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Graytown hits significant historical milestones

Formally known as Spring Creek, Graytown is located in the Strathbogie Shire, 137km north of Melbourne.

This year marks 150 years since gold was first discovered in Graytown.

Joyce Hammond's *The Graytown Goldrush* paints a picture of a time where Graytown's population exceeded 30,000 people, with over 500 buildings established during the short-lived gold rush days.

During the late 1860s, Graytown compared in size to the Ballarat Goldrush, but gold rapidly disappeared and by late 1870 the population had dropped below 200 people.

2018 also marks 170 years since the town was surveyed by Robert Hoddle, Officer-In-Charge of the Port Phillip Survey Department, who went on to become the first Surveyor General of Victoria in 1851.

Today, Graytown is predominantly a Box Ironbark National Park forest and dry land farming area, occupied by approximately 58 people, according to the latest census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Nevertheless, where Graytown lacks in stature it makes up for in community spirit.

The December Ordinary Council Meeting saw Council endorse Graytown Action Group's Community Plan 2017-2021 which sets out priorities for the next four years, including preservation and promotion of the town's rich history and heritage.

Secretary and Treasurer of the Graytown Community Action Group Julie Sims said the community regularly meets at their local 'hub' for gatherings and special events.

"We are a small friendly group of people with a great community spirit," Julie said.

Graytown resident and Strathbogie Shire Mayor Amanda McClaren said the town has a gorgeous landscape with an incredible history.

"Graytown is an interesting small town with a diverse and fascinating history; from the Traditional Owners to the Gold Rush in the late 1800's; to the ironbark forestry and more recently the military history with the former POW Camp" Cr McClaren said.

"Graytown has such an active community and it is so great to see them working together to plan for the future; it truly is the little town with the heart of gold."

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