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June 2010

FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.)
NEWSLETTER

ABN 571625138800

27th Annual General Meeting

Jonathan Schmidt

'Through the eyes of the conservator'

**'Exhibiting the
Duracks :
the other side
of the story'**



Mary Durack and friends at Argyle Downs
Station, 1942 (Courtesy Battye Library
Reg Durack Collection.061761PD)

Our AGM will be held on
Tuesday 13 July 2010
5.00pm for 5.30pm

Great Southern Room, 4th floor
State Library of Western Australia

Please see details on Page 3

Objectives

The objectives of the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) are to assist and promote the interests of the J S Battye Library of West Australian History and the State Records Office, and of those activities of the Library Board of Western Australia concerned with the acquisition, preservation and use of archival and documentary materials.

Patron Mrs Ruth Reid

Emeritus President Professor Geoffrey Bolton

Committee (2009-2010)

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Secretary Mrs Lorraine Dearnley

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Committee members Mr Graham Bown, Ms Jennie Carter, Dr Alison Gregg, Mr Jim Gregg, and Mr Robert O'Connor.

Ex-Officio Mrs Margaret Allen (CEO & State Librarian)
Ms Cathrin Cassarchis (Director, SRO)
Dr Sarah Brown (Battye Historian)

Newsletter editor Ms Jennie Carter

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The Secretary, PO Box 216, Northbridge WA 6865

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Friends of Battye Library Committee, the State Library of WA, or the State Records Office.

Our 27th AGM

Tuesday 13 July 2010
Great Southern Room, 4th floor
State Library of Western Australia
5.00pm for 5.30pm.

Through the eyes of the conservator

Exhibiting the Duracks :the other side of the story.

Paper Conservator Jonathan Schmidt will discuss the process of putting together an exhibition from storage to display.

Following the meeting you are invited to join us for a meal at Harry's Bar and Grill. Bookings can be confirmed on the night.

Problem with the stairs?

If any members have difficulty with taking the stairs to the fourth floor, please notify staff on either the ground floor reception desk or the Battye Library desk on the 3rd floor for access to the staff lift to the fourth floor.

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About our speaker

Through the eyes of the Conservator

Jonathan Schmidt has been the Paper Conservator at the State Library for seven years and has treated a wide range of collection materials including documents, photographs, maps, ephemera and plans. He trained in conservation of cultural materials at the University of Canberra.

Message from our President.

Dear Friends

Our last meeting was clouded by our speaker Prof Bob Reece's ill health. The bits that he gave me to tell you about Robert Menli Lyon, however, were enough to whet our appetite for another talk on this enigmatic man perhaps next year.

Our next General meeting is the AGM – and we have another interesting talk lined up for you. Please remember too that subscriptions are now due and you will find an application / renewal form on page 19.

In this issue we have included nomination forms for places on the committee. Please, please, can some of you think about joining us on the committee. We would like to see some new faces and we could all do with some new ideas and perspectives. It is not onerous - we meet the second Tuesday of the alternate months at 4pm – in between the general meetings. The committee's responsibility is to organise the program for members, supervise our gift fund, decide on applications for funding from the Sholl bequest – and to find ways of raising interest in both the State Library's Battye Library and State Records Office collections.

As you will hear at the AGM our Lotterywest grant to help rescue Oral History Tapes is progressing – the Library is in the process of installing the sound proof rooms to enable the project to get underway – and the team of library specialists and OHHC representatives are sorting through the existing tapes to decide on priorities – which is a mammoth task.

I hope to see you all at the next meeting. We will have just returned from

a wonderful overseas trip – with a cruise of the Baltic as the highlight!

Pamela Statham Drew

Our 2010 meetings and speakers' program

13 July 2010 - Annual General Meeting

Jonathan Schmidt, *Through the eyes of the conservator.*

14 September 2010

June Caunt - *Post war migration experiences*

23 November 2010 - End of year function

Jennie & Bevan Carter - *Writing the history of Armadale*

State Library News

Exhibitions

Durack Dynasty: an exhibition of the Durack Family Papers

The Durack family have had major influences across Australia. It all began when a small branch of an Irish family tried to escape poverty in 1853. The State Library presents an exceptional exhibition on this pioneering family, showcasing the extensive collections of Durack material held by the Library together with material on loan from members of the Durack family. Featuring diaries, artworks, letters, notebooks, photographs, film, rare books, objects and more, the exhibition tells us some of the fortunes of this extraordinary family and their contribution to Western Australia.

The exhibition is open from 29 May to 3 October 2010. There are also a number of associated events, including a series of talks, tours and films. For more information visit: www.slwa.wa.gov.au/whats_on/events

New Collections

The State Library's heritage collection has been enriched by several

significant donations, including:

- Diary of Eileen Lanagan, written on the Canning Stock Route in 1940
- Records of the Australian Opera Studio
- Papers of the Hepburn Heights Bushland Reserve Campaign: 1986-1994
- Collection of watercolor paintings by Mary Edwards
- Collection of pastoral station ledgers, including PM Durack and Mary Durack material, personal correspondence of John Forrest
- Recollections of small country schools early in the 20th century by Dorothy G. Austin
- Papers of Bishop Michael Challen
- The Aerial Surveys Australia collection (1000+ negatives of aerial photographs taken 1960-1990s).

Note: some of these collections have not been processed/re-housed etc, so may not be accessible to researchers yet.

Digitisation

Digitisation of Battye collections continues – this includes a range of materials including, maps, archives and photographs.

Kalgoorlie CollectionsCare Regional Hub

SLWA has recently met with the coordinator of the new CollectionsCare Regional Hub in the Goldfields to discuss possible opportunities for working together. CollectionsCare aims to develop practical skills and knowledge of staff and volunteers of regional collecting institutions. SLWA will look at ways to work with the Hub to help local collecting organisations manage their collections and build cooperative working relationships.

Closing the Gap

Under the Commonwealth's Closing the Gap Strategy, SLWA will be delivering Information Literacy training in WA's remote Indigenous

communities. This will be a three year program, and will see SLWA staff working with Indigenous communities to improve literacy in all age groups.

Sarah Brown
(Battye Historian)

From the collections

Rare stamp found

Volunteer Patrick Bunbury had a rare find when processing archival documents, Acc 712A/8 (Stone, James & Co.), recently – a Penny Black stamp. The stamp is attached to a letter, dated 29 July 1840 and addressed to Messrs Few Hamilton & Few, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden (London). The sender is Wm. Smith of 2 Francis Street, Golden Square, requesting payment for various goods.



Before gathering our belongings and disappearing into the sunset, Patrick and I thought we should ‘do a Google’ to find the stamp’s worth - see if we were flying first class or business. We sadly unpacked our bags when we saw that used Penny Blacks are valued at anything from \$20 upwards to about \$2000, depending on the condition of the stamp.

“Our” Penny Black is in quite good condition, apart from having no left-side margin. A Penny Black with all margins intact is worth more than those with missing margins. This and many other interesting facts about the Penny Black can be found online in *Wikipedia* and various enthusiastic philatelic sites.

The stamp is safely and securely housed in Security Stack with a copy made for client use. Despite the lack of monetary value, it is still a significant item and has the added value of being a part of a complete, combined letter, and item of postal stationery (most letters at that time were sent folded and sealed, thus transforming into an envelope). According to Wikipedia, in the less than two years (1840-41) that the Penny Black was on issue, over 68 million stamps were printed, and with so many letters and other documents being kept, there are many

survivors of the stamp!

For those interested in philately, see the Prinsep Family collection of postal marks (call number Acc 1972A/185) and records of the Philatelic Society of Western Australia (call number MN 813)

Rosalyn McHale, Archive Team.

Have you visited the Friends of Battye Library Website yet?

We commissioned consultant researchers, and Friends of Battye Library members, Lorraine Clark and Cherie Strickland of 'Swan Genealogy' [<http://www.swangenealogy.com.au>], to develop a web presence for our organisation. Thanks to their skills and generosity we now have an attractive and informative new website.

<http://www.friendsofbattye.org.au>

We welcome your comments or suggestions which can be easily made using the feedback page.

State Records Office News

Margaret Medcalf Award

On the morning of 19 May 2010, the Hon John Day MLA, Minister for Planning: Culture and the Arts, accompanied by Margaret Medcalf OAM, presented this year's Margaret Medcalf Award to Kevin Fitzgerald and Chris Owen from the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. The Award, including a prize of \$1000, was made for the book *'It's still in my heart, this is my Country': The Single Noongar Claim History*, authored by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, John Host with Chris Owen.

Culture and the Arts Minister John Day recognised the contribution the work makes to the knowledge and history of native title in Western Australia, saying

“this book brings together evidence that was gathered as part of the

Single Noongar Claim Federal Court trial to provide a comprehensive account of Noongar people and their history. The judges felt this book had the potential to alter the path of historical Aboriginal research and that the work has led to a paradigm shift in the way Aboriginal culture and identity is defined and understood. The researchers spent several years reviewing thousands of records at the State Records Office, in addition to other evidence gathered as part of the Single Noongar Claim. The records included 19th century colonial archives about Aboriginal people in WA, the records of the State Native Welfare and Aborigines departments and the anthropological papers of Daisy Bates.”



Margaret Medcalf Award. L-R Chris Owen, Kevin Fitzgerald, Margaret Medcalf, Hon. John Day, Sven Bluemmel, and Cathrin Cassarchis, Director State Records Office. (Photo courtesy Rob O'Connor)

Special commendations were also awarded to two works:

Tiffany Shellam's paper - *Enumerating the unknowable: imagining, counting and defining the politically relevant Aboriginal population of colonial Western Australia*

Penelope Hetherington's book - *Paupers, poor relief and poor houses in Western Australia, 1829-1910*.

The judging panel for this year's Award comprised Associate Professor Jean Chetkovich, from the Centre for Western Australian History at The University of Western Australia, Justine McDermott, State Records Commissioner, and Cathrin Cassarchis, State Archivist and Director State Records.

Geoffrey Bolton Lecture 2010

The speaker at the 2010 Geoffrey Bolton Lecture will be Emeritus Professor David Black AM, Chairman of the Parliamentary History Advisory Committee at the Parliament of Western Australia. The Lecture will be held at the Government House Ballroom at 6pm on Monday 20 September 2010. The date has been chosen to coincide with a parliamentary sitting week. The topic for this year's Lecture has not yet been finalised but Professor Black has stated that he sees the Lecture as an opportunity to explain what has been achieved in parliamentary and general political history in Western Australia, with particular reference to the State's archives.

SRO Seminars

Details of the 2010 program for SRO's lunchtime seminars are available at <http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/whatsnew/events.asp>. and elsewhere in this newsletter. The most recent speaker at a SRO Lunchtime Seminar was Isla Macphail who spoke about her 2009 Margaret Medcalf Award winning publication titled *Highest Privilege and Bounden Duty: A study of Western Australian parliamentary elections 1829-1901*, published by the Western Australian Electoral Commission. Isla spoke eloquently about her topic, making what seems at first to be a somewhat dry academic subject, come vividly to life, underlying the use of a great deal of archival material from the State Archives collection in the production of the work.

The next Lunchtime Seminar will mark NAIDOC week and will occur on 6 July 2010. Featuring Dr Mary Ann Jebb, the seminar is titled "Community history and 'Mowanjum 50 years'" and is about this lively and interesting work produced to mark the 50th anniversary of the Mowanjum Aboriginal Community. The book is richly illustrated and uses oral and archival sources to describe the people, culture and country of Mowanjum in the Kimberley region. The seminar will occur in the South West Room at the SRO.

1979 State Cabinet Records released

Each year the State Records Office organises the official release of the State Cabinet Records from their 30 year restriction access period, on or near Western Australia's Foundation Day – a day chosen because it

marks the commencement of government in Western Australia. This year a Guide to the 1979 State Cabinet Records was produced and promoted, resulting in newspaper, television and radio coverage of some of the issues highlighted in the State Cabinet Records from 30 years ago.

1979 was the year Western Australia made international headlines when Skylab fell to earth near Esperance, and the Miss Universe contest was held at the Entertainment Centre in Perth. The 1979 State Cabinet records reveal the concerns of Sir Charles Court's government about various issues, including: the actions taken to provide relief to drought ravaged farmers and victims of the Cadoux earthquake, the consideration of sites for a possible nuclear power plant, deliberations about oil drilling on Noonkanbah Station and about Aboriginal Land Rights generally, discussions about the abolition of the Marriage Allowance for public servants, the release of an Energy Policy for Western Australia, discussions about proposed Sex Discrimination legislation and discussions about Nude Bathing at Swanbourne.

1979 was also the year of the 'sesquicentennial' anniversary of British settlement in Western Australia, and the State Cabinet Records show the deliberations by the Government about the use of the 'WAY 79' logo and celebratory events that occurred during that year including; Prince Charles' visit, the Parmelia Yacht Race, the Military Tattoo, and a 150th anniversary Golf Tournament. Western Australia was certainly in a 'state of excitement' throughout 1979.



Prince Charles talks to women in the crowd outside the Town Hall, Perth, during his visit for the State's WAY '79 celebrations. (Courtesy Batty Library - Ronald Armstrong Collection 232056PD)

For more detailed information about the events from 1979 and the State Cabinet Records please see the online Guide to the 1979 State Cabinet Records at:

http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/whatsnew/documents/A_Guide_to_the_1979_State_Cabinet_Records_000.pdf.

Historical maps online

Over 5000 historical maps have been made available online since funding

from the Friends of Batty Library (Inc) was granted for this project late last year. Only 250 more maps are awaiting loading to the system and these require further descriptive work first. This will then complete this project.

Anna and Thomas Leonowens in Western Australia, 1853-1857

Anna Leonowens was the almost mythical 19th century Governess to the King of Siam's children, portrayed in the 20th century bestselling book *Anna and the King of Siam* (1944) and the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *The King and I* (1951) which were both later turned into Hollywood films. Much has been written about Anna and the State Records Office has recently published an *Occasional Paper*, authored by distinguished American biographer Alfred Habegger and SRO Senior Archivist Gerard Foley, titled *Anna and Thomas Leonowens in Western Australia, 1853-1857*.

This paper reveals the little known facts about their time in Western Australia. This includes the story of their perilous journey to Western Australia from Singapore, the record of Anna Leonowens advertising to be the teacher of a 'seminary for young ladies' in Perth, Thomas's strong opinions recorded in the Minutes of the Swan River Mechanics Institute and the story of the family's life in the remote convict outpost of Lynton, north of Geraldton. The true story is every bit as remarkable as the Hollywood version of Anna's life, but the truth has always had difficulty coming to light. Unfortunately, for various reasons, Anna concealed her early life, never revealing to anyone that she spent four years in Western Australia, preferring instead to say that time was spent in the more salubrious surrounds of St James Square in London.

The paper can be found online at: <http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/community/documents/OccasionalPaper1-LeonowensinWesternAustralia.pdf>

Gerard Foley
(Senior Archivist, SRO)

SRO Lunchtime seminars 2010

The State Records Office of Western Australia invites you to the 2010 series of Lunchtime Seminars.

Featuring a variety of topics, these seminars are designed to inform researchers about the SRO, its functions and the collections it houses. It also provides researchers with an opportunity to meet fellow researchers, learn about members of staff, and provides a forum for questions and discussions in a relaxed and friendly environment. Attendees are encouraged to bring their sandwiches and drinks to the Seminars. Tea and Coffee are provided and bookings are essential.

Following are details about the first Lunchtime Seminar for 2010 featuring SRO's Archives Research Officer Tom Reynolds

Tuesday 6 July – Lunchtime Seminar to mark NAIDOC week.

Speaker: **Dr Mary Anne Jebb**

Topic: *Community history and 'Mowanjum 50 years'*.

Venue: Great Southern Room, 4th floor Alexander Library Building, Perth Cultural Centre.

Thursday 9 September – Speaker: **Kerry King**

Topic: *'Lifting the Bonnet' on the dark history of road crashes in WA.*

Venue: Southwest Room, Ground Floor,

Wednesday 13 October – Speaker: **Damien Hassan**

Topic: *AEON 2.0.*

Wed 24 Nov – Speaker: to be advised – Topic: to be advised

These dates and venues will be confirmed a month before the event.

Bookings are necessary for these Seminars, so please phone 9427 3360 to book, or let us know should you visit the SRO's Search Room before the event.

Email addresses needed

To enable us to share information and keep members up to date on important happenings, we have a group email list for current members. If you would like to be kept informed of important matters or forthcoming events relevant to the Batty Library and the State Records Office, please

email me at bevnjen@gmail.com or Nick Drew at nickdrew@bigpond.com .

In June advance notice about the July AGM was circulated to our 'online' members. If you received this notice, then your email address has already been included on the list and you do not need to reply to me or Nick. If you are a new member or renewed your membership and included your email address, then your email address has also been added to the group list. If you do not want to be sent any Friends of Battye Library information by email, please let me know.

Jennie Carter
(Editor / membership secretary)

State Library Bookshop - discount for members

The State Library has generously offered members of the Friends of Battye Library a 15% discount on new book purchases. To be eligible for the discount, members must show proof of name when making their purchases so staff can confirm that you are a current member.

Please note that the discount does not apply to secondhand books sold in the bookshop, nor to the Friends of Battye Library publications which are sold at an already discounted rate.

Visit the bookshop on the Ground Floor of the Alexander Library Building or Telephone: 08 9427 3211, Fax: 08 9427 3215

Email: info@slwa.wa.gov.au. Open seven days a week:

Mon - Fri: 10am - 5pm

Sat & Sun: 12noon - 5pm

Archival quality materials

The bookshop also stocks archival materials as recommended by the State Library's conservation staff. There are a variety of boxes, paper and card, photo enclosures, and binders available to help preserve precious items.

Jennie Carter

‘Have you a story to tell?’

[The following piece has been kindly sent to me by one of our members, Christopher Fyfe. Christopher is a long time researcher and supporter of the Battye Library and is the author of a number of publications, among them being *The bale fillers : Western Australian wool, 1826-1916* published by the University of Western Australia Press, 1983. *Wheels in Malaya : the Wearne brothers and their company* published by Lana Press, 2002 and *A backward glance: twenty years of the Richard Wagner Society of Western Australia (Inc.)* also published by Lana Press, 2006. (Jennie Carter)]

Dear Editor

Your ‘Have you a story to tell?’ in the recent newsletter prompts me to recount the following tiny snippet which I would like to share with your readers.

Recently I was reflecting on my earliest visit to the Public Library [now the State Library of Western Australia] in the early 1940s. In those days my father wrote brief broadcasts for the Australian Broadcasting Commission on English poets and authors, touching on their style and subsequent influence on English literature.

His research necessitated visits to the Library, always on a Sunday afternoon, during which he and Dr Battye would engage in long discussions on topics far above my comprehension. On my first visit there with my father, Battye, seeing the look of boredom on my face, asked, “Would you like to look in the back room where lots of other books are stacked?”. He then took me over to the door, opened it and switched on the lights. All I could at first see were long dark corridors barely lit by two sixty-watt globes which struggled to serve each gloomy alley. Battye closed the door behind him and I was left to my own devices.

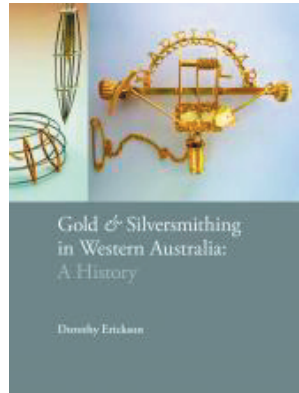
As my eyes became used to the darkness, my imagination soon dreamed up visions of foreign spies armed with guns waiting around the next corner, whom I silently crept upon to defeat, and having despatched them, sought further adventures in the next dark canyon. When it was time to leave, Dr Battye asked, “Did you enjoy looking at the books?”, to which I mumbled an unconvincing reply. In the

past forty years I have made countless visits to the Library, but none have matched the excitement, danger and death in that back room almost seventy years ago!

(Christopher Fyfe)

Recent books of interest

Erickson, Dorothy. *Gold & silversmithing in Western Australia: a history*. Nedlands: UWA Press, 2010. [A superbly illustrated account of WA jewellery designers and makers.]



Buchanan, Bruce, with the assistance of Buchanan, Anne [eds.] . *The journal of Gerald de Courcy Lefroy*. Carlisle: Hesperian Prss, 2009. [Gerald de Courcy Lefroy (b.1819, d 1877) wrote five diaries in which he described his daily life, contemporary events and his impressions of the times and people he knew.]

Hopkins, Leckie and Roarty, Lynn. *Among the chosen: the life story of Pat Giles*. Fremantle: Fremantle Press, 2010. [A well researched biography of the private and public life of Western Australian feminist, activist, and Federal ALP Senator, Pat Giles.]

Pascoe, Rob. *In old Kalgoorlie: the photographs of J. J. Dwyer* . Welshpool, W.A.: Western Australian Museum, 2010.

(Jennie Carter)

More great resources for Western Australian researchers.

Police Gazette of Western Australia (1876 to 1889, 1899 - 1900)

The *Police Gazette of Western Australia* (1876 onwards) is a valuable resource for researching police and criminals in Western Australia. Information can be found under various headings: apprehensions (name of person arrested, arresting constable, charge and sentence); police appointments, dismissals, discharges, promotions, resignations and



transfers; tickets of leave, certificates of freedom, and conditional pardons issued to convicts; physical descriptions of prisoners etc.

With thanks to the Friends of Battye Library and the Sholl Bequest, the *Police Gazettes* 1876-1900 have been digitised and are fully text searchable. www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/western_australian/police_gazettes

Soul searching: A user's guide to the Western Australian Legislative Assembly electoral rolls 1890 - 1967

This useful publication was compiled by Julie Martin, who was for many years a senior librarian at the Battye Library, with the aid of a grant from the Friends of Battye Library.

In 1890, Western Australia was granted self government and a bicameral parliament (one with two Houses) was established. The Legislative Assembly or Lower House provided the Government of the State whilst the Legislative Council or Upper House acted as a House of Review.

This guide is only to the Legislative Assembly electoral rolls, as most residents of Western Australia met the voting qualifications for this House. Until 1963, a property qualification was required for those enrolling to vote in Legislative Council elections. The guide can be accessed from the Friends of Battye Library website at: <http://www.friendsofbattylelibrary.org.au/Online%20Publications.htm>

Australian Newspapers Online

News from the National Library of Australia's Australian newspapers online project is that work has started on digitising more of the *West Australian*. Already featured online are articles for the period 1901-1918 as well as selected issues to 1936. This is a wonderful source for researchers, historians and genealogists. See newspapers on line at <http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

Swan River Stories

Swan River Stories provides a fascinating look at the social, political and environmental history of Perth water, as told through original photographs and words.

Developed by Sue Graham-Taylor (the inaugural James Sykes Battye Memorial Fellow), this multimedia website is a useful tool for those interested in the history of Perth water or as a starting point for further research. See: http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/swan_river

The State Library offers a range of tours and interactive programs designed to help you explore the building and its collections. All tours and programs are free.

Maps, music, microfilm and more

Discover more than just books @ Your State Library.

When: Tuesdays 12.30pm (weekly)

Where: Discovery Lounge ground floor.

This free guided tour of the Library will introduce you to our unique collections, including the J S Batty Library of West Australian History and take you behind the scenes. Tour lasts approximately 50 minutes. Bookings not required (except for groups).

Have you a story to tell?

Contributions for the Friends of Batty Library Newsletter are welcomed from our members.

Have you come across any interesting snippets about Western Australian history? Are you involved in a research project that you would like to share with us? Do you use the Batty Library or any of the online resources provided by the State Library of WA or the Friends of Batty Library? If so, we would love to hear from you.

Articles up to 250 words are preferred for publication. Your contributions can be emailed to bevnjen@gmail.com or posted to the Friends of Batty Library (Inc), PO Box 216, Northbridge WA 6865.

Deadlines for publication in 2010 are 10 June, 10 August, and 15 October.

Jennie Carter
(Editor)

**Friends of Battye Library (Inc) Subscriptions form
From 1 July to 30 June each year**

LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$500

Annual Membership

Ordinary	\$20
Joint	\$30
Concession (pensioner / full time student)	\$10
Corporate	\$50
Donation	\$ _____

(Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible)

I wish to apply for / renew membership:

Name _____

Organisation _____

Address _____

_____ post code _____

Tel: Day _____ Evening _____

Mobile _____ Email _____

(If you do not wish to receive emails from us, please tick here)

If paying by cheque, please print this form, complete it, and send with your cheque to:

The Treasurer
Friends of Battye Library
PO Box 216
NORTHBRIDGE 6865

If paying by electronic direct funds transfer, our details are:

Account Name – Friends of Battye Library (Inc)
Account Number – 4220 58413
BSB Number – 016-185

In the payment description section, please type your initial and surname as well as 'subs' or 'donation' to ensure that your payment can be identified. For example 'JCarter subs'.

We will still need your completed form for our records, so please return it either by post or as an attachment to an email to nickdrew@bigpond.com with a note of your online payment.

**Thank you for your interest in the Friends of Battye
Library, your support is very much appreciated.**

Some dates in Western Australian history.

JULY

- 1 July 1889 Great Southern Railway opens for traffic.
- 9 July 1839 First theatrical performance in Perth (*Love a la Militaire*)
- 12 July 1979 Debris from USA space station Skylab falls in WA's south west.
- 13 July 1982 WA's first test-tube baby, Jarrad Carter, is born at KEMH.
- 19 July 1958 Last tram service in Perth (from Inglewood to the city).
The tram is now preserved at Whiteman Park.
- 20 July 1926 Flooding causes the collapse of the Fremantle Railway Bridge.
- 20 July 1963 First stage of the Ord River Scheme opens.
- 25 July 1973 Murdoch University is established.
- 26 July 1879 The first Government Railway (Geraldton-Northampton) opens.
- 26 July 1882 The Daily News became the first daily paper in Perth.
- 30 July 1942 Port Hedland is bombed by Japanese planes.
- 31 July 1900 WA votes in favour of Federation.
- July 1905 Completion of the 1164km Rabbit Proof Fence no.2.
- July 1916 King Edward Memorial Hospital established as a maternity hospital
- July 1958 Roe Street brothels closed



Josie Bungalow, brothel in Roe Street 1929
- (Courtesy Battye Library 048405PD)

AUGUST

- 1 August 1854 First WA adhesive postage stamp issued.
- 1 August 1894 J.S.Battye begins his 60-year tenure as head of the Public Library.
- 10 August 1914 Blackboy Hill Camp opens for training troops.
- 12 August 1984 The first stage of the Northwest shelf gas operation begins with gas being piped to Perth and industrial areas.
- 16 August 1832 First will proven in the Civil Court, Perth.
- 17 August 1899 Women win the right to vote in WA.
- 21 August 1943 WA's Dorothy Tangney becomes Australia's first woman senator.
- 27 August 1842 Boys from Parkhurst prison arrive at Perth.
- 28 August 1885 First gold found in the Kimberley.

(Compiled by Leith Robinson)

Jack's Back: On the trail of the Leonowens

It is a pleasing development to see Occasional Paper No.1 lately put out by the State Records Office and that on the intriguing topic of Thomas and Anna Leonowens and their stay in Western Australia in the 1850s (see page 12 of this issue). Some reflections concerning this little piece of our history went into this column of mine in our Newsletter no.128 of May 2008.

It is quite opportune for me to revisit the subject in consequence of a brief holiday I recently enjoyed at Penang in Malaysia. I was already aware that Thomas Leonowens had died there in 1859, and so I soon sought out his grave in the old Christian cemetery. Actually, his is one of some twenty-five noteworthy names to which the visitor's attention is drawn on a large signboard that has stood near the main gate since 1993 as part of the Penang Heritage Trail. At the grave the inscription is on one side of the monumental superstructure of brick and stone: 'Sacred to the memory of Thomas Leonowens who departed this life on the 7th of May 1859 aged 31 years & 5 days. Lord have mercy.'

According to the authors of the Occasional Paper, previous research has



Jack contemplates Thomas Leonowen's grave in Penang. (Photograph courtesy of Tom Herzfeld.)

shown that the deceased really should have been aged 35 in 1859, but Gerard Foley has since reminded me that they have found quite a few such discrepancies in their pursuit of Anna's whole trail! In her own 'autobiography'

published in 1870 she made no mention at all of the four years the couple had spent in Western Australia in the decade before her time in Bangkok. And the new Paper only takes the story up to the point when Thomas and Anna left here for Singapore in 1857.

This is also a convenient occasion to produce a relevant item that I came across long ago. It shows that Anna's stay here was not altogether forgotten by our colonists in 1870, as indicated by a piece in the Fremantle newspaper *The Express* of 15th October that year. Under the heading, 'Death of a Buddhist king', it quoted a lengthy report on King Mongkut in his dying days in 1868 (of which just a portion follows here):

'The following interesting account is we have been given to understand from the pen of an English Lady named Leonowens who has been governess at the Siamese Court, and formerly resided in this colony.

'...On the day before his death he called to his bedside his nearest relatives, and parted among them such of his personal effects as were most prized by him... In the evening he wrote with his own hand a tender farewell to the mothers of his many children, - eighty-nine in number. On the morning of his last day, he summoned his royal half-brother Wongsah, the Prime Minister and others, and solemnly imposed on them the care of his eldest son, the Chowfa Chulalon Korn and his kingdom; at the same time expressing his last earthly wish, that the Senabawdee [i.e. the Accession Council] in electing his successor, would give their voices for one who should conciliate all parties, that the country might not be distracted by dissensions on that question...

Then turning his gaze upon a small image of his adored Teacher [i.e. Buddha], he seemed for some time absorbed in awful contemplation. "Such is life!" Those were actually the last words of this most remarkable Buddhist king... That very night, without disorder or debate, the Senabawdee elected his eldest son...to succeed him... The title of the present supreme king (my amiable and very promising scholar) is Prabat Somdetch Phra Paramendr Maha Chulalonkorn Kate Clou Cheu-yu-Hua. - "*The English Governess at the Siamese Court*" in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Anna's promising pupil went on to prove an able and progressive ruler and reigned till his death in 1910. He was the grandfather of Thailand's much revered monarch of today, the aged and ailing King Bhumibol.

(Jack Honniball)

Membership Subscription (from 1 July to 30 June - GST inclusive)

Life membership \$500

Annual membership

Ordinary \$20

Joint \$30

Pensioner / student / junior \$10

Corporate \$50

Meetings

General meetings are held each year in March, May, July (also the Annual General Meeting), September and November (also the end of year function). These are held at the State Library of Western Australia and usually begin at 5.00 pm for 5.30 pm and conclude before 7.00 pm.

Newsletter

Published four times per year - March, June, September and November (no newsletter is published in May). Articles from members and supporters are very welcome and the deadline for copy for the newsletter is 8 February, 8 June, 8 August and 10 October each year. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject articles and notices for publication.

Contact details

For comments, more information, membership forms, a copy of the Friends of Battye Library (Inc) Constitution, or to send articles and notices for the newsletter, please contact:

The Secretary, Lorraine Dearnley on dearnley@aapt.net.au, or,

The editor, Jennie Carter at bevnjen@gmail.com

or write to:

The Secretary
Friends of Battye Library (Inc)
P O Box 216
Northbridge WA 6865

J S Battye Library of West Australian History

Opening hours Mon/Thurs 9.00 am - 8.00 pm
 Friday 9.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Sat/Sun 10.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Public holidays - closed

Retrievals Every half hour during opening hours.

Telephone enquiries (08) 9427 3291 Fax enquiries (08) 9427 3256
Website www.slwa.wa.gov.au Email: battye.library@slwa.wa.gov.au

Specialist staff: Dr Sarah Brown (Battye Historian) (08) 9427 3165
Steve Howell (Senior Subject Specialist : Battye) (08) 9427 3476
Carmel McRobert (Subject Specialist : Battye) (08) 9427 3305

State Library shop: Mon/Fri 10.00 am-5.00 pm. Sat & Sun 12.00 noon-5.00 pm.

State Records Office

The SRO Search Room on the Ground Floor is open for enquiries and use of material on weekdays from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. A Researcher's Ticket is required.

Retrievals Previous day Available 9.30 am
 11.00 am Available 12.00 pm
 1.00 pm Available 2.00 pm

Requests for use of Government archives in the Battye Library must be lodged at the State Records Office by 1.00 pm if required the same evening and by 1.00 pm on Friday if required on the weekend; for continued use of the material in this way, the requests must be renewed on each occasion they are required. Requests must also be submitted for after hours use of State Records Office microfilm.

Telephone (08) 9427 3360, website www.sro.wa.gov.au, email: sro@sro.wa.gov.au

The Genealogy Centre

(First Floor State Library) for Family History research.

Opening hours- as per Battye Library opening hours.

Specialist staff for Family History: Tricia Fairweather ((08) 9427 3395), Leonie Hayes (08) 9427 3247. Email: family.history@slwa.wa.gov.au

Volunteers from the Western Australian Genealogical Society Inc. (WAGS) are available to assist researchers on Tues, Wed, & Thurs from 9.30 am to 1.00 pm.