

## RESEARCH REPORT by Mark Randell

A lot of members will realize that I am the club's Research Officer and quite a few have posed questions: some easy, some hard and ALL interesting! Here is a selection of results:

### Mystery Gas Producer photographed by Les Fry at Beaufort, near Ballarat



Figure 1 Tanks and some sort of blower



Figure 2 Counter weight pulls on cable shown in Figure 1



Figure 3 This label gave the clue to research "Air-Gas Machine"

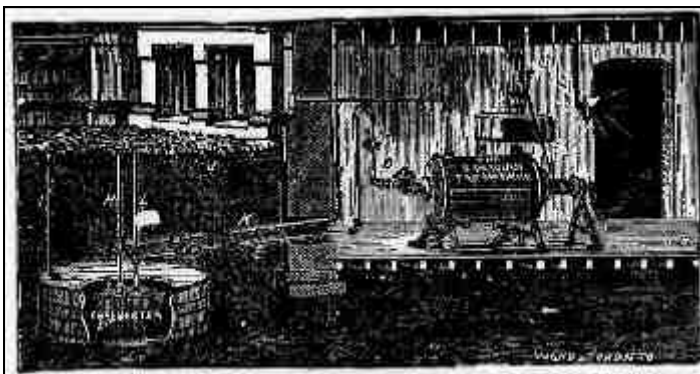


Figure 4 The Canadian Air Gas machine. The underground vessel is labeled "Carburettor"! Note counter weight and gas lamp.

Some internet searches quickly found that the mystery item in Beaufort was built to produce gasoline vapours for gas lighting. The counter weight would activate an air pump when the lamps were lit and would automatically shut down when supply was turned off. Figure 4 is from a diagram from the "Canadian Air Gas Machine" published in 1870. The device was claimed to be very safe and efficient but it is interesting to note that the carburetor and fuel supply could be installed several hundred feet from the dwellings being supplied and also underground (figure 5)!

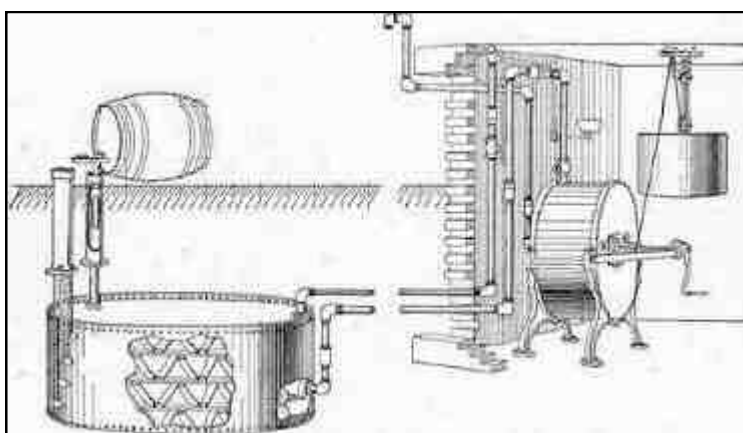


Figure 5 Diagram of Air-Gas Machine.

## Mystery Item from Ray Bailey

Ray keeps me supplied with questions (do you remember the window locks?) including queries about half of the items in the Prospect Hill Museum! His latest is illustrated in Figure 6 and was easy for me because of my background, Figure 7.

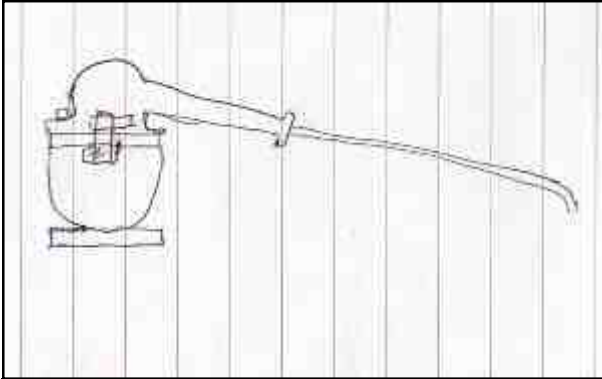


Figure 6 Ray Bailey's puzzle

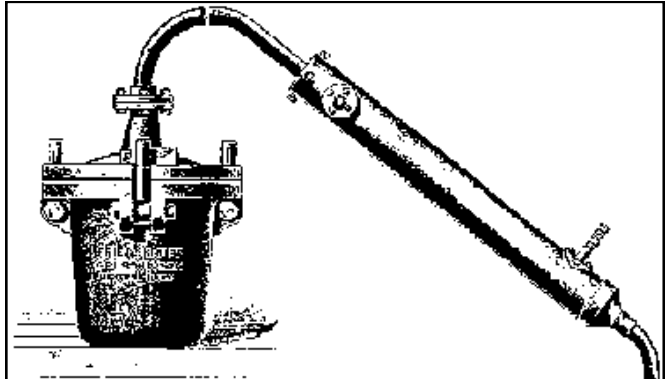


Figure 7 Possible solution to Ray's query.

I am not going to reveal the use of Ray's gadget as he has submitted photos to The Old Machinery Magazine (TOMM) and feedback from the public is awaited. What's your opinion?

## Articles from Bernie Hannan

Over the years our member Bernie Hannan has entertained club members with his knowledge of all things bright and beautiful and mystery items at various club meetings. He has also given me some of his surplus treasures and they formed the core of an exhibition of surveying equipment at Power of the Past 2013 (hope that you saw it). Some of his other treasures are illustrated in Figures 8 to 10 but I won't reveal research details at this stage : perhaps they will go on show in 2014 (after restoration).



Figure 8 Mystery item labeled "Standard Opt Co"



Figure 9 Mystery Item labeled "American Optical Co"



Figure 10 Mystery Item labeled "Lensometer"

## Conclusion

As you can see there is a lot for me to do in restoration and research for the club. Keep the ideas and queries coming so we can share new discoveries!

Mark Randell