FROM THE COMMITTEE

We have been invited on Monday 17th December from midday to join the staff for their end of the year luncheon in the Alfred Coates Centre (the old Student Union) Our AGM will take place in Studio 1, at the Caro Centre, adjacent to the Great Hall from 1.30pm. A RSVP is required by Friday November 30 to Ian McKee at 309 Drummond Street, Ballarat, Ph: 5332 7604 or email: anneianmckee@ozemail.com.au

Negotiations have taken place concerning our Association’s members being listed on the University Data Base. Colin Kline has been pursuing this and also our position relative to getting a link to the University Web Page. We are also trying to find anyone who can design a web page for us. Vivian Wittwer has also to been contacted re the web page. Hear more about these matters at the AGM. DON’T FORGET: RSVP for lunch

BALLARAT TREASURES REGISTER from Clare Gervasoni

The Ballarat Treasures Register seeks to recognise buildings, structures, places, landscapes, collections and objects that have been significant in shaping Ballarat’s history and cultural identity.

The inaugural Ballarat Treasures Register was announced on 20 August 2007 at the Ballarat Town Hall. The Register will be reviewed annually. The University of Ballarat was successful with these nominations being accepted:

* Ballarat School of Mines precinct and Lydiard St Streetscape
* Former Ballarat Post Office
* UB Art Collection
* UB Historical Collection
* UB Mace
* 1st SMB Roll book (ie 1st enrolments in Australia’s 1st School of Mines)
* 1857 Map of Ballarat East
* UB Big Tree Mt Helen (nominated by UB Ex-Staff Association)

The complete list is available on the Ballarat City Council website.

ABOVE: Clare Gervasoni, Curator of the University of Ballarat Art and Historical Collection, with Allan Ballard, President of UB Ex-Staff Association attended the launch of the Ballarat Treasures List at the Town Hall.

ABOVE Right: The lower part of the big tree, a southern blue gum, eucalyptus globulus, looking towards science and engineering buildings.
YESTERDAY was the 40th anniversary of the Mt Helen Campus of the University of Ballarat. The site was purchased on 25 January, 1967, for $63,000 and the first sod was turned on a wintry day on October 19 in 1967. Several proposed locations in close proximity to the city were too small, while other sites further out were remote from transport and services, flat and badly drained or embedded in industrial development. An elevated area of attractive farm land just off the Midland Hwy about five miles from the city centre was eventually selected. A broad stretch of grassland dotted with gumtrees, one of which appeared to be quite huge, was noted on the site. The huge tree became the central point for the campus architectural plans. In 2007 that tree, now known as the ‘Tree of Knowledge’, was added to the Ballarat Treasure’s Register.

The idea of converting a sheep farm to a major tertiary campus was challenging, but there was plenty of room on the site for expansion and innovation. It was decided to provide living accommodation for two thirds of the total enrolment on the Mt Helen Campus. The plan was to be modern, attractive, efficient, and provide a stimulating concept. Three precincts were to be considered. These consisted of a teaching precinct, a residential precinct, and an outdoor sports and recreation precinct. The teaching precinct was to contain core essential services such as the library, computer centre and “union.”

In preparation for the ceremony on October 19, 1967, of the “turning of the sod” a temporary stage and canvas awning was set up. Governor General Lord Casey was to perform the ceremony. Because he was quite elderly a sod was precut so he would only have to turn it over. A white peg marked the favoured sod. There was no secret about the ceremony, and suspecting some student antics, another sod was cut several feet away but was left unmarked. The students, who had spent an hour or two the night before secretly through the sod, were driving concealed metal rods were therefore amazed when the Governor General easily turned the decoy sod.

The Mt Helen buildings were first used at the start of 1970, the Centenary Year of the School of Mines.
Above is the UB Historical Collection volunteers group at the send-off lunch for Zig Plavina. Present were Ken Clements, Clare Gervasoni, Robert Hook, Zig Plavina and Roy Schrieke. Also present, but not in the picture were Gail Schuler and her husband Jurgen Rochelmeyer (both of whom were regular members of the volunteers’ Monday lunch group).

After over seven years Zig Plavina has resigned as a University of Ballarat Historical Collection Volunteer. In that time Zig devoted a complete day each week to work on the U of B Historical Collection. The work Zig undertook was broad and varied. Some weeks he would be set short, time consuming research tasks as they arose, while at other times he would work on self directed lengthy projects. These projects included cataloguing and cleaning the scientific equipment, cataloguing photographs, maps and plans, compiling a register of staff members service and many other tasks.

Zig’s broad knowledge of the University of Ballarat, especially Mt Helen campus and its staff, was vital to the type of work he undertook with the Historical Collection. He could name people in photographs, describe how equipment worked, and was able to reminisce on the early days of Mt Helen. greatly respected by those who worked with him Zig was able to entice former members of staff, such as Neville Gower, Peter Fryar and Mollie Jardine to write reminiscences of their subjects and courses, all of which are now catalogued into the Historical Collection. Personally Zig undertook to research and compile material relating to Engineering. Although meticulously researched Zig often forwarded material to others for further checking.

Justice cannot be given to the work that Zig undertook within the Historical Collection within a few paragraphs. Each project that Zig worked on took weeks, if not months, to complete. An important legacy of Zig’s work is that it will assist in ensuring the story of the University of Ballarat, its predecessor institutions and staff are accurately portrayed in the years to come.

The enormous contribution that Zig made during his time as a volunteer was recognised during a lunch in his honour. Ken Clements, Clare Gervasoni and Zig clean scientific equipment
VISIT TO NEWLY OPENED BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRAINING CENTRE JUNE 15 2007

FROM ALAN BALLARD

L to R: Derek Woolley, Ken Clements, Zig Plavina, Jacki Metcalf, Dulcie Brooke, Verna Barry, Roy Schrieke, Ian McKee (behind), Graham Hawley, Peter Van Pinxteren, Frank Martin, Peter Colville, Jean Goh, Greg Binns, and Isobel Dowling, await the start of the tour.

Department head, Peter Parry, right front, explains some external features of the new building. The North facing glass windows incorporate solar panels which generate electricity that can be used in the building or returned to the grid. The external timbers are all made from recycled wood.

Left: Members moved down to a lower building where the practical skills of house construction, bricklaying, and pipe and drain laying are practiced.

Below: Some members in discussion and awaiting lunch at Oscars following the tour of the new SMB Building while Clare Gervasoni discusses an aspect of her work with Derek Woolley.

Clare Gervasoni, UB Curator: Art & Historical Collection, reminded members to complete the staff profile proforma that was included in the previous newsletter.