

heard on the tours is an event which happened soon after George Lansell's wife Bedelia died.

A procession of men carried an empty coffin through Sandhurst and put it outside the stables of Fortuna Villa.

The act was a "gesture of dissatisfaction of the poor ventilation of mines in the Bendigo goldfields and the mine owners' indifference to the plight of the miners suffering from miners phthisis or pulmonary tuberculosis."

When Lansell found his name on the lid of the coffin he saw it as evidence that "others wanted to remind him that he too was merely mortal."

But for what happened next, you will have to hear the tour guide tell the story.

On the tours you will be shown around the homestead, including the spectacular entrance hall, the glassroom and main staircase.

The Pompeii fountain and the roman bath are just some of the special features in the gardens surrounding the building.

The house was commonly referred to as Victoriana Abortion, because it featured so many different styles.

"If George saw something in Vogue he would get it for the house," Tour guide Lance-Cpl Richard Arman said.

Cpl Arman said the tours provide a "complete history of Fortuna and stories of the Lansell family."

One of the stories he enjoys telling is when George Lansell advertised he wanted to buy a goat.

"500 children turned up at the gate with goats to sell to George.

"When he chose the one he wanted the children made so much noise because they were scared to go home to to a beating from their parents that he bought them all," Cpl Arman said.

So to hear these stories and many more, allow about three-and-a-half hours on a Sunday and tour Fortuna.

Bookings can be made by phoning 42-0222.

● The Army will not be leaving the Fortuna site in April.

The military side will move out but the Army will stay on.

"The soldiers will be extracted but the Army will still be at the site," Lt Col. Burns said.

More than 80 of the soldiers will go into the workforce and others will be posted to other survey regiments in Australia.

"The same work will be done here but a new organisation will be moving in.

"ATSE will have a very focussed production factor," Lt Col. Burns said.