



# BATHURST STAMP, COIN, COLLECTABLES & LAPIDARY CLUB INC

## NEWSLETTER

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST MONDAY EACH MONTH - EXCEPT JANUARY.  
**AT THE CLUBHOUSE (OLD EGLINTON FIRE SHED), PARK STREET, EGLINTON.**  
 Meetings commence at 7.30pm. Enquires 63315404 AH or write P.O. Box 9156, Bathurst 2795  
 Editor [amcrae@lisp.com.au](mailto:amcrae@lisp.com.au) [www.philas.org.au/bathurst](http://www.philas.org.au/bathurst)

### *JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2016 Issue*

#### UPCOMING PROGRAM

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|------------------------|--|
| January 2016           | No meeting this month  |
| 10th January           | <b>Sunday</b> - working bee at the clubhouse at 9am.   |
| 20th January           | Both day and evening lapidary workshops restart for 2016. Morning times are 9am to 12 noon. Evening hours are 7pm to 9pm.  |
| 1st February           | <b>Monthly Meeting</b> - 7.30pm – Guest Speaker - Will Birkenstock will be our guest speaker and will talk about ‘Stamps and Coins from his Homeland’. Club Competition - ‘An item or collection relating to Bathurst and district’. Remember your ‘Latest Acquisition’.   |
| 28th February          | <b>Sunday</b> - 39th Annual Sofala Show with BSCC&L club members invited to enter their Collectables Competition. The Sofala Show continues to be a fantastic family outing with the pavilions overflowing again with items like Collectables, Art, Photography, Wool and many more. There are also more attractions for the children. Displays need to be in place by 8am and closes at 4pm. See Sue or Alan for entry forms.   |
| 7th March              | <b>Monthly Meeting</b> - 7.30pm – Guest Speaker - Club Competition – ‘an item with written history’. Remember your ‘Latest Acquisition’.   |
| 25th – 29th March      | <b>Easter Friday – Tuesday - GEMBOREE 2016</b> – the 52nd National Gem & Mineral Show, will be held in Ulverstone in Tasmania.   |
| 29th March             | <b>Tuesday</b> – Interclub visit with Orange Coin & Stamp Club. It is held at the Orange Community & Information Centre at 79 Kite Street, Orange but entry is from the carpark behind - ask Alan for directions. Meeting starts at 7.30pm. Meeting is held first, then “show and tell” and talks about displays which members have brought along, voting for displays, followed by their monthly numismatic and philatelic auction. Lots are almost always less than \$10-\$20 and frequently less than \$5. Bathurst members might consider bringing along small auction lots and even items for “show and tell”. All welcome. |
| 4th April              | <b>Monthly Meeting</b> - 7.30pm – Guest Speaker - Club Competition – ‘Five items whose name starts with ‘B’ or ‘T’. Remember your ‘Latest Acquisition’.  |
| 9th and 10th April     | <b>Saturday and Sunday - Orange Coin &amp; Stamp Expo 2016</b> , Kenna Hall, 90 Hill St Orange – Dealers, displays and kid’s activities table.   |
| 2nd May                | <b>Monthly Meeting</b> - 7.30pm – Guest Speaker - Club Competition – ‘A display of your favourite hobby. Remember your ‘Latest Acquisition’.   |
| 14th - 17th April 2017 | <b>Easter Friday to Monday GEMBOREE 2017</b> - the 53rd National Gem & Mineral Show, at Lithgow Showground.  |

**There is no President's report for this issue.**

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## COUNCILLOR MONICA MORSE'S SPEECH AT BATHHEX 2015

When I first came to Australia from England many years ago I was surprised at the then prevailing fashion to throw out old things and replace them with new. People didn't want to live in old houses, they wanted new ones. They didn't want old furniture, they wanted new tables, chairs and beds. They wanted new china, new tools and new books. This was very different from my family and friends who had old pictures, old postcards, old sewing samples and the family furniture. We had a room in our house called Minnie's Room, where all the old stuff was stored. I still have much of my family's memorabilia, including my mother's hair!

Now, how things have changed. Living in an old house can be a status symbol. There are groups of people who lobby to keep old buildings and there are programs on television in which people bring their treasures to find out their history and be valued. The older the better. There are endless restorations of old homes.

It has been a very special year for Bathurst in its 200th year, with exhibitions of 200 Years of Fashion, decades of photos and a Colonial Fair. And now this, the wonderful highlight of the year. This BATHEX 2015 Bicentenary Collectables, Gem and Mineral Exhibition - Bathurst Remembers 200 Years of History is the culmination not only of two or more years of work by the organisers, but a demonstration of how our past is being celebrated, enjoyed and treasured.

Looking around at the displays and demonstrations, it is such fun. And it is not only the old people who are enjoying it – this has caught the imagination and interest of young people as well. This weekend gives us time to stop, look and chew the fat over the old things, hear their story, find out their use and, as they say on the Antiques Road show, their Provenance.

What it brings us back to is the strong thread which has been woven throughout the whole of this year in Bathurst – stories. While what we are looking at today is ‘stuff’ – what we really are hearing is the stories. Where did it come from? Whose was it? Where did they live?

Congratulations to the organisers, the stall holders, the demonstrators and, most of all, the collectors. Thank you for hoarding your treasures, thank you for sharing your skills and thank you for being the keepers of our history.


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## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND CENTENARY OF NURSING STAMP



One can hardly imagine the primitive medical conditions which existed during the Crimean War in 1855 and the efforts of a nurse named Florence Nightingale to help the soldiers at that time. In 1954 the Post Office decided to amalgamate several proposals which had been put forward to them including the recognition of the centenary of Florence Nightingale in the Crimea, to pay a tribute to the nursing profession and to signify the importance of maintaining health standards in Australia.

Florence Nightingale intended to visit Australia although the trip never eventuated, however she did train a small group of nurses who came to Sydney Hospital in 1868. In 1874 when a Royal Commission was set up to enquire into the state of the hospital she gave advice on a number of reforms needed. Florence Nightingale first gained recognition with her work in the Crimean War where she and her band of nurses established reasonable hospital standards in spite of great difficulty, often male. This led to continued work to upgrade standards in hospitals around the world and especially in Britain where she had captured the imagination of the British public.

 The Australian Nursing Federation and the Royal Victorian College of Nursing submitted a number of designs for consideration but as usual for one reason or another none proved

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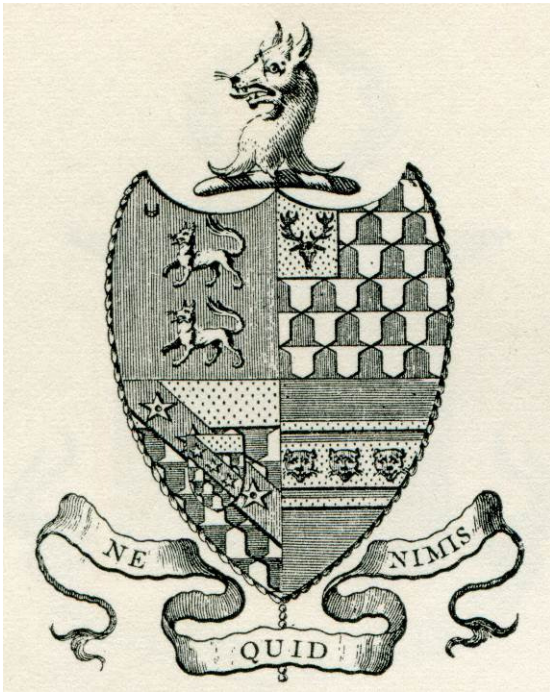
Some engravers later prepared woodcut ‘blanks’ which may feature a shield and some sort of mantling so that the customer just needed to supply their crest, arms and family or business motto, the latter usually being placed in the motto ribbon. By the Victorian era engravers were engraving their designs onto copper.

Allegorical figures, both male and female, were popular on some plates which are at times accompanied by a backdrop comprising a landscape, shipping or industries scene. Sometimes the plate design incorporates a garter around the motif.

With no checks in place or with little effort made to confirm that the heraldry supplied was correct or truthful, or even that the client was authorised to use the arms, there are examples of bookplates that have gone on to be used by succeeding generations of a family that aren't genuine. In the 1800s and 1900s engravers were called upon to put armorial designs onto wax seals and signet rings.

Understandably with Australia being settled in 1788 and then time being needed before any printing works were actually set up, there are not many Australian examples.





The armorial bookplate (left) was prepared for Robert Lowe who was born the son of Rev. Robert Lowe, rector of Bingham in England, in 1811. His mother, Ellen, saw that he had a sheltered childhood as he was an albino child. From the start he had defective vision but he still matriculated at Oxford. Later when doctors told him he would be blind within seven years he sailed to Sydney arriving on 8th October, 1842.

Ironically, within nine days of his arrival by sailing ship he was admitted to practice in the New South Wales Supreme Court. Within a short time doctors ordered his eyes to be totally rested but he defied the doctors and not long after went back to work. When Governor Sir George Gipps learnt of his situation he used him in the Legislative Council as an unofficial nominee where his first speeches electrified the chamber.

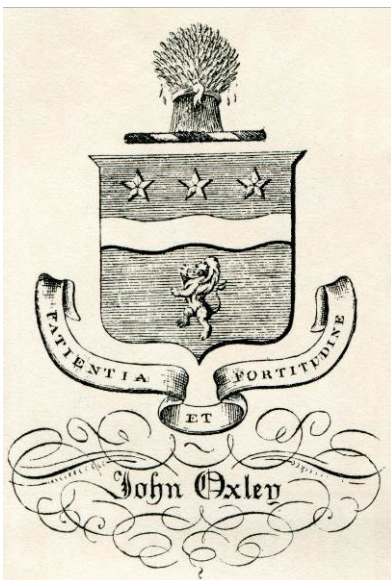
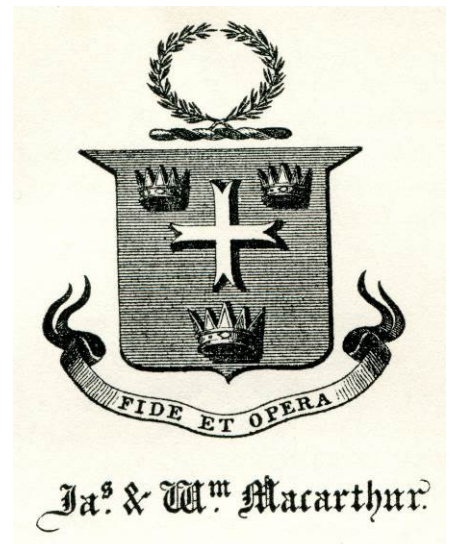
Early in 1844, as part of his court cases, Lowe defended a convict, John Knatchbull, who had killed a young woman. Robert Lowe pleaded insanity though the court found otherwise. Lowe and his wife Georgiana later adopted the murdered woman's two young

children.

Lowe supplied a report in 1844 on popular education recommending a state-supported, non-denominational system of schools and the Legislative Council agreed. Governor Gipps refused to introduce it as he felt Lowe was against him. Finally in 1847 Governor Sir Charles Fitzroy allowed the National school system to be introduced. Lowe was one of the leaders in stopping transportation. His work in New South Wales served as his political apprenticeship and he would go on to a busy life in the House of Commons and ministerial rank.

In 1850 the Lowes and their two adopted children sailed for home and he became a newspaper writer for some seventeen years before entering parliament over in England. He had many jobs and he didn't mind who he insulted including Queen Victoria. His wife died in November 1884 after many years of illness. Within three months he remarried but his memory and eyesight worsened before he died in 1892.

Another plate (right) was engraved for James and William Macarthur, early wool pioneers, along with their father John. John's father, with his brother, joined the Pretender (Prince Charles) and was the only survivor of the family to escape alive from the field of Culloden. Their joint plate design features a spade shield armorial design as does John Oxley's below.

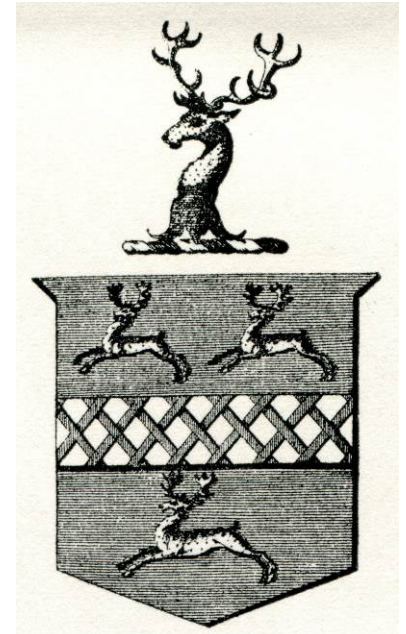


John Oxley, one of our nation's early intrepid explorers, features a sheaf of wheat with three stars and a rampant lion. John Joseph William Molesworth Oxley (1784-1828), was the surveyor-general in the colony of New South Wales and had a great association with Bathurst. In March 1817 Macquarie appointed Oxley to lead an expedition to explore the Lachlan River system and he left Bathurst in April to commence his search. In May 1818 Oxley led another expedition from Bathurst to follow the Macquarie River.

Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell was a keen collector of these bookplate designs with much of his collection being donated to the Mitchell Library in Sydney. He had several of John Oxley's bookplates in his collection as Oxley

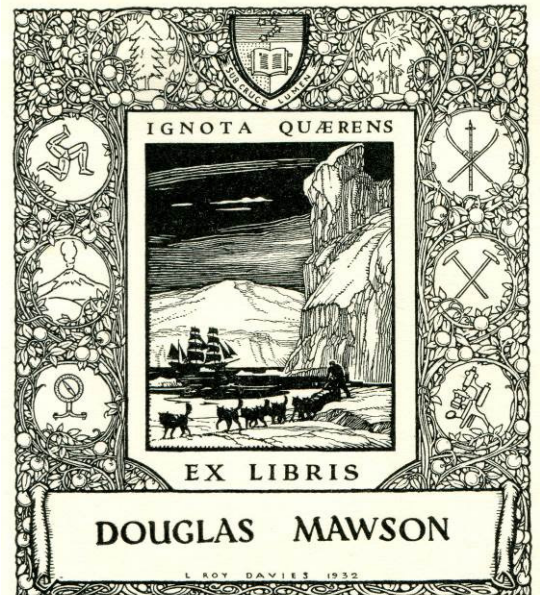


The stag with the antlers at the top with three other running stags are featured below it, **on the right**, belonged to Edward Hammond Hargraves. He was an Englishman who sailed to Sydney in 1832, afterwards working on a property at Bathurst. In July 1849 he sailed for the goldrush in California as one of the ‘forty-niners’ but returned to Sydney in January 1851. He decided he could get rich by claiming the colonial government’s reward for discovering payable gold. This he did, receiving £10,000 with the help of John Lister and William, James and Henry, sons of William Tom. Hargraves announced the discovery of payable gold at a special meeting he held in Bathurst. Later, in 1877 Hargraves was granted a pension of £250 per annum by the New South Wales Government.

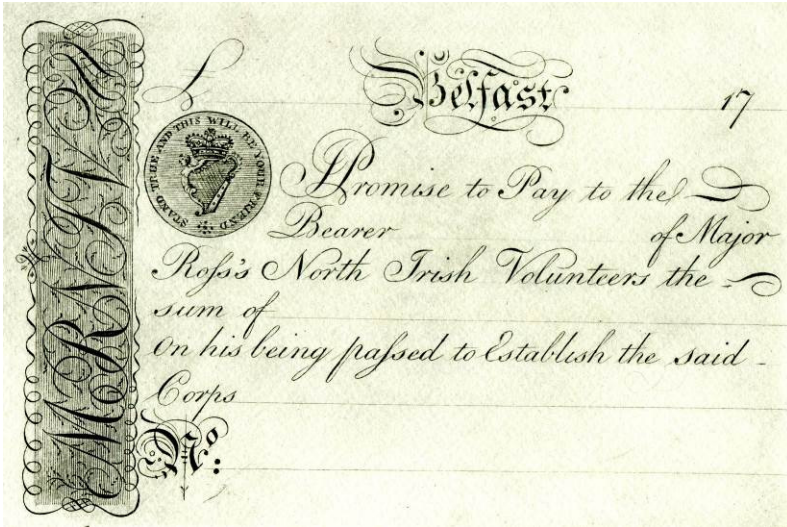


accumulated an estate that included 29,000 acres of land.

Douglas Mason's bookplate makes a marked break from earlier armorial designs as it includes a pictorial engraving in the centre surrounded by emblems from throughout his life. It was designed by L. Roy Davies in 1932. Mawson was a well-known geologist and explorer who had been born in England on 5th May, 1882. His family arrived in New South Wales in 1884. A meeting with Ernest Shackleton, leader of the British Antarctic Expedition, saw Mawson appointed Physicist on a round trip to Antarctica on the "Nimrod". Mawson's interest in Antarctica continued after World War II when he promoted the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions. He was also a member of the Australian Antarctic Executive Planning Committee until he died. These days unfortunately armorial (coat of arms) bookplates are a thing of the past and out of fashion.



## MILITIA ISSUED THEIR OWN PROMISSORY NOTE



This paymaster's 'promissory note' was issued by Major Ross, paymaster for the North Irish Volunteers in 1757 – 1759 and was printed at a time during King George II's reign. The unit was part of the Irish Militia during the Seven Year War. This specimen is a limited edition reprint, number 133 out of 250, and was printed from the original printing plate.

The information with this story has been supplied by Tony James, well known Australian banknote dealer, keen collector and researcher and writer for the Australasian Coin & Banknote Magazine and other publications.

The promissory note has a seal with a harp in

the centre around which are the words “Stand true and this will be your friend”. Down the left-hand side is an ornate panel with the initials ‘MRNIV’ standing for ‘Major Ross, North Irish Volunteers. Belfast’, seen at the top which indicates that this was the headquarters for the unit.

With Britain and France at war between 1756 – 1763, which became known as the Seven Year War, soldierly manpower became quite scarce. One measure was to withdraw several infantry regiments who had been stationed in Ireland. Realising the need for a military reserve the Militaria Act 1757 was voted for by the English Parliament. At the same time the Irish Parliament introduced their own legislation for part-time militia units to protect Ireland though previously, in 1715, an Act had already been passed to raise militia regiments in townships. Volunteers aged from sixteen to sixty could join but had to be Protestants!

What also brought on the necessity for such units was the failure of Ireland's potato crop which resulted in riots by the starving populace. They were also raiding the markets and the militia was used to protect farmers and produce merchants. A meeting was held in November 1756 to discuss the matter with the attendees agreeing "to a unit, some 18 strong and including a captain, sergeant and a drummer to be paid from local funds".

Volunteers came forward and five companies were formed, each with an officer including Captain James Ross's unit which had 82 volunteers, all of whom were unpaid. How many promissory notes were initially printed and used we will probably never know.

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## LARGE AMPHIBIOUS PREDATOR FEATURED ON STAMP

For ‘Stamp Collecting Month’ in 2013 Australia Post issued six stamps in the ‘Australia’s Age of Dinosaurs’ series. All valued at 60 cents each features some prehistoric animal or dinosaur. The one featured here is the ‘Koolasuchus cleelandi’ stamp.

Koolasuchus cleelandi was a large amphibious predator which lived in the Victorian rift valley around 120 million years ago. While it looks a bit like a crocodile, it is more closely related to modern frogs and salamanders. It may have been capable of crawling on land, but was much more at home in the water.

Research suggests it was about three metres long, 30 centimetres high and weighed about 250 kilograms. Its large skull and conical (cone-shaped) teeth made it a very powerful carnivore, eating crustaceans such as crayfish and clams, fish, turtles and maybe even small dinosaurs.

Koolasuchus cleelandi lived in fast-flowing, cool streams and probably detected its prey through vibrations in the water. As the prey passed by, Koolasuchus would open its huge gaping mouth and snap up the unsuspecting victim. Fossils of Koolasuchus have been found at Rowell's Beach near Kilcunda in Victoria.





## ‘FOUR BOB’

Alexandrina Victoria was born on 24th May, 1819, the daughter of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn, the fourth son of King George III. She inherited the throne aged 18, after her father's three elder brothers had all died, leaving no surviving legitimate children. On 20th June, 1837, she became the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland until she passed on. Additionally, from 1st May, 1876, Queen Victoria also gained the additional title of Empress of India.

In 1840 the queen married her first cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and the couple went on to have nine children who married into various royal and noble families across Europe.



Left – This is a silver ‘double florin’, ‘four shillings’ or ‘four bob’

and is quite large - 36 mm across with a milled edge. This large coin ended up being one of the shortest-lived British coin denominations in history as it was only produced between 1887 and 1890, just four years. This coin is from the second year of issue in 1888. Some said that at 22.6 grams it was too heavy and would take a toll on men’s pocket linings which tailors would not appreciate.

The design on the front of the coin, seen left, features a stately portrait of Queen Victoria wearing a veil and small crown. Around the edge is the legend “VICTORIA - DEI GRATIA” which means ‘Victoria - By the grace of God’. The reverse,

the back, of the coin shows four cruciform shields which covers the northern third of the island of Great Britain, and Ireland, with sceptres (symbolic ornamental staff) which is often held in the hand by a ruling monarch as an item of royal or imperial insignia, between the shields.

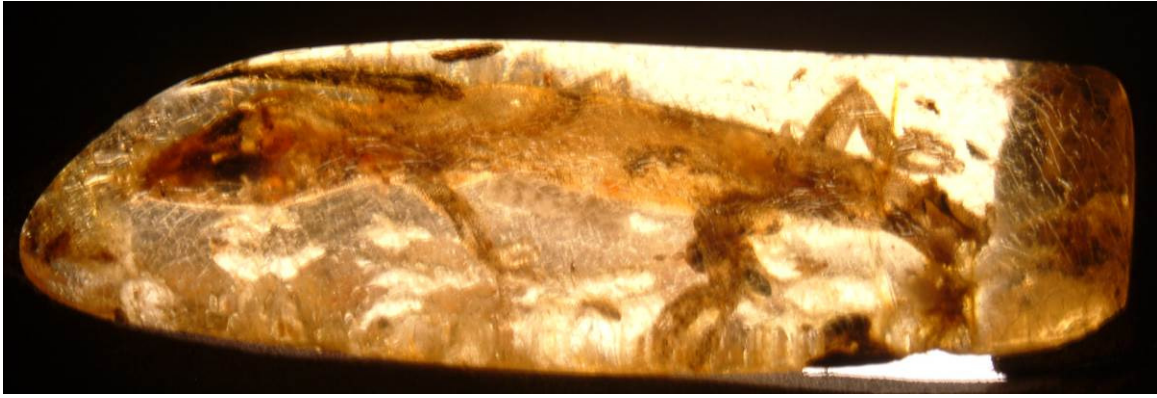
The design was done by Leonard Charles Wyon who was a British engraver of the Victorian era. Probably his most significant work was for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887 on her gold and silver coinage. The inscription, in abbreviated Latin, on the reverse reads – “FID DEF BRITT REG” along with the date, meaning basically “Defender of the Faith, Empress of India”. Queen Victoria died on 22nd January, 1901.

Ironically, the design of the British florin (2 shillings) and double florin (4 shillings) are virtually the same, except for the physical size, the florin only being around 28 mm in diameter.

The large double florins found their way to Australia and being a large silver coin were somewhat popular with the jewellers to engrave them to use as ‘christening coins’, though this was an illegal practice.







## AMBER CAN CONTAIN PAST LIFE!

From cockroaches, flies, spiders, centipedes, beetles, gnats, wasps, mayflies, ants and even lizards, they have all been trapped by the sticky resin from ancient trees, some up to 400 million years ago. They are even before the rise of the dinosaurs and their final demise. Amber is fossilised tree sap which can trap insects as it hardens allowing the unfortunate insect to be perfectly preserved over time. As insects evolved it was the Carboniferous Period some 353 to 298 million years ago when the first winged insects began to make their appearance and we see things like grasshoppers and mayflies along with some spiders and the cockroach. Then, during the Permian Period from 298 to 251 million years ago, came the flies, beetles and other insects. Later there were the wasps, moths, earwigs, fleas, dragonflies and stick insects.

The image above contains a lizard in amber and is part of the Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum collection here in Bathurst though it is very unusual to find a vertebrate in amber. Insect fossils are rare and lizards even rarer. Often the amber has small bubbles in it and these are usually bubbles of gas created by the microscopic bacteria initially stuck in the sap.

Amber is a golden orangey/yellow colour with the most commonly known being Baltic Amber. It can also come in other colours, in fact quite a wide range - from an off white to dark red and sometimes comes in very dark brown to black from other locations in the world. Amber has been located and collected in massive amounts from along the shoreline of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea is found in Northern Europe and bordered by Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, northeastern Germany and eastern Denmark so amber can be found or wash up after storms in numerous places. Once very expensive, like diamonds as it was controlled by a cartel, it has now become much cheaper.

It seems that amber was creating interest thousands of years back when it was collected for ornamentation by early man. In England amber, which would have floated there probably from the Baltic, has been located in archeological digs which have been traced back to around 11,000BC. It became an early trade item being traded along many of the sea routes to places such as Africa and China and around the Mediterranean. Even the Aztecs used amber to make bodily ornaments as well as incense to burn at their ceremonies. The Egyptians and the Greeks used it, the latter using ground amber as a medicine, calling it “electron”. It was once popular in some Middle East areas for prayer necklaces as it was a light material. In later times the Germans became well-known for amber carving by their skilled lapidarists.

As amber was so light some thought it had magical powers. Like some other precious and semi-precious stones there were those who believed it could ward off spirits and other evil. Others, like the Romans and Greeks, thought it had medicinal powers so it was ground up and consumed with various liquids.

Amber varnish was one sideline from the mining of amber in the Baltic region. Lithuania was one country that became well-known as a supplier of good quality varnish especially good for use on sailing ship decks. The Italians and other countries demanded their varnish for their prized violins and other string instruments.