

# Around the Ridges

And a bit beyond

Issue 138

NOVEMBER 2015

E: [aroundtheridges@hotmail.com](mailto:aroundtheridges@hotmail.com)

Fax 4934 5565 Phone 4934 1192

## Ridgeland Gold Fields

With thanks to [www.treasureenterprises.com](http://www.treasureenterprises.com).....Gold was discovered at **Ridgeland** (32km north-west of Rockhampton) in **1866**. Some of the patches of alluvial gold were very rich. Reef mining did not become very important because the water level was rapidly reached and the mines were then abandoned. Very little information on the geology of these mines or their production has been recorded. Benjamin Dunstan records the '*Morning Star Mine*' as working a quartz reef 2 feet wide, which assayed 2 oz of gold to the ton.

History of the Ridgeland Gold fields with thanks to the Wiki of Central Queensland History.  
<http://www.cqhistory.com>

The true story of the discovery of Ridgeland has never been published, chiefly, because the two who knew realised that they had lost the chance of a small fortune and so were not inclined to talk of their find.

Mr Bird and party had successfully worked a claim in Williamson's Gully. One evening in Rockhampton Arthur Hosking told Mr Bird that he had been told privately that two men had come in from the sheep-station ten miles on the road to Rockhampton with a quantity of gold, and were going back again at midnight so that no one should follow them. Hosking wanted Bird to go with him and find out if there was any truth in the story. Bird and Hosking, with tools, blankets, and a little food, left about ten o'clock in the dark. After going about four or five miles the two decided to camp in a little scrub beside the road, but the first they took bushes and smothered the dust on the road, so that if they fell asleep they would be able to follow the men's tracks if they passed. After a miserably uncomfortable night, day broke and no tracks were found on the road. Having come so far, it was decided to go on to the sheep-station and make inquiries. This was done, and the shepherd caught just as he was letting out his sheep. He declared several had been prospecting about there but, no one lately, and one of them had got gold. A personal examination showed this to be true, so they had breakfast and talked of what had best to be done. They resolved to return to Morinish by a straighter way if possible, and as there was plenty of time to prospect on the way back. This was done, and the two went up the Creek and then got into the ridges and washed some prospects from likely looking ravines. A little black sand was found, but no gold except very fine colours. What was deemed a straight road back was followed till the face of a dense scrub was reached, and then they had to turn at right angles, somewhat in the direction of the road they went out.

Presently they came to where there was pieces of quartz strewed on the ground, and the surface looked more auriferous. Both began to check pieces and look for gold, and going further along, gold was seen in a few places and eventually in nearly every piece that was examined. A careful look around showed a nice slope and a gully that looked highly auriferous, and a site for a shaft being selected, it was promptly sunk to a depth of about four feet, when nice-looking wash dirt was reached. A dish was soon got out and washed in a little stream that flowed at the bottom of the gully. The result was splendid, about 1 dwt. of very fine gold, but withal of a heavy nature, showing good quality. Other prospects were washed, with even better results, and also some from the surface higher up. It was quite clear that a possible valuable discovery had been made.

They finished their food and discussed matters. Naturally, both were very excited over their good fortune, but the partnership business was exceedingly awkward as they had both been prospecting with others. Bird and Hosking, of course, had to be full mates, and it was decided that Bird was to apply for a reefing area and Hosking the alluvial claims. The ground was pegged out as well as could be done without axe or tomahawk, and

as it was getting late it was decided to say nothing of the discovery, but come out again the next day and make further investigations. Claims were also pegged out for Bird's mates and former mates, and Hosking's friends.

The position was further discussed on the way home, and the last words on parting were to *say nothing* about the find. Bird kept quiet but Hosking apparently told people. The only thing to do was to make the best of it, and it was decided to go back out first thing in the morning and then report to the Commissioner at Rockhampton. In the morning a couple of horses were obtained by Bird and Hosking. Many followed the horsemen on the foot. Ridgeland, then without a name, was reached, the claims pegged out more securely. Those who came out got the claims pegged out for them. On Saturday, the 27th February, 1867, the discoverers got back to Rockhampton and found that the Commissioner's office was closed till Monday. As was subsequently found out, a man named Kirker had re-pegged a portion of the ground Bird was applying for and rode to the Commissioner's private house to apply for it on the Sunday.

On the Monday morning the Commissioner recognised Hosking as an old opponent on another field and warned him not to dictate to him (the Commissioner). He promised to be out on Wednesday and stated there had been another applicant for ground there. The upshot was, Hosking got the claim for alluvial, and Bird and Kirker each got an area for a quartz claim, but Kirker's ground was really a portion of what Bird had pegged out, prior to this Kirker and his two mates had offered to amalgamate with Bird and his mates, but the Bird did not want this. Thus the reef "**Blow**" where the best stone was, was given to Kirker. Bird was led to seek redress from the law but his law suit failed.

The Alluvial gold on Ridgeland was very fine and of high value. The reef was almost flat, a foot or more in thickness, and of a decomposed, glossary nature, most of the claims being worked on the block system, and many of them from peg to peg. Kirker and party took some thousands of pounds out of their claim, whilst Hosking and Bird's alluvial claim also turned out well, in fact, nearly all of the alluvial claims. At the lowest estimate, Ridgeland must have yielded 20,000 oz. of gold. As showing that more consideration should have been given to the discoverers, Bird and Hosking, received a Government reward of £250 for the discovery, being the first reward for finding, gold paid in the state.

Ridgeland was a comparatively small field, that is, the payable ground was confined to a smaller area and more compact than was usually the case. Many acres of the surface soil was treated in puddling machines and gave good results. The flat reef as it extended became very patchy, though "shoots" of rich stone were found for considerable lengths, the Blow of the reef had the cream of the gold. The larger portion of the gold was taken out in the first seven or eight months after which the population of about a thousand began to diminish, till only a few hundreds were left, who remained for a couple of years or more. Diggers from Old Calliope, Boyne, and Crocodile fields came there in numbers, but the opening of Gympie fields in October 1867 drew many southwards.

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22 Sheehan Road Alton Downs QLD  
Email: [enginecentre@dodo.com.au](mailto:enginecentre@dodo.com.au)

Telephone: 0749 341473  
Mobile: 0438 341473

**Disclaimer:** Around the Ridges and A Bit Beyond reserves the right to edit all articles as necessary. Submission does not always guarantee publication. The Committee does not accept responsibility for errors, omissions and inaccuracies. Opinions in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of this committee, school or community.

**Law of Mechanical Repair** - After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch and you'll have to go to the toilet.

**Law of Gravity** - Any tool, nut, bolt, screw, when dropped, will roll to the least accessible corner.

**Law of Probability**- The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.

**Law of Random Numbers** - If you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal and someone always answers.

**Supermarket Law** - As soon as you get in the smallest line, the cashier will have to call for help.

**Variation Law** -If you change lines (or traffic lanes), the one you were in will always move faster than the one you are in now.

LICENCED CHRISTMAS KAROAKE in aid of Ridglands Hall Funds

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2015, 6.30 pm. At the RIDGELANDS HALL

Roast pork, roast beef and vegetables, followed by sweets.

Adults \$15.00, with a lucky meal ticket, Primary school children \$7.00, Sweets \$3.00

Parents place a gift(suggested limit \$10.00) under the Christmas tree with your Child's name attached. On the night SANTA will arrive to present the gifts.

RAFFLE and AUCTION. GOLD COIN ENTRY. SEE YOU THERE FOR A GOOD NIGHT OUT.

**AVON**



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## White chocolate and macadamia rocky road.

- 250g packet marshmallows, halved
- 100 g packet dried cranberries
- 110g packet macadamia nuts, roughly chopped
- 60 g pistachios (optional)
- 1/3 cup (35g) desiccated coconut
- 2 x 180g blocks good quality white chocolate, chopped



Grease a 20cm square cake pan. Line base and sides with baking paper, allowing a 2cm overhang on all sides.

Combine marshmallows, cranberries, nuts and coconut in a bowl. Place chocolate in a microwave safe bowl. Microwave on medium-high for 1-2 minutes, stirring with a metal spoon every 30 seconds, or until smooth.

Pour chocolate over marshmallow mixture. Mix well. Spoon mixture into prepared pan, pressing down with a spatula. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until set. Using a warm knife, cut into squares. Serve.

# What's Happening this Month?

## Notices

### Stitch and Chat Group

Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month starting at 9.30 a.m. Ridgелands QCWA room. All welcome Phone 4934 5145.

### Ridgелands & District Sporting & Agricultural Asscn Inc.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, commencing at 7.30 p.m. at the Ridgелands Show grounds. Next meeting 2<sup>5</sup>th November.

### QCWA Ridgелands Branch

Meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday every month, commencing at 9.30 a.m. Contact Joyce 4934 5120. for further information.

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***Around the Ridgелands newsletter committee would like to thank Big Colour Works for printing our newsletter every second month for free. If you need something printed, please support Big Colour Works.***  
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### Alton Downs Dump Hours *September to April*

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, 3pm - 6pm.  
**Free disposal of Green Waste at Alton Downs.**  
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### Thoughts

No man is truly married until he understands every word his wife is not saying.

I don't have a coffee problem---  
You have a problem if I don't have coffee.

A party without a CAKE is a meeting

## Community Notices

### **Christmas Karaoke**

Christmas Karaoke in aid of Ridgелands Hall Funds.

**Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2015.**  
6.30 pm. At the Ridgелands Hall.  
All Welcome.

### ***BOONY'S SCREENS & AWNINGS***

Fly & Security Screens for windows & doors, window replacements, aluminium awnings & lattice. Quality Work Guaranteed Free Quote ABN Up to 20% Cheaper  
**Call Wayne 0421273391**

Found this in the 1998 Gardening Australia Magazine - Author unknown. Easy Biology lesson

### **The Flower**

The *calyx* is the outside cup, Which holds the flower snugly up. Its *sepals* have been woven stout, To keep the cold and dampness out. The *corolla* is the coloured part, Which gladdens every child-like heart. Its *petals* wave upon the breeze, To summon butterflies and bees. The *stamens* next within the ring, Their *anthers* set a magic spring. They supply a generous mead, Of *pollen* needed to make seed. The *pistil* in the centre fair; For it must have the greatest care. Its *stigma* catches pollen beads, Which turn the *ovules* into seeds.

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*Welcome to all our new residents.*

*If you have any news for us please contact the volunteers via the newsletter email. Please introduce yourself to your neighbours.*

## Celebrations

**Happy Birthday** to all the residents in our community who are having a birthday:

Robyn O'Neill  
David Fry  
Judy Stanke  
Diane Roberts  
Rosie Oates

### ***FARMBUTCHER***

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Slaughter and butchering of cattle, pigs and sheep. All processed in a refrigerated mobile butcher shop, Mince, sausages, corned meat and rolled roasts, all cut to your requirement. Cryovac of whole cuts available. Please call **Jamie** for an obligation free quote.  
**PH. 0429 675 744**  
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### **RCT Domestic Water carrier**

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### **Cattle Cartage**

23' foot cattle truck for hire, servicing Rockhampton, Yeppoon and CQ areas, Phone 0428 741 291, great rates.

### **2016 Date Claimers**

26 January - Australia day at Alton Downs polocrosse club afternoon till late.

23<sup>rd</sup> January Ridgелands & District Sporting & Agricultural Asscn Inc BBQ fundraiser.