$20.00
CHILDREN	\$11.00	\$12.00
POLAR EXPRESS CHILD		\$15.00
STUDENT / CONCESSION	\$13.00	\$14.00
POLAR EXPRESS STUDENT		\$17.00
SENIORS	\$12.00	\$13.00
POLAR EXPRESS SENIOR	\$16.00	\$16.00

l) Melbourne Museum

<http://melbourne.museum.vic.gov.au/about/visiting.asp>

Come and See the Real Thing

Explore a rain forest. See Phar Lap. Touch a dinosaur bone. Walk onto a set of the TV show Neighbours. Live a life-time in no time at all at Melbourne's award winning Museum.

(Currently showing Dinosaurs from China)

Situated in Carlton Gardens and next to the historic Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne Museum is an exciting and innovative attraction - including permanent and touring exhibitions, dynamic performances and events, cafés, IMAX Theatre, gift shop, and undercover parking.

Adults \$6.00, Children and Concession Free

Open 10am-5pm daily

11 Nicholson St, Carlton.

74. Geelong Waterfront Day - 10 April 2005

Meeting time and location to be advised.

http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/visiting_geelong/parks_and_gardens/rippleside_park/

Rippleside Park sits at the corner of the Princes Highway and Bell Parade, marking the turn-off to the attractions of Waterfront Geelong.

The park is also at the northern end of the Bayside Bollards Walk with a sealed path following the water's edge to the city. Dozens of colourful bollards depicting characters from Geelong's past are dotted along the track. Another sealed path up from the park runs along the cliff top to the city.

http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/Visiting_Geelong/Attractions/Waterfront/About_the_Waterfront/

Waterfront Geelong is one of Australia's best waterfront redevelopments. The transformation includes new restaurants, beautiful landscaped gardens, walking, cycling and skating paths, attractions and public art.

Central features are Steampacket Quay and Steampacket Gardens where you can take a stroll beside the bay or enjoy a picnic on the lawns.

An antique carousel beside the quay is a favourite with youngsters who can do laps on the 36 painted horses and two chariots to familiar melodies from a 19th century fairground organ.

On the other side of Beach Road, Customs Park recalls Geelong's maritime importance in an artistic way. Unique metal and glass "cargo boxes" contain examples of the cargoes handled at the port and provide illumination at night. To complete the picture, Waterfront Geelong has modern street lighting and street furniture to match the contemporary feel.

75. Buxton weekend - 27-29 May 2005

A roomy boarding house with plenty of beds in bunk rooms, in picturesque country on the way to Eildon with lots of opportunities for pleasant non-taxing walks and other bush type activities. Book now to ensure your place! Very reasonable prices.

76. Wine Bottling - 18 June 2005

A refill of the GEMS label with selected bulk wines at very reasonable prices. Details to follow.

77. Progressive Dinner - 23 July 2005

This is now an annual event. The date for this year's feedathon was set at the last one by popular acclaim. This will be centred on the Tardis again. Get your names down early and let us know if you want accommodation.

78. Warrnambool Weekend - August 2005

Come along for the weekend, organise your own accommodation. We have changed the month to August, as the whales are more likely to appear from June till August. We will also be going to the Flagstaff Hill "Shipwrecked" Sound and Light Show on the Saturday night. Let us know if you want to attend the show, we may get a group discount. No GEMS charges, pay your own way. Date to be advised.

79. Woop-Woop - September 2005

For something rather different, try this one. We have to book in as a group, so please let us know if you want to come along. Buy your lunch there or bring your own.

The following was taken from an A4 flier of unknown origin, dated August 2003. Currency confirmed by phone.

If laughter is the best medicine, you'll get a good dose of it at Woop-Woop. Unlike anything you've ever seen before, fair dinkum! A sculpture garden/gallery/tea room based on our Aussiw lingo with a belly laugh behind every bush - a few giggles inside too! Don't forget your camera!

Open only to groups - bookings essential (both small and large groups welcome)

Admission (includes guided tour) Adults \$5, children \$2 (not ideal for young children - adult supervision required)

Closed June and July - It's colder than a mother in law's kiss!!

Mornin' and Arvo tea on tap in the Noshery

Aussie Tea - shearer's scones with fly bog (jam) and thick cow (cream) and tea/coffee \$4

Mornin Munga (Arvo too) with box 'n dice slices and tea/coffee \$3.50

Bangers and bunny grub BBQ lunch \$5 (all eating areas are indoors)

(sausages and salads, hunk o' dodger - tea/coffee thrown in)

Apple slice 'n thick cow dessert \$2

It's orright to bring yer own picnic - no worries!

8km past Castlemaine on the Calder Highway, turn left onto Blackjack Road at the 119 km post.

80. Miss and Giggle Golf Weekend - 21-23 October 2005

Revisit the Lower Tarwin golf course. Stay at the Tardis in Inverloch for the weekend.

10th Annual Disk Bowls Championship - 1 January 2006

Don't miss it! Special 10th anniversary prizes.

SUGGESTED EVENTS (Note: these will run if there is sufficient interest)

TRIVIA QUIZ

MURDER MYSTERY

These may be included in one or more of the weekends away.

GLOW IN THE DARK MINI GOLF

Use your imagination.

ERICA WEEKEND possibly November

A repeat of the successful visit in September last year. Great scenery at nearby Walhalla, a very interesting mining town from the gold rush times with lots of history in the town and beautiful bush walks around.

OTHER STUFF

The Tramways Band is giving free concerts in Wattle Park on the corner of Riversdale and Warrigal Roads, at 2:30pm on the following Sundays -

13 Feb "Music for the kids"

20 Mar "Viennese Memories"

24 Apr "Spirit of Anzac"

The weekend at the Warburton Rover Chalet has been shelved as the minimum booking number of 15 people implies a large per head cost if only a few people go.

While cleaning out a room (we are renovating the house for sale) we uncovered some MGS P+S Minilotto prizes that were overlooked in the disbanding of P+S in 1996. If anyone has contact details for the following, please let us know, and we will forward their prizes (which have doubled with compound interest at 7% pa) - D.Horan, B.McInerney, J.Baillie.

We hope we are providing you with an interesting Newsletter and lots of fun activities. Please continue to make suggestions for future events. All your suggestions will be filed, and eventually we will probably run them. If you can help to organise them, so much the better.

GEMS GEAR

We still have a limited number of 50 x 50 mm GEMS fridge magnets at only 55 cents each or the special bulk discount price of only \$5.00 for 10. These will become a collector's item, so get your order in now.

Another order for shirts, jackets, caps and a new item, GEMS beanies, is under consideration, hopefully in time for this winter. More info soon.

There was no response from our previously helpful badge maker, he appears to have gone out of business. We have tried another supplier, who sent an unsatisfactory sample, and we are currently awaiting a sample from a more promising company with an impressive web site. A prompt response was received from them regarding the graphic, and a very good badge layout was received as a pdf file. Put your names on the list (see the booking form).

DELIBERATE MISTAKE

We can't remember if anyone uncovered the DM in News 41, but we think no-one did. Please correct us if you think you told us what it was. If no-one claims the prize, it will jackpot to 2 special fridge magnets for correctly identifying the DM in this Newsletter, #42.

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