

# THE MINERS VOICE

ISSUE 5

JULY 2015



Queensland Sapphire Miners Association Inc Inc

PO BOX 364, Rubyvale, Qld 4702

[www.qsma.com.au](http://www.qsma.com.au)

## MISSION STATEMENT

**TO PROVIDE A CENTRAL BODY TO LIAISE, COORDINATE AND PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR MINING AND OTHER ASSOCIATED ISSUES RELATED TO THE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SAPPHIRE GEMFIELDS.**

**PRESIDENT** Greg Charlton... 0419 748432 **VICE PRESIDENT** Phil Ashworth... 0400 378 190

**SECRETARY** Carol Graham... 07 4985 4290 **TREASURER** Megan Harwood... 0403 653 335

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EXPERIENCE THE  
SAPPHIRE GEMFIELDS

*World Class Aussie Sapphires*

**ADDRESS:- PO BOX 364 Rubyvale QLD 4702**

**EMAIL:- [megan@qsma.com.au](mailto:megan@qsma.com.au)**



## STRENGTH IN UNITY

### THE POWER OF NUMBERS

THE QSMA NEEDS YOU. THE  
MORE MEMBERS WE HAVE,  
THE STRONGER OUR VOICE.

## BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

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# OUR MINING HERITAGE



The Eureka Flag

## THE EUREKA REBELLION

When the gold miners on the Ballarat Gold Fields revolted due to the expense of a miners licence, taxation via the licence without representation and the actions of the Government, the Police and Military the Ballarat Reform League was formed by the miners.

As tyranny and oppression continued by their Colonial Masters the miners now referred to as rebels, on the 3rd of December 1854 took up arms at a stockade located on Bakery Hill on the Eureka Lead. This became known as the Eureka Stockade.

Here the shortest battle in history was fought resulting in the deaths of 27 combatants mostly rebels.

The immediate result of this "little rebellion" was a public reaction against Hotham and his secretary Foster, which led to the latter's resignation. License hunting became almost non-existent, and the Victorian jury convened to adjudicate the trial of 13 miners acquitted all but one: Henry Seekamp, the editor of the Ballarat Times. He was sentenced to six months for seditious libel.

The Gold Fields Royal Commission led to reform of the laws, and gave the miners almost everything they had asked for. The gold license was abolished and replaced by a miner's right costing one pound per year. Possession of this gave the digger a right to mine gold, and vote in the elections for parliament. Lalor and Humffray were elected unopposed in 1855 to the Legislative Council, and the former became Speaker of the House of Assembly in 1880.

## PRESIDENT/NATIVE TITLE CO-ORDINATORS REPORT

Greetings to all Members new and long term. The first thing I would like to do is thank those Members and Non-Members who have donated not only money but items for the raffles that we are conducting, proceeds are going to the QSMA Building Fund. You know who you are. The QSMA and its committee thank you whole heartedly.

There have been a number of serious issues/concerns that have been raised by our members, be rest assured that your committee has been and still is pursuing these concerns most vigorously. Some of these matters are still under investigation, we are unable to elaborate any further, please be patient.

As you are all aware Negotiations in regards to the Right To Negotiate Process are now well under way. The first round of meetings were held at the DNRM Officers in Emerald on May 27<sup>th</sup> with the Western Kangoulu People and their Representatives and on May 28<sup>th</sup> with the Bidjara People #7 and their Representatives. These were day long negotiations and we can say that they were progressive.

The QSMA would like to remind its members that any Sapphires that have undergone any treatment to enhance the stone must be disclosed. The Gemfields are dependant on Tourism for its longevity. The QSMA foresees a bright future for the Australian Sapphires and the Industry as a whole. Nothing travels faster than bad news.

Unfortunately several people have made it known that they would like to see Tourists and Fossickers out of the area and this attitude is astounding. The Gemfields is a Tourist Destination and a lot of time, effort and money has been spent by various Organisations and Local Businesses as of late to promote the Gemfields to Tourists. Whether you live on Freehold, an MHPL or you, like myself are a miner, the Gemfields is a community and as Community the actions of a minority **will** affect the lives of the majority. To the person/persons who is/are harassing the campers in the 48 hour camping area, the only thing you have managed to achieve is to give Sapphire the reputation of being an unfriendly tourist town and area. This is just what local businesses **don't** need. Think about your actions very carefully as this also affects you.

The Sunday Markets are well under way again for the season and the QSMA will be there at our regular stall. Questions and concerns can be raised and answered at the time and if we are unable to answer your question we will research it and get back to you as soon as we can. I would like to that Trevor for his dedication to the market stall and to those who assist him on a roster basis. Once again Thanks.

Until next time, lucky digging.

### WEBSITE:

Hopefully by the time you receive this newsletter the QSMA website will be up and running. A very special thanks to Brian Bell for the long hours spent on the construction of the website and getting it off the ground, Fantastic job. A google search for **qsma.com.au** will take you to the website. We are still ironing out some bugs so please be patient, it is almost ready to go completely live.

We would appreciate your feedback. If you have any suggestions you feel that may enhance the website please don't hesitate to contact one of the committee members or send your ideas to PO Box 364, Rubyvale, Qld 4702.

## **SECRETARYS REPORT**

### **Claim Renewals, Transfers & Permits.**

It is important members attend to any Renewals or other forms sent to you by the Department as a matter of priority as many have time frames attached. If you need help please contact myself or Megan as early as possible with a problem you may have as it causes a lot less work for us that way and less stress for yourself.

### **Myminesonline: (MMOL)**

We are still processing Renewals & Transfers for members through MMOL, please have as much information as possible when renewing or transferring as this makes the job easier for both you and us. When we have completed further training generously offered by the Department, and have an Office, we hope to train other members to help with this process.

### **Meetings:**

The General Meeting held by the QSMA at the Sapphire Community Centre on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015 as previously advertised in our last newsletter was well attended with over sixty people present. Topics covered were: Right to Negotiate, History of the QSPA & QSMA, The positive meeting with Department of Natural Resources & Mines John Tolhurst & new Registrar Mr Brad Eddy. The Meeting with Council re our vision as per our last newsletter. Fraudulent Stones. The CHRC 2022 Vision update and the Myminesonline review.

Forms were available at the door to "Have your say" and all questions from the floor were answered.

Your Committee were highly impressed by the orderly conduct of all patrons at this meeting, and wish to thank you all sincerely for your co-operation and participation.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> April your Executive attended a meeting with DNR & M including the Safety Inspector, CHRC's – Keith Jarratt (CHRC- Ranger Services re: Miners Common Cattle) Member for Gregory- Lachlan Millar and the Anakie Police. Apologies to this meeting were SLAM and EHP Departments.

Points of note for Members to come out of this meeting were: Safety inspections can be conducted at your Mine without prior notification. Inexperienced underground Miners are given the opportunity to attend a safety brief by Department of Mines Safety Inspector. Temporary stockyards are in the planning stage to be built at Rubyvale, plans & maps are to be sent to the QSMA Inc by Central Highlands Regional Council's Keith Jarratt if and when this proposal to State Government is approved.

Of those various bodies who attended, several issues were discussed with satisfactory outcomes, others are still a work in progress.

Due to the absence of SLAM & EHP Departments many pressing issues were not addressed at this meeting. A further meeting is planned for mid to late July with the relevant bodies.

### **Topics Pressing:**

Various topics that are currently being addressed are: Deeds of Grant for Freehold and Leasehold tenures and its impact on Mining and Prospecting, Prospecting & Pegging Permits and Landholder/Miner Conduct. The issue of the ERE over the Miners Common Land. The dedicated Road from Sapphire to Reward/Sultana Hill area for safety purposes be repaired to at least prior Flood condition.

A community statement may be needed in the near future to petition Central Highlands Regional Council /State Government for these repairs. This dedicated road access is highly necessary for Miners and Tourists at Reward/Sultana Hill in any emergency.

## TREASURERS REPORT

### **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

For the first time in ten years we find ourselves having to raise the membership fee by \$10.00 to \$35.00 per family per year, this is due to the rising costs of postage and administration costs and the fact that we are going through the RTN Process where we will be facing legal expenses.

Membership fees for the new financial year (2015/2016) are now due. If you wish to renew on the form attached please send it to the PO Box on the form and make any cheques or money orders payable to the Q.S.M.A. It would be very much appreciated if those members renewing could do so as soon as possible. **Please ensure that you sign your membership form.**

The guys are also at the Sapphire Markets on Sunday mornings if you choose to renew your membership there. Those of you with a membership No will not receive a new card as the card and No that you have is yours for the time that you are a financial member of the association. New members will receive a card, welcome note and a copy of the latest newsletter. We have a strong membership at the moment and would like to see this continue to grow as it gives us a very strong voice for the future. I would like to thank each and every member and their families for your continued support, without you we couldn't do what we do.

**Remember, We Are Here For You.**

### **Gemfields 2022 Community Reference Group: by Carol.**

This group now has three of your executive as members, myself, Phil Ashworth and Megan Harwood.

Megan & I attended the Regional Community Summit held at Capella on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015. This Summit was inspiring and an enormous success with all thirteen areas of the Central Highlands represented. I have lived in the Central Highlands for over 35 years and was astounded by the variety and potential our combined region has to offer for positive Regional Growth, Tourism and Community satisfaction. But our most important resource is its people, and you are needed to bring this vision to fruition and beyond. We need your opinions and ideas on what we can do to make our "Little Piece of Paradise" even greater. Your opinions and views are very much valued and needed. Each member of the Group has been selected to represent a different section of our community. Please contact the appropriate member to have your say:-

**Andy Spring:** Community Services & Fire Brigade, **Ewan Letts:** Tourism & Business, **Carol Graham:** Mining & Fossicking, **Megan Harwood:** Mining & Wildlife, **Kim Thomson:** History and Heritage, Tourism & Community, **Margret Lewis:** Community Services & Health, **Law Proberts:** Seniors & Community Services, **Phil Ashworth:** Mining/Tourism, **Jo Carew:** Sport & Recreation/Education. A copy of the Contact details for these members is attached on page 10.

## **GENERAL REPORT**

### **Memorial**

**R.I.P Beau Olsen** 28<sup>th</sup> June 1933 – 5<sup>th</sup> April 2015

Sadly the QSMA has lost a much loved committee member with the passing of Beau and our thoughts go out to his wife Marion and their family. Beau worked tirelessly for the good of the QSMA and its members. No task was too much trouble and Beau was a real bloodhound when it came to sourcing information, which he had done many times. Beau had also served his country as a member of the Australian Defence Forces joining the Army.

Like many people Beau and Marion had come to the Gemfields for a holiday and decided to stay and spent many wonderful years here as members of the community with Beau sharing his knowledge of hunting sapphires with family, friends and strangers. It's just not the same without you mate.

## Police Corner



### The Gemfields Myths

Being a Police Officer on the Gemfields is a very unique experience and part of that experience is listening to various stories that come to our attention which, well meaning people see as Law when in fact they are just urban or local myths. An example of this is the "No loud music after 10pm" Myth. This has in fact never been in law and just an urban myth but says a lot about respecting your neighbours. Another one which we hear often on the Gemfields is "You don't have to have a registered vehicle or trailer to go between any mine claims". People were thinking that unless they were travelling on Bitumen Roads, they did not have to have a registered vehicle" False. While Police at the moment may not be able to enforce this, The Mines Department Laws they can enforce, and in fact also have Ticket Books just like the Police to write out on the spot fines. So be warned and make sure your vehicles and trailers are in fact registered. Stay safe and Happy Motoring, watch your speed as your money is better served in your pocket than in the Justice Departments

Regards

**Russell (Robocop) Bentley**

Anakie Police



## AMBO'S CORNER

Health and Safety. "Yeah I know; that 'bloody phrase' that doesn't apply to me. It's the course I have to do 'cuz the system says I have to. It's the one that stops me doing my job properly, because the hard hat gets in the way, and those safety glasses just steam up. Then there's the signs. How stupid are those? Nobody reads them anyway!"

Decades ago, before the 'invention' of health and safety at work policies, accidents would injure, maim and kill people on a regular basis. As time went on the big firms were forced to introduce measures for their workers designed to create a safer working environment both in the daily routine, and for the longer term prevention of lung disease and chronic back issues, to the extent where modern industry is a safe and pleasant place to work. And this is where the gemstone miner differentiates, because you guys often run a one man band, responsible for the development, or not, of a safe working environment. I'd like to think that you all operate safe working practices not only in your work, but at home too. However, as the ambo, my experiences are telling me that this isn't entirely the case. If I had a dollar for every metal fragment in the eye, every case of arc eye, where welding shields were not used, and chopped fingers from machinery with guards removed, I'd retire tomorrow! Now don't get me wrong, many of you do the right thing when it comes to health and safety; you wear the hard hat, the eye protection, the gloves and breathing masks. But its often the times when it's only a quick bit of grinding needed doing, or too much grog when welding means you pick up the hot metal, that sees you adorn my doors. And as much as I love seeing you all, helping you to sort your problems, it isn't me that can't work for the next week because my dominant arm is all bandaged up, or my arc eye is so painful, I have to remain in a darkened room.

I understand that there are times when health and safety can hinder progress. But the message here is just take a moment before you do the next task, and ask yourselves, how you can make it safer. Just because you may never have used clear plastic eye shields to grind, doesn't mean you can't start using them. And if you slip a disk in your back because you didn't use the trolley jack? Well, no ones going to pay your bills when you can't work. Take 5 to stay alive and be safe.

**Stay well, stay happy. Dave the Ambo**



## THE NEW TRAVELLER



### How Times Change!

Gone are the days of the traveller using an old tiny bondwood caravan. The modern traveller is well equipped, a state of the art vehicle coupled to a highly modernised caravan, or in some cases a very spiffy mobile home.

These days with the ever increasing costs of travel and the distances to be covered the traveller with their fully self contained van or motor home is virtually independent. It is because of these ever increasing costs, predominantly fuel, that the self contained traveller is less likely to need the services provided by your conventional caravan park.

There is a growing number of organisations that pride themselves on being able to travel this great country of ours without the need to pay for accommodation. I mean if you are fully self contained why would you want to pay for amenities you don't need.

All over Australia there are free parking areas catering for just this type of traveller. These parks vary in provided amenities and the length of time the traveller is permitted to stay.

Those communities that have a **future vision** are well aware of the potential of the free campers. The switched on communities provide things like toilets, hot showers, water, sewerage dumps and a pleasant level area for parking. These free campers are not free loaders, just the enormous cost of fuel alone to access these places is a burden on anyone's budget.

While these travellers may not be spending money on accommodation they still inject a huge amount of income into any community they visit. They have to eat and replenish their supplies. They usually need fuel and of course they spend on souvenirs and items of interest from the various places they visit.

*Any community that is switched on and has a vision for the future would welcome these travellers with open arms. They improve the viability of any community they visit.*

Most travellers these days are in communication with other such travellers by UHF Radio. They report to others there experience in the various places they visit. Providing their visit is positive and welcoming, they get on their radio and tell others of there experience.

**Free advertising—Great!**

Unfortunately when these travellers have a negative experience they spread the word like wildfire.

Harassing our visitors by being aggressive and committing criminal acts to discourage the free campers is totally unacceptable. When a business owner behaves this way you have to wonder what is the motivation. He is not only hurting the **Good Will** of the Gemfields but his own business as well.

**The QSMA welcomes all visitors and wish you a totally enjoyable stay!**

## **SMALL SCALE MINING PLATFORM**

### Bill to cut red tape for small-scale miners

**The State Government has introduced legislation that aims to boost small-scale mining operations in Queensland.**

Natural Resources Minister Andrew Cripps says opal and other gemstone exploration is the lifeblood of some regional communities.

Mr Cripps has told State Parliament the bill will simplify applications and remove administrative processes and fees for some small operators.

"These small-scale miners have faced increasing pressure from a steady increase in fees compliance costs and red tape over many years, which has driven down participation in the industry

"The reforms I am introducing today address these issues and will reduce ongoing administrative processes and fees for the industry."

Central Queensland gem miners have welcomed the State Government cuts to red tape for small mining operators.

More than 85 per cent of mining claims in the state are in the Gemfields in central Queensland.

The Queensland Sapphires Producers Association (QSPA) now **QSMA** says red tape has been draining small mining businesses.

QSPA now **QSMA** president Cliff Mortley said it will also benefit tourist operations in the Gemfields.

"We anticipate quite a boost to the small-scale mining platform," he said.

"It's got to be beneficial obviously to the Gemfields area but I mean mainly the Gemfields are a unique location being the largest sapphire fields in the Southern Hemisphere.

"I think at this stage it will entice tourists, which means the tourist industry grows."

Mr Mortley said it will give small miners a chance to take back some of the profits.

"We were being tied in with the large-scale mining - coal - and it was identified then that we were being over-regulated," he said.

"We still need to be regulated but there was a lot of red tape and there was a lot of documentation obviously and costs of course associated with that, which was basically detrimental to small-scale mining."

#### **Why was the Gemfields left out?**

The Gemfields has for some years now been trying to have a Small Scale Mining Platform for the purpose of Sapphire Mining. After sending submission after submission to the relevant government bodies we are still no further advanced.

*Continued Over*

The Gemfields is unique in that it supports several different mining tenements.

Level 2 Mining. Predominantly alluvial machinery mining of deeper ground.

Underground Mining. 900 sq. mtr. Mining claim working at an average depth of 20ft. to 30ft.

Surface Mining. 900 sq. mtr. Mining claim working ground to shallow for shaft sinking.

Fossicking. Areas set aside allowing anyone to work the ground to a depth of 2mtrs. On a Fossicking Licence.

We are also unique in that we have itinerant miners, hobby miners, tourist miners and of course fair dinkum miners.

I ask you, with the different levels and types of mining happening on the Central Queensland Gemfields how can we be expected to comply with rules and regulations designed for Level One Mining.

### **What We Require.**

1. First and for most we would like to have the rules and regulations we have to comply with be tailored to Sapphire Mining rather than being lumped under the Quarrying Act.

2. The Central Queensland Gemfields has been a mining field since it was gazetted as The Anakie Mineral Field on 03 Sept. 1902.

Having an ERE within this area is detrimental to mining, tying up much sapphire bearing ground. This also has a huge effect on tourism.

Not to mention inconsistent mapping of the ERE makes it almost impossible to know where and where not one can mine.

3. Popularity of the Gemfields has grown and more people have taken up Mining Tenures the need for more ground escalates. Allowing freehold properties to quarantine ground in regards to the 100mtr. Rule is not only detrimental to our existence as miners but is discriminatory as the freeholder can choose to allow friends to peg within the quarantined 100mtrs.

A fossicking licence allows the holder to dig at a depth of 2mtrs right up to the boundary of a freehold property.

4. With ground becoming harder to find more areas are being pegged that are harder to mine under the present regulations. Ground that has an average depth of between 2mtrs and 4mtrs on a mining tenure at present must be worked by hand.

We would like to be able to either use or hire a machine to remove the excess of overburden to be able to access the wash.

5. Being required to pay a surety bond on a mining tenure it is paramount in order to budget costs that the miner has access to an itemised accounting of how the amount of bond is calculated.

A miner must be able to know the costs in advance to be able to decide to proceed or not.

6. The Gemfields Mining Field. Its uniqueness is that in 1914 all unoccupied Crown Land within the Anakie Mineral Field was gazetted as a Miners Common.

Continued Over

Nearly all unrest of the Gemfields Community can be traced back to the regulations of the Miners Common.

It is impossible to follow the rules unless first you know what they are!

Our Miners Common is getting smaller all the time due to land being used for various developments. There are serious concerns and anger between Graziers and Miners as since the Miners Common was brought into existence land that was part of the common has been sold off reducing the gazetted area.

It is imperative that we know what the laws, regulations and true boundaries are of the Gemfields Miners Common.

All correspondence to Government Departments in relation to the Miners Common has been unproductive.

Our Legal Representative has stated that the original Proclamation still stands therefore it would appear that there are some serious ramifications in regards to what has been allowed to happen by government on the Miners Common!

This is an ongoing problem and as you can see the above concerns have been debated for too long.

Its time to resolve these issues once and for all. We need answers and we need them now!

### **2022 Community Reference Group Contact Details**

Margret Lewis	0427 549 600	<a href="mailto:admin@gemfields.org.au">admin@gemfields.org.au</a>
Phil Ashworth	0400 378 190	<a href="mailto:edge71916@gmail.com">edge71916@gmail.com</a>
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Megan Harwood	0403 653 335	<a href="mailto:megstrevharwood@hotmail.com">megstrevharwood@hotmail.com</a>

**ON YA MATE!**



**Local Gemfields resident Cory donating some of his pocket money towards our building fund.**

**AGM**

The AGM will be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015 at the Multi Purpose Centre (MPC) in Sapphire at 1pm. Please be aware that the AGM is for financial members only. Please have your membership cards with you. You can if you wish renew your membership on the day, I (Megan) will be there from 12.15pm. The Current committee with the exception of the secretary will stand down and a new committee will be elected. Following the AGM will be a General Meeting for everyone to attend.

If you wish to submit a postal nomination please use the form below and send to PO Box 364, Rubyvale, Qld 4702 made to the attention of the Secretary before the AGM, forms will also be available on the day.

.....cut here.....

**Q.S.M.A Inc  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM**

I.....Nominate.....  
for the position of .....

Nominee Signature..... Date.....  
Membership No.....

Nominator Signature..... Date.....  
Membership No.....

All Nominees/Nominators must be current financial members of the Q.S.M.A Inc.

# HAVE YOUR SAY JOIN THE QSMA

Member No:.....

2015/2016

**Queensland Sapphire Miners Association Inc.**

**QSMA PO Box 364 Rubyvale Qld 4702**

**Membership and renewal Application Form \$35.00 Per Family Per Year**

Name:.....Date:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....Postcode:.....

Phone No:.....Claim No:.....

Email:.....

**New Application**

**Renewal**

**Change Of Details**

Receipt No:.....

Committee Member:.....**Applicant:**.....



## CONTACT US BY EMAIL

**PRESIDENT**/Native Title Co-ordinator:

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**VICE PRESIDENT**

Phil Ashworth [edge71916@gmail.com](mailto:edge71916@gmail.com)

**SECRETARY**

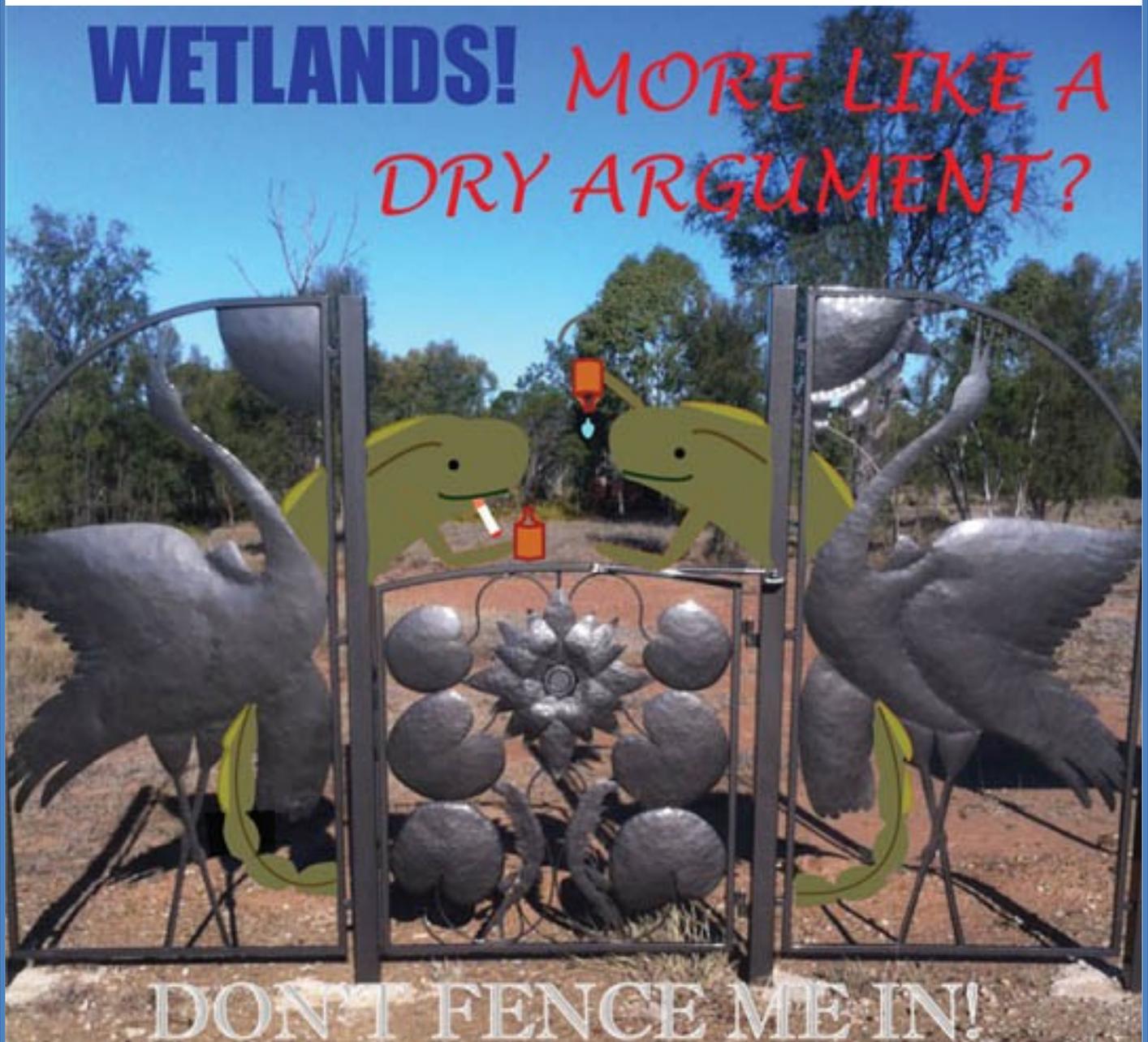
Carol Graham [carol@qsma.com.au](mailto:carol@qsma.com.au)

**TREASURER/ASSIST SECRETARY**

Megan Harwood [megan@qsma.com.au](mailto:megan@qsma.com.au)

The Sapphire Wetlands is an area of 94.5 hectares of gem bearing ground  
Along Rockhound Road. The area is fenced:- What For?

Other Natural Habitat was destroyed to push the fence line and fire break.



**Is this really a fattening paddock for cattle?**

# THE MINERS COMMON

## A PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency the Honourable Sir ARTHUR MORGAN,  
Knight, Lieutenant-Governor of the State of Queensland  
and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of  
Australia, and President of the Legislative Council of the  
said State.

[L.S.]



Sir Arthur Morgan

### ARTHUR MORGAN

Lieutenant-Governor.

**I**N pursuance of the powers and authorities in me  
vested and In accordance with the provisions of "The  
Mining Act of 1898," 62 Victoria No. 24, I, Sir ARTHUR MORGAN, the Lieutenant-Governor  
aforesaid, by and with the advice of the Executive Council, Do by this my Proclamation, no-  
tify and proclaim that all Crown lands Comprised within the limits of the Anakie Mineral  
Field, except such lands as have for the time being been taken up, and are for the time be-  
ing occupied, used, or held under or by virtue of any miner's right or business licence, or  
licence to mine for coal, or under or by virtue of any lease, application for lease or licence  
from the Crown, shall be a Miner's Common.

Given under my Hand and Seal, at Government House, Brisbane,  
This nineteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord one  
Thousand nine hundred and fourteen, and in the fifth year of  
His Majesty's Reign.

By Command, J. GEO. APPEL.

**GOD SAVE THE KING!**



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MINERS ASSOCIATION  
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