

No. 176



March 2023

FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.)
NEWSLETTER

Our March 2023 meeting

Jill Yates

Quietly, Loudly... ..



Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 5.00pm for 5.30pm. See details on page 3.

Objectives

The objectives of the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) are to assist and promote the interests of the JS 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 Miss Margaret Medcalf OAM

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ISSN 1035-8692

Views expressed in this *Newsletter* are not necessarily those of the Friends of Battye Library Committee, the State Library of Western Australia, or the State Records Office.

Our March meeting.

Tuesday 14 March 2023
Great Southern Room, fourth floor
State Library of Western Australia
at 5pm for 5.30pm

Our speaker will be Jill Yates

Quietly, Loudly.....

Jill was part of the independent music and art scene in Australia. Her talk will expand the context of the late 1970s – early 1980s, in association with recent acquisitions by the State Library of Western Australia (2022) of posters, handbills and flyers that she designed, made and also collected.

After the meeting, members and guests are very welcome to join us for a meal at a nearby Perth restaurant. Our Treasurer, Nick Drew, will take bookings 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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Meeting dates for 2023

- 9 May** Roger Underwood: *Water and Fire*.
- 11 July** Trevor Cross: *Scrimshaw*.
- 12 September** (AGM) Kate Gregory: *Cracking O'Reilly's Code*.
- 28 November** (4th Tuesday) - End of year function - SLWA's map collection.



About our speaker - Jill Yates

Jill Yates was born in Kalgoorlie 66 years ago. The daughter of a gold-mining engineer and a piano playing homemaker predisposed her to appreciate invention, communication and artistry as foundations of directions taken.



Jill is a designer and applied artist. Her creative background includes exhibiting, co-evolved gallery spaces and curation, commissions and hands-on production. Aside from song writing and music-making, past activities significantly involved hand screen-printed fabrics, fashion production and large fabric installations including showing at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, at the National Gallery of Australia and the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney.

A decade of full-time academic teaching principally in design theory and contextual studies (to Masters' level) coalesced in writing courses, achieving two post-graduate degrees, publications of articles and garnering much appreciation from students.

Recent creative commissions have involved digital surface design iterations on glass, aluminium, wood and paper in the on-going appreciation of repeat patterns and also contemporary digital photographic manipulation.

An ecologically-sound creative outlook has lately featured sculpture made from re-purposed clean consumer packaging waste in an effort to engage and remind that artists should be accountable regarding the deterioration of the natural world's resources.

Jill Yates continues to write on design and its links with humanity, currently penning an autobiographic illustrated book featuring life stories via a template of dresses and dressing.

Jill's talk - Quietly, Loudly.....

Around 40 years ago I was part of the independent music and art scene in Australia. This talk will expand the context of the late 1970s – early 1980s, in association with recent acquisitions by the State Library of Western Australia of posters, handbills and flyers I designed, made and also collected.

In recreating this little groove in history I can tell you that I was there at the time: alive, in person, playing in a band or two, writing music, making art for handbills and posters, hand printing posters and fabrics, co-evolving artist-run gallery and performance spaces, exhibiting and intensively participating.

I was a member of the Teeny Weenys band and later temporarily The Triffids. Consider that from a production point of view then, the full gamut of life without computers, mobile phones and the internet meant that communicating actually had to rely on bits of paper. Distilling the times became graphic exercises in style and display, and the physical activities of making and distribution.

This talk will be about setting the scene of the cohort of who we were and what it was – in Perth then Sydney. I'll expand by including images and real objects reflecting the impetus and impulses, painting the picture of forging new paths.

Jill Yates BA(Des), PGradDip(Des), MA(Curtin)



President's Piece

Trove – A Sinking Ship

In this President's Piece I want to bring to your attention some very worrying news from the National Library of Australia (NLA) about the



future of Trove, the Library's incredible, and very well used, public digital archives,

At present, Trove has only about six months funding left, with the NLA's Director General recently revealing that if the Federal Government does not step in with a new funding package Trove will have to be shut down.

Trove, the free online searchable website used by thousands of researchers, academics and members of the public every day, receives more than 20 million hits each year. However, for the last six years it has limped along on a Federal Government 'drip-feed' of about \$5m per year. This present funding package is set to run out in July, unless, by some miracle, Trove will be thrown a last-minute lifeline in the May budget.

The problem is summed up in a letter from the President of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies to the Minister for the Arts, Tony Burke, part of which I quote here:

Trove both digitises newspapers and other material itself and harvests digitised content from the collections of other organisations, making them globally available. Together, this work has created arguably the most significant collection of Australian stories and cultural heritage. What has been achieved already is invaluable, but this work needs adequate and ongoing funding to continue. As part of this, it is essential to enable NLA to maintain already digitised material by ensuring that it is in possession of changing software and hardware needs. It would be tragic if what has been accomplished were to be lost because of advances in technology.

The 'efficiency dividend' cut-backs of recent years imposed on the NLA (and other national cultural institutions) have had a drastic effect on many of its services, but will have a particular impact on researchers who do not live in Canberra, which includes the vast majority of Australians. The possibility of a decline in the services provided by NLA and Trove is very disturbing for the hundreds of community societies that have been digitising their collections in preparation for harvesting, and for the wider research community.

We urge you as the responsible Minister to take action to ensure that the invaluable work of NLA and Trove are protected and supported.

Please all consider writing a letter to Mr Burke. I for one would be lost without access to Trove!

Richard Offen

Farewell ... and hello!

At the AGM held in September last year, I stepped down after sixteen years from the role of editor of our *Newsletter*. It has been a privilege to work with so many talented writers and historians over the years who contribute so generously to the Friends' little magazine. My gratitude to the members of the Committee, in particular Pamela and Nick, for their continued support and encouragement. My thanks also to the wonderful, hard-working staff of the State Library of WA and the State Records Office for sharing with readers the many and varied professional activities and initiatives which ensure the State's documentary heritage is collected, preserved, and made available to all of us.

I am delighted that Heather Campbell, who has been the Friends' very efficient secretary, has agreed to take on the editorship. She will bring her experience and skills as a writer and editor, her deep knowledge of WA history, her calm practicality, and her quirky sense of humour to the role.

This issue of the *Newsletter* is the first one that Heather has edited and I know members will agree that it is a bumper one!

Jennie Carter



Obituary

Dr Penelope Hetherington

Lecturer, historian and author, 1928-2022

Although Penelope (Pen) Hetherington was not a member of the Friends, she was a great exponent of WA history and an avid and enthusiastic user and supporter of the Battye Library. This following article is largely based on Patrick Cornish's obituary of Dr Hetherington which appeared in the *West Australian* on 26 January 2023. I am grateful to Patrick for allowing me to use, and to quote from, his work.

In his obituary for Pen, Patrick Cornish described her thus:

As historian and author, Dr Penelope Hetherington saw the past as wonderful source material. As academic, she was an explorer.



Photograph: Hetherington family.

Much of her early academic career was spent in Kenya and her enthusiasm for the African continent culminated in her master's thesis, subsequently accepted for book publication, *British Paternalism and Africa, 1920-40*. This enthusiasm however was not limited to academic pursuits. Historian and later Professor of History at UWA, Norman Etherington, recalls his first sight of Pen as 'this highly original woman in the long elegant semi-African dress'; many of us will remember Pen dressed in floor-length caftans.

Born in Rose Park, SA, she was the second of seven children. After attending two one-room schools in regional South Australia Penelope continued her primary and secondary education in Whyalla and Adelaide and in 1947:

[She] left home to attend Adelaide Teachers College and the city's university, graduating four years later with a degree and a teaching diploma.

In that same year, 1951, she married Bob Hetherington, whose commitment to political life covered fields both academic and parliamentary. After 10 years as tutor at the University of Adelaide, he was appointed lecturer at UWA in 1967. In 1977 he was elected to WA's Legislative Council and went on to hold several senior positions in State politics.

The Hetherington family came to Perth in 1967, and in 1970 Pen was appointed senior tutor in UWA's history department, initially teaching European history and then focussing on African history from 1981. A biography of her parents, *The Making of a Labor Politician: Family and Politics in South Australia, 1900-1980 : A Biography* (1982) won the 1983 Adelaide Festival of Arts Biennial Prize for history or biography. Other publications, after turning Australian women's history, included:

Childhood and Society in Western Australia (1988) and *Sexuality and Gender in History: Selected Essays* (1993). Retiring as a senior lecturer in 1993, she turned to what she considered neglected areas of WA history, publishing *Settlers, Servants and Slaves: Aboriginal and European*

Children in Nineteenth-century Western Australia (2002); *Paupers, Poor Relief and Poor Houses in Western Australia, 1829 to 1910* (2009), which won a 2009 Western Australian Premier's Book Award; and *The Marriage Knot: Marriage and Divorce in Colonial Western Australia* (2013). UWA awarded her a doctor of literature in 2004.

Writing with distinction was but one facet of Pen's personality, she is, 'remembered too for kindness and encouragement for students following in her wake'.

Penelope is survived by her daughter, Naomi, sons Paul and Mark, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Bob Hetherington died in 2015.

Among poetic tributes to Penelope by Paul Hetherington, who has just retired as professor of poetry at the University of Canberra, is this:

Formidable to others, within herself
murmurs a constant questioning of love,
and self-inquisition which disputes
all simple truths, easy self-possession.

Those wishing to learn more about this remarkable woman may like to read her autobiography, *Twentieth Century Woman: An Autobiography*, Access Press, Bassendean, WA, 2007.

Heather Campbell



Members' News

The 2022 Margaret Medcalf Award

As many of you know, this annual award honours our Patron Ms Margaret Medcalf OAM, the second State Archivist of WA for her valuable contribution to archives in Western Australia.

Works nominated for the Award must demonstrate use of archival sources and substantial use of State Archives. They may be fiction or non-fiction, comprise any format and may be published or unpublished, but must have been completed or published during the previous calendar year.

At a ceremony on 18 November 2022, attended by past winners of the Award and shortlisted nominees, the Hon David Templeman MLA,

Minister for Culture and the Arts announced the winners of Award for that year.

Among those shortlisted (pictured below) was our very own Pamela Statham Drew. Congratulations Pamela!



Left to right: Anne Jefferys, David Price, Leigh Straw, Emily Lanman, Pamela Statham-Drew, Margaret Medcalf OAM, Hon David Templeman MLA, Minister for Culture and the Arts, Deon White, Carolyn Wadley Dowley, Sue Hobson.

The joint winners of the 2022 Margaret Medcalf Award were:

Ms Emily Lanman, a PhD candidate in History at the University of Notre Dame, received the Award jointly, for her work on *Prisoners, Power and Panopticon: Investigating Fremantle Gaol, 1831-1841*.

Dr Leigh Straw, an Associate Professor in History at the University of Notre Dame and author of several true crime biographies and Australian history publications was also a joint winner of the Margaret Medcalf Award in 2018 and was a joint winner on this occasion for her work *The Petticoat Parade: Madam Monnier and the Roe Street Brothels* from Fremantle Press.

Heather Campbell

Australia Day honour for one of our members

It is pleasing to announce that **Geraldine Byrne** received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) at the Australia Day Awards. Congratulations to

Geraldine and it is heartening to see that research and writing Western Australian history is prized by the WA community. Geraldine has written several history books including *Built on a Hilltop: a History of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Western Australia, 1902-2002*, *Sisters of the Good Shepherd, 2002* and *The Campus that Never Stood Still: the Centenary of Edith Cowan University 1902-2002*, Edith Cowan University Churchlands, 2001 (Co-author with Professor Geoffrey Bolton).

Geraldine has had a long association with the Battye Library and the New Norcia Archives as a researcher for the Photographic Collection as well as being a member of New Norcia's Archives, Research and Publications Committee.

Jennie Carter

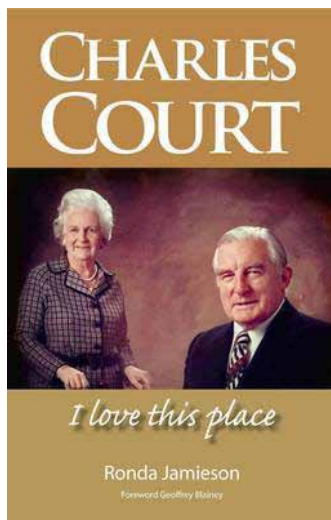


Our Gems of Time (a retrospective)

Sir Charles Court AK KCMG OBE

[Sir Charles was presented with the award in 2003. Unfortunately, citations for some of our earlier Gems of Time have not survived. The following tribute has been written with information provided by Ronda Jamieson's comprehensive biography Charles Court: I love this place which was published in 2006.]

In 1912 Charles Court's parents migrated to Western Australia with their infant son who had been born on 29 September 1911. He attended Leederville Primary School and Perth Boys School. His parents were members of the Salvation Army and Charles became a champion cornet player. He studied accountancy at night school and eventually formed his own business in 1933. When WWII broke out he enlisted and served with distinction. For his work during the Bougainville Campaign, Court was promoted to the rank of Acting Lieutenant Colonel and later awarded an OBE. After



returning home, he joined the Liberal Party in 1946 and represented the electorate of Nedlands from 1953 to his retirement in 1982.

As Minister for Industrial Development, he championed the development of WA's iron ore industry. He became the 21st Premier of WA in 1974 and was known for his strong stance in favour of Western Australia's development. This, at times, led to conflict with environmentalists as well as Aboriginal groups opposed to mining on their land.

Sir Charles Court was knighted in 1979. As Premier he fostered WA art and culture and under his leadership the State celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1979, the opening of the WA Art Gallery, the establishment of Murdoch University, the restoration of His Majesty's Theatre, and other notable initiatives.

Sir Charles died on 22 December 2007 at the age of 96. The personal records he and his family donated to the Batty Library and the hours of interview recorded with him by Ronda Jamieson and lodged in the oral history collection, form a significant archive, not only of an important politician, but also of the economic and cultural life of Western Australia.

The Friends of Batty Library showed its appreciation of the role played by Sir Charles by awarding him our society's third Gem of Time in a record that will last to acknowledge the contribution of outstanding men and women to Western Australian history.

Jennie Carter



Voices That Should Be Heard

[This article is the 22nd in Ronda Jamieson's popular series based on the oral history collections of the Batty Library.]

Mervyn Limon (1910-1994) OH514

Mervyn Limon was born in Melbourne in 1910, the son of Henry James and Elizabeth Limon from China. After completing his Leaving Certificate, he found it hard to find work with the Great Depression looming and, as he put it: 'people of our race were not quite first-class citizens'. He eventually worked as a clerk with an agent who sold fruit on commission and later joined the motor trade when he was employed by the agents

for Cadillac and La Salle cars 'which in those days were the cream of the cars, immediately below Rolls Royce'. He worked for the firm for five years and was then invited to go to Geraldton in 1932 by his uncle, Sydney Fong, who visited Melbourne on his way back from a holiday in the Far East. Sydney Fong had a retail grocery shop and when he found out his nephew was concerned about his future with fewer cars being sold, he invited him to visit Geraldton to work in the Fong store.

Mervyn stayed with the Fong family and worked in the shop for eight years before enlisting in the Royal Australian Air Force in 1940. He 'fell in love with the town' and found it easy to make friends. His main job was to do maintenance and repairs on the motor vehicles used for home deliveries, some of which he described as being 'more ancient than modern' needing 'a fair bit of coaxing to keep them running'.



Geraldton Guardian 19 June 1924 p.3.

The business sold wholesale and retail groceries, greengroceries, hardware, and household items and goods carried especially for farmers and local fishermen. Sydney Fong acted as agent for some of the fish supplied to the Fremantle Markets and also developed a home delivery service. He held a wines and spirits licence.

Mervyn Limon described the processes involved in handling and packaging various stock. He talked of the credit extended to farmers, in particular during the Depression, and spoke of the Italian community who formed a large part of the fishing industry. In discussing race relations in Geraldton, he described how the Chinese and Aboriginals lived on the town's outskirts.

There was a marvellous description of the lack of packaging at the time and the limitations caused by customers having little money. For example, a customer would ask for 'three pence' worth of pepper which sold for 'one and ninepence a pound'. The calculation would be that was one-seventh of a pound. Items which sold regularly, such as sugar, were weighed and put aside in various lots. A weights inspector called regularly to check if staff were weighing things correctly and allowing for the weight of the bags being used to ensure customers got the full worth.

The bacon they sold came from the Eastern States, and Mervyn recalled having to learn how to 'bone a side of bacon' to prepare it for slicing.

Then there was being able to 'open a ball or a wheel of cheese' so it could be cut to weigh exactly what the customer asked for. If it was slightly over, the customer 'would scowl if you cut a little off'.

When it came to eggs, there was no Egg Board to control prices, so farmers were paid whatever they wanted. At 'different times of the year there'd be a glut of eggs' and prices would drop', and they could be expensive when the quantity was less. Their size also varied and they were packed in chaff.

For a husband and wife and two children, a grocery bill could be somewhere between twenty-five and thirty shillings a week or the equivalent of \$21 to \$30 today. All of the items were bagged.

Items packed in Melbourne would come by ship and go into store in Fremantle and be transhipped to Geraldton on coastal steamers. When it was known a ship would not arrive in time, rail was used.

Sometimes when a ship came in, staff would want large quantities of food – 'two tons of potatoes, three quarters of a ton of onions, and about eight sides of bacon ... and you're running a store where you only sell eight sides of bacon a week.' When suppliers were rung to see if there could be an urgent delivery of the requested items, they often managed to do so. 'The difference between the railway and the shipping was only a matter of a few shillings a ton.' Profit was about ten per cent on some items with slow-moving items being 15 per cent.

Included in the store's stock were items for farmers such as sheep dip, blow fly oil and kerosene. For boat crews, linseed oil was in demand, plus lead paints, turpentine and kerosene. Tomato gardeners were another group that needed special things bought for them. Prices were fairly stable in those days, and there were not the sudden price rises that seem to occur now. Crockery, pots and pans could stay on the shelves for long periods. Petrol was sold by the drum, as was kerosene. Hardware sold well as did fishing hooks and lines, which came from the UK. Then there was always the standard items such as jams and sauces, most of which came from the Eastern States because there were no local factories. Part of the skill in making orders for things from overseas and the Eastern States was to allow time for a shipment to arrive, which was not always according to a regular schedule.

In summer, orders had to be planned according to possible pests, such as weevils, and items that needed cooling had to be carefully chosen as

there was no air conditioning, and home refrigeration was rare. On farms at the time, there was no electricity, though some farmers had their own plant.

Wheat used to be stacked for export and, being in bags, often became a favourite source of food for mice. The stacks were along the railway line: 'and you'd see mice running along the railway line, going up and down, up and down, and they'd be everywhere ... I've seen them come in the front door of the shops'.

Mervyn recalled a time when a customer wanted kerosene, which Fong's did not have enough of at the time, so the customer went to another shop. The ship it was for was

way up the coast somewhere and they opened the new tin, put it in the heater and they had a terrible fire on the boat. They lost the boat, burnt to the water line. The trouble was the Italian word for kerosene is petrolio, and he asked for, "Two four gallore of petrolio, " ... He got, eight gallons of petrol.

Further recall was that a person who had come from another country in those days was a rarity and 'the language barrier was a great problem'. Another important recall was that Sydney Fong was a very kind and thoughtful man and when a customer was having problems over cash during the Depression, and they could not get a loan from the bank to buy food, Sydney Fong would not charge them for their food.

There were quite a lot of farmers that used to deal with Sydney Fong who wouldn't deal anywhere else ... because during those years he carried them with food when things were really bad ... I know of one chap who wanted a windmill fixed, and his own bank wouldn't give him the money. He told Sydney Fong about it and he said, "We'll fix the mill". I think at the time there was about forty-one pounds involved. So the mill would pump water and the stock survived. I know he lost a lot of money from farmers that went broke and walked off their land.

Round about once a year, Mr Fong looked through the books. I said, "Oh what are we going to do, we keep sending a bill out?" "Oh, write it off, bad debt." He was very, very human. He was in his own time a kind of a legend.

After his war service, Mervyn did not go back to Geraldton because his mother was not in good health.

I'd got a bit of an idea I'd like to go into the aircraft industry and there was no scope for it over here, and Melbourne was the headquarters then of Australian National Airways, and I went in there with my credentials and I got a job and stayed till I retired. I had twenty-nine years ... I think I made

the right decision. If I'd come back to Geraldton I wouldn't have had the same chance, so I've gained a vast storehouse of knowledge as regards the inside of aeroplanes. ... I've got a lot of reward out of it.

Ronda Jamieson



Treasures from Trove

[This is the tenth article in the series by Heather Campbell delving into the wonders of NLA's 'Trove' database of Western Australian newspapers

...and it may be one of the last, if funding is not forthcoming for Trove, so please write to Tony Burke, Minister for Arts and/or go online and sign the petition.]

Victoria Public Library - The Saga of the Stones

Albany Mail and King George's Sound Advertiser, 15 June 1887, p.3

Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee took place on 21 June 1887. In 1886, £5000 was allocated for the celebration of that event, and it was decided that £3000 of this would be used to establish a free public library to be named the Victoria Public Library in the Queen's honour. The proposed site was 'on that piece of ground where the Government Boys' School stands, in St Georges Terrace'. Building would take place after a proposed new and larger government boys' school had been erected at a different location.

Inquirer and Commercial News, 22 June 1887, p.5; and Daily News, 9 June 1887, p.3



Governor Broome laying the foundation stone of the Victoria Public Library St Georges Terrace 20 June 1887.

(Battye Library, SLWA 3542B/211)

On the actual day of the Jubilee, after a procession to the site, His Excellency Governor Broome laid a suitably inscribed foundation stone amongst much pomp and circumstance, smoothing the mortar with a solid silver bladed trowel with a handle of jamwood. The 'massive block of grey granite which was to form the foundation stone' had been presented to the Government by Messrs CE Millar, contractors for the Beverley-Albany Railway and 'the work of cutting and lettering ... carried on night and day, almost without intermission' until the day it was laid.

Daily News, 2 June 1887, p.3; Inquirer and Commercial News, 25 January 1888, p.5.

The boys' school was still operating on the site and not surprisingly some concern was expressed in the newspapers at this rather premature act, as 'no tenders had been invited for the putting in of foundations... [so] how on earth is the foundation stone ... to be laid on the date mentioned unless the substructure on which it must rest be previously put in?' Subsequently there was more punitive action when 'some malicious and blasphemously minded person ... disfigured the hoarding erected over the foundation stone ... by painting a couple of doggerel verses about Sir FN Broome' on it, along with 'the symbollic letters RIP'. His Excellency was not amused.

Inquirer and Commercial News, 10 August 1887, p. 2 and 9 November 1887, p.5

By August 1887, however, consideration was being given to leasing a premises to facilitate an early opening of the Victoria Public Library, rather than wait for a new building. The Western Australia Bank in St George's Terrace was rented for that purpose. By November tenders had been accepted to effect the necessary repairs to that building.

Daily News, 12 May 1888, p.3; West Australian, 18 August 1888, p.3; Daily News, 1 November 1888, p.3; Inquirer and Commercial News, 23 January 1889, p.3; Western Mail, 13 February 1904, p.24.

In May 1888, the Governor 'refused to assent to the Victoria Public Library Bill' and appointed a committee of management himself. This committee subsequently appointed Mr WC Townsend clerk to the library and books were ordered through the Crown Agents. However 'entirely owing to the usual dilatoriness of those officials' there was a 'protracted delay' with the library in the old WA Bank building finally opening in January 1889. WC Townsend left in March 1890 and was succeeded by Basil Porter,

who resigned in June 1894 'owing to a failure in sight'. This 'failure' unknowingly made way for a new era in libraries and librarianship in WA, when Mr JS Battye, who 'for some years had been one of the assistant librarians in the Melbourne Public Library', took the job.

West Australian, 28 January 1889, p.3; Western Mail, 13 February 1904, p.24.



Western Mail, 13 February 1904 p.24 captioned 'The Old Library in St George's Terrace, since destroyed.'

Plans to build on the Government Boys' School site in St George's Terrace fell by the wayside, as 'the work promised to be of such a costly nature the committee felt it would be inexpedient to ask the country at present to burden itself with such heavy expenditure'. By 1896 construction had begun on a site at the corner of James and Beaufort Streets. The Victoria Public Library moved

there in 1897, initially on the ground floor of the James Street wing of the building intended for the Museum, vacating it in December 1903, on moving to its own premises.

West Australian, 30 April 1904, p.6.

With the removal of the word 'Victoria' the library then became known as the Public Library of Western Australia, sharing the extensive building

Public Library of Western Australia (left, running north south along . Museum Street and the Western Australian Museum, James Street, Perth, ca.1905). Battye Library, SLWA 009129PD:



with the Museum and Art Gallery before moving to the new, purpose built Alexander Library Building in 1985.

Daily News, 9 June 1887, p.3.

The original 'massive block of grey granite' foundation stone, 'worked

on night and day' prior to being laid at the Government Boys' School site in 1887, was moved to the site on the corner of James and Beaufort Streets in 1897 and re-laid. A second stone was then laid above it commemorating the 1897 date, and an official ceremony was held on 22 June of that year.

Relaying the foundation stone for the Victoria Public Library in James Street, in preparation for the official ceremony, 22 June 1897.

(Battye Library, SLWA, 3881B/65.

Afterwards a stone commemorating the 1897 laying was placed above it.



Leaving no stone unturned.....

Heather Campbell



Recollections of an Accidental Librarian:

[Julie Martin was *one of two student librarians to begin their 'apprenticeships' at the State Library. Her initial placement was in the Battye Library and more than 40 years on, with several deviations along the way (including motherhood), she also ended her working life in the Battye Library. Julie, who was our Gem of Time in 2020 agreed to contribute a series of articles for our newsletters. Her first was about starting at the library and about Francis Aubie Sharr and she has followed it up with....]*

Part 2: *But, oh, those summer nights (with apologies to the Bee Gees)*

Monday 9 January 1961, 8.55 am. Surrounded by a motley group of patrons at the front entrance to the State Library, I waited for the doors to open. It was four weeks since I had replied to the ad in the 'Situations Vacant' column of the *West Australian*. What and where was this Battye Library to which I'd been assigned?

'Straight ahead, through two sets of glass doors, and you're there.' Tentatively, following the receptionist's directions, I made my way towards the back of the building.

Most of the walls of the brightly lit, compact room I entered were adorned with pale blonde-wood shelving, although on my right, metal cupboards faced freestanding shelving units. Between this shelving, situated on small tables, were bulky machines which I later discovered were microfilm readers. Large tables and upholstered chairs filled the remainder of the room, and facing these, a spacious desk fronting a bank of small metal drawers.

The shelving contained what I later learnt were the staple tools of British settlement and government in Western Australia – *Acts and Statutes, Votes and Proceedings, Government Gazettes, Statistical Registers, Blue Books, the WA Almanacks*, etc. The metal cupboards, rolls of microfilm. My apprehension grew - not a Mary Grant Bruce or Georgette Heyer in sight!



The Reading Room of the
JS Battye Library of West
Australian History and State
Archives, 1960.

(FA Sharr photographer)
(Battye Library, SLWA
231748PD)

Looking back, I now understand the reasoning behind my appointment as a student librarian. Mr Sharr had taken over the management of the old Public Library only four years earlier and the staff, apart from the Battye Library, comprised imported English librarians and a smattering of former Public Library staff. The workload in the Battye Library, a new division incorporating the former Archives Branch of the Library, was increasing dramatically. An assistant, a gofer, was needed to free up the specialist staff, Mollie Lukis, Margaret Medcalf, Peter Biskup and Jack Honniball, to deal with the flood of incoming private and public archives. My good fortune was to be chosen as that gofer.

If ever I thought that library work would be dull, repetitive, and sedentary, I was way off the mark. Lugging large volumes of broadsheet newspapers, enormous leather-bound registers, and heavy archive boxes rivalled any gym workout. Loading, untangling and sorting microfilms required dexterity, processing photographs and other non-book materials needed analytical thinking and dealing with patrons with unusual attitudes and viewpoints demanded tact. I also regularly visited other sections of the Library on Battye's behalf.

It was fascinating to watch David Browne-Cooper and John Mann in the Bindery go about their various tasks, which involved repairing and sewing folded sections of books, painting warm glue on the spines of large volumes, which were later encased in leather strips and tooled in gold leaf. At the same time, a Gestetner machine clattered away in the adjoining room, spitting out thousands of new catalogue cards. Over time, I became reasonably adept at using the photocopying equipment in the Reprographics area. It was a convoluted wet process and the smell of chemicals trailed behind me for several hours afterwards. Still, it was an opportunity to catch up with the Scots lass, Pat Graham, who spent her days filming Battye's newspaper collection. I hope she never discovered that, years later, it was necessary to destroy all her work when 'vinegar syndrome' ran rampant through the microfilm collection. I also relieved the receptionist at times and became proficient in using the cables and sockets on the switchboard, connecting staff or setting up outside lines.

The collections I dealt with were as diverse as the tasks I was given. The most interesting items lived behind the wooden screens of the Battye reading room - long, slim metal drawers containing old maps, shelf upon shelf of bound newspapers, some almost 100 years old, filing cabinets and boxes of old photographs, postcards, posters and images in formats I'd never seen before and what was then called the Printed Reference collection - ephemera, pamphlets and other non-book items. I had little to do with the Government and private archives but often stood at the door of the Archives room watching the senior staff as they examined large volumes of official handwritten instructions and letters or listed piles of old files, their contents held together by long metal split pins and pink tape.

The transition from carefree school days to new responsibilities was swift and, at times, overwhelming. Within three weeks of starting full-

time work, I was attending night classes at the Perth Technical College, preparing for the Preliminary Examination of the Library Association of Australia, and working at least one and sometimes two nights a week. The State Library remained open until 9.45pm on Mondays through Saturdays and from 2-5pm on Sundays, and shift work for the reference staff was compulsory. Understandably, as the newest and youngest member of Battye Library, I drew the short straw – the Friday night shift. As a result, my social life hit a new low every third week when it was my turn for the split weekend shift, which included Saturday night.

On the positive side, shift work attracted a higher salary. The avuncular Chief Admin Officer, Mike Andrews, was a welcome sight every second Thursday as he strolled through the Library handing out our pay envelopes, later replaced by cheques. The extra pay meant I could eventually afford to buy a Lambretta scooter, as walking through Northbridge in the evenings to catch my bus was not for the faint-hearted.

When I think back to my late shifts in Battye, the summer nights invariably come to mind. Patrons were few, the schools and universities were either closed for the year or just commencing their activities, and the evening dragged, especially after 7pm.

The two large sash windows on the western side of the room were always wide open, begging for a breeze but attracting only a chorus of cicadas, who lurked in the dried grass sprouting defiantly in sections of the adjoining staff carpark. Sometimes the insects were accompanied by jolly piano tunes and singing from the Baptist Church in nearby Museum Street. Whilst I enjoyed indexing articles in *West Australian* newspapers and serials or copying Miss Cammilleri's handwritten index entries to library standard 5" x 3" cards, the solitary hours and silence were unnerving.

By 9pm, despite an earlier tea break, I was flagging. It was then I retrieved Victor Courtney's book, *All I may tell*, from a nearby shelf. Courtney was a former editor of the *Sunday Times*, and the book was his take on the Perth of my parents' youth, stories of the clever, the curious and the devious.

Coincidentally, his daughter, Veecee and I attended the same school, she being several classes ahead of me, and I recall her father coming to the school to discuss essay techniques with the senior students. I found Courtney's observations of people and situations fascinating and partly

credit him, along with the non-book materials I worked with in Battye, for seeding my romance with Western Australian social history.

Promptly at 9.40, the 'upstairs staff' practically fell over themselves to ring the heavy metal bell hidden behind swinging glass doors in Hackett Hall, signalling that the Library was about to close. That same bell had been in use at least since 1927, when a regular user was sufficiently annoyed by it to complain to the *West Australian*.

For, once in every 24 hours, the serene silence of the place is broken. Just before 10 o'clock at night, when the hall is quietest and your thoughts are deepest on the book before you, comes the loud and brutal clanging of a bell. It is a hideous bell, it saws into your mental rest and goes through you like a jagged sword. The bell is, of course, the signal to go home, and the assistant will probably tell you that a loud signal is needed to wake up one or two sleeping old men. But there is a vast majority of readers who don't need waking up. Many visitors leave the library earlier in the evening merely to avoid that bell. Mr. Battye would be put to small cost, both of effort and money, were he to have installed some less nerve-jarring instrument—say a small electric bell, or buzzer—and visitors would repay him tenfold with their thanks.

West Australian

(L) 5 March
1927 p.13.

(R) 1 March
1927 p.15.

The Public Library Bell.

"A.A.F.S." has echoed the sentiments of many regular visitors to the Public Library when he refers to the closing time bell as hideous and as acting upon one like a jagged sword. Even if a person is expecting it it comes somewhat as a shock, and if he is unfortunate enough to be absorbed in a book it comes truly as a sword that goes right through him. It is a little thing, but it is a constant source of annoyance to all frequenters of the library. I hope that in the near future that bell will be doing service for some less peace-loving community, and some up-to-date method of signalling will be installed in its place.—Harmony, West Perth, March 9.

My final task for the evening was to ensure that the tables were cleared, all materials reshelved, the reference desk tidied, the windows locked. The staff and any 'slow to move' patrons made their way to the front door for a head count before exiting into the night. Astride my scooter (no compulsory helmet then), heading west along Wellington Street, the roads were quiet.

The Friday and Saturday night revellers and theatregoers were still occupied with their pursuits, the pub patrons were just making their way out the door, and I had a clear run home, enveloped in a rush of warm night air. Time to think back over the day and wind down before, on many occasions, returning to do it all again the following day. *Oh, those summer nights.*



Julie and her Lambretta.
(Photograph provided by
author - IFH657.4.)



Have you a story to tell?

[Starting as a cadet directly from high school, David Whiteford began work at the State Library in 1975 and with the Battye Library in January 1979. He now has more than forty years experience as a dedicated custodian of Western Australia's important published and archival heritage and his knowledge of the collections of both the JS Battye Library of West Australian History and the State Records Office is unparalleled. He was our Gem of Time for 2017. David still finds adding new records to the collection 'exciting' and shares with us a journey he had, when finding one particularly so.]

A Serendipitous Find

I commenced work as a library cadet in the Battye Library early in 1975 and, with a few gap years, have worked with the Battye Library and State Archives collections ever since. I am again working as an Archivist with SRO and after all this time I still am very excited when adding new records and information into our online catalogue for present and future researchers. As some readers will know, I have a strong interest in the railways of Western Australia, especially in small quirky operations such as at quarantine stations, jetties, salt lakes, lighthouses, clay pits, and many other industries. And after all this time I am, happily, still learning and making new discoveries.

Early in 2022 I was processing some civil court file records of the 1890s and came across an intriguing court case following an injury – involving a tramline - on a coal hulk in Albany. I'd never heard of the use of tramways on coal hulks and this serendipitous find led to further research (in my own time I will add!) and the submission of an article to the national *Light Railways* magazine that is due to be published this year.

The case that fired my research originated on 16 September 1898 when JHC Schumann was employed by the Adelaide Steamship Co. Ltd. as a whipman on board the company's coal hulk *Herschel* in Albany for the coaling of the steamer *Warrigal*. The hulk had an elevated tramway above the deck that ran from the mouth of the hold to the steamer being coaled. The whipman would signal the winchman to raise the basket out of the hold using a friction winch and, on the basket being raised to the level of the tramline, he would deliver it to the man in charge of the trolley who would convey the trolley to the steamer. Mr Schumann, 'at the head of the gang, was paid 1s 2d per ton for all coal worked into or from a

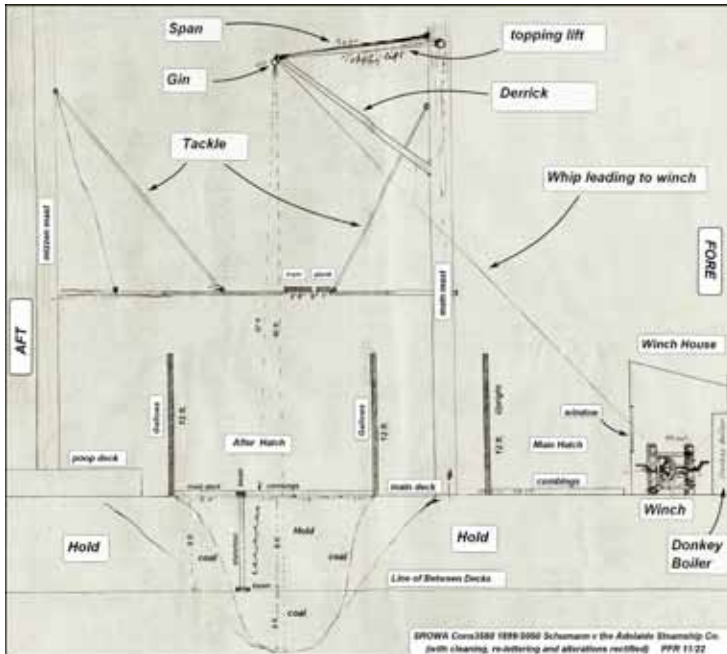
steamer. [He] was more a contractor to, than a servant of, the company, but the company had the first call on his services'.¹ He was standing on the tramlines when the winchman started to raise the basket without any signal having been given. The basket struck the tramline and he was thrown about 24 feet to the deck below suffering permanent disabling injuries.

A year later Mr Schumann was in the Supreme Court of Western Australia as plaintiff in a civil sitting on Tuesday 19 September 1899, claiming £1,000 damages, and such further or other relief as the nature of the case might require. Coaling was done day and night and Mr Schumann alleged that the company refused to provide sufficient means of light to enable his duties to be safely performed on that night but the company said that as whipman, it was his duty to see that sufficient light was provided, and if the light was insufficient it was solely owing to his negligence. According to the company the whipman was in charge of the men working on the hulk and supervised the work. Schumann countered by saying he had asked the hulk-keeper for more lighting but only one was provided which was shortly afterwards removed. When he said he could not work, the foreman told him to get on. Witness T Hart, trolleyman on the day, said that there were then no lights on the tramline. The winchman was M Martin who had been driving winches for about 10 years and he claimed he had heard the whistle that was the signal to raise the basket. He hauled slowly for two or three seconds then more quickly after hearing a second whistle. He said that light on the tramline would not have prevented the accident. After the accident he had been told he must have mistaken another noise for the whistles.

Another witness, FM Baxter, was acting foreman on the occasion of the accident, but no longer worked for the company. He, and also the winchman and hulk-keeper, were paid by salary, but the men engaged in coaling were paid in gangs at a rate per ton. He said that Schumann had requested more light but he had none to give. Baxter had previously, on two occasions, applied to the company's agents for more lights but did not get them.

The case was finalised on 21 September and the jury agreed that the company had not had sufficient lights on the hulk, and it was dangerous to work on the tramline without sufficient lights. However the jury found that the plaintiff was guilty of contributory negligence as he had continued working after the one additional light that was supplied was removed. They awarded damages of £600.

Further research revealed many serious accidents, often resulting in death, on coal hulks with the tramways and their operation often featured in the cases. I contacted a fellow historian in the East who also explores the more quirky side of railway operations and he had collected some references on coal hulks but had not written up his research. Phil



Sketch of the *Herschel* showing the method of raising bags of coal from the hold with the winch and whip. The tramline is shown in the centre of the image.²

(SROWA Cons 3580 1899/S050.)

Rickard generously shared his references thus broadening my research, and he also located some fascinating photographs of coaling operations including some detailed images of the tramways, although these were largely in South Australia. Our combined research showed that the use of tramways on coal hulks was actually very common and we had examples of their use, and of subsequent accidents, in Fremantle, Albany and Geraldton in WA, and Geelong and Melbourne in Victoria that were included in my article.

On 19 September 1905 a man named Charles Holme slipped from the tramline on board the SS *Dilkera* and fell onto the coal hulk below. Fears of major injuries were allayed. Just over a year later, on 27 December 1906, a tramline collapse caused serious injury to Albert Edward Smith. He'd been running the trolleys along the line from a hulk to the SS

SS *Moira* with coal hulk alongside, Fremantle c1905. This enlargement of a portion of the photograph shows the photographer captured the moment coal was being trammed across the hulk. The elevated nature of the tram line is well illustrated.

(Battye Library, SLWA
009674PD)



Cockburn. In May 1907 the Adelaide Steamship Company settled with Smith for £220.³

Lumper Charles Fredericksten fell from the tram and into the Swan River between a hulk and the SS *Clan McArthur* on 4 October 1914 and received serious injuries.⁴

Perhaps surprisingly, these operations continued well into the 20th century but in the 1940s the workers had finally had enough.

The use of tramways on hulks in WA came to a head in April 1946 when the Fremantle Waterside Employment Committee (FWEC) of the Stevedoring Industry Commission received complaints from Fremantle lumpers. There had been complaint about the slowness of coal bunkering at the port. Lumpers had refused to work the basket and tram method since 5 April and coaling was reported to be taking longer resulting in the delayed departure of a number of ships. Mr WD Ivey, Chairman of the FWEC, said that:

[T]he normal method of bunkering was by the discharge of coal from hulks by the basket and tram method. This had operated at Fremantle for many years. Under this system coal was hoisted in quarter-ton baskets from the hulks, placed on tramways, and pushed across to the bunker hatch of the ship. The system had been objected to by the lumpers, who had worked it under protest for about 12 months. Last December (1945), he said, the lumpers gave notice that they expected a changed method of bunkering, and stated that after three months they would not make themselves available for work by the basket and tram method.⁵

The FWEC inspected a bunkering job in February and opined that the tram method was worthy of alteration and improvement. A meeting of bodies concerned had been held but no alternative had been decided on.

Employers claimed that the tram method was in use at many Australian ports 'and that the few accidents at Fremantle supported their contention that the system was not dangerous'. Lumpers claimed that the job of the whipman was dangerous. He stood on a plank on the tramline and guided the basket to its position on the line with the friction winchman unduly responsible for the safety of the whipman. Since 5 April they had refused to operate the positions of whipman and winchman.

Needless to say the companies were ongoing in advocating strongly to retain the system and not be put to expensive substitutes while the workers were ongoing in their opposition, however I have been unable to trace any conclusion to this dispute in official or secondary references. The Perth *Workers Star* newspaper of 25 October 1946, in an article headed, 'Safety measures urgent at port', said that, 'In recent years there have been quite a number of improvements in working conditions (no trams and trolleys for bunkering, short shifts for obnoxious shift jobs, etc.), but there is still room for much to be done'. It seems that the April 1946 ban was either still in force or that the companies had agreed to permanently retire the tram and trolley system.

The use of coal hulks at Fremantle ended in 1950 and the last one, the former windjammer *Bankfields* was attacked by the RAAF 27 miles from Fremantle on 7 June. 'As the *Bankfields* was subsiding into the water over the continental shelf, the Mustangs turned from their rocket attack and raced in with machine guns blazing in a strafing attack.'¹⁶ *Bankfields* had been sold to a metal dealer who had stripped her of anything of value and this may have included the tramway. She had been the only hulk at Fremantle since April 1948 when the *Concordia* was towed off Rottneest Island and sunk.

So my serendipitous discovery led to fascinating research and an article submitted for publication. Although I'm working towards retirement, I'm hoping that other little discoveries are still to be made.

David Whiteford

Endnotes

1. *West Australian*, 21 September 1899 p.7.
2. SROWA Cons3580 1899/S050 Schumann v the Adelaide Steamship Co.
3. *Daily News* 19 September 1905 p.3.
4. *West Australian* 5 October 1914 p.6.
5. *West Australian* 13 April 1946 p.12.
6. *Daily News* 7 June 1950 p.1.



[Jennie is the Friends' Vice President. She has researched and written on WA history for many years. In 2022 she was commissioned by the new owners to delve into the history of the Claremont Hotel and help locate images to be featured in the hotel's renovation. Here is one story gleaned from her research.]

Nell and her hotel

The Claremont Hotel, which was closed for several months while renovations were carried out, reopened in January this year. In researching some of the history of this grand old building at 1 Bay View Terrace, which had been built in 1902, I came across the story of a young woman who was the hotel's licensee and manager for several years.¹



Bay View Terrace, Claremont. C1905.

(Royal Western Australian Historical Society P1999.1482 - photographer unknown)

Seventeen year old Nell Gwynne (yes, that really was her name²) Decis married James Illingworth, a 25 year old widower, in 1905. Their son was born in 1907. In 1913 Nell was recorded as the housekeeper for the Hotel Claremont, which at that time was run by Karl Fink. James took over the Hotel from Karl Fink on 24 December 1914 and was listed as the licensee until 5 February 1916. The hotel manager for both Karl Fink and James Illingworth was Alexander (Alex) Belperroud.

Nell took sole charge after James enlisted in the AIF on 22 March 1916. James was discharged as medically unfit less than four months later

while still at training camp. Not to be deterred, after recovering, he reenlisted on 17 May 1917 and was transferred to the 44th Battalion - known colloquially as 'Claremont's Own'.³

James Illingworth saw action in France but became seriously ill and was transferred to a military hospital in England. At the war's end he was repatriated to Australia. He remained in hospital almost until his death aged 38 on 4 June 1919 at Claremont.⁴

Nell Gwynne Illingworth would have been only around 28 years old when she became the single licensee on 28 April 1916. She successfully ran the Claremont Hotel on her own for five and a half years - all while presumably caring for her son and, for almost a year, her convalescent and ailing husband. It is possible she may have been assisted in the work of running the hotel by Alex Belperroud, who was then the hotel's head barman, but no other manager is listed.

During Nell's proprietorship of the hotel, it always passed inspection as a popular, well-run establishment which adhered to the rules. According to the Licensing Court records, some Claremont licensees, both before and after Nell's reign, were not so scrupulous.

On 15 August 1921 Nell signed over her interest in the hotel and relinquished her licence to William Henry Dawson and moved to South Fremantle. Five years later, in 1926, Nell, who was then 38 years old, married 45 year old Alexander Belperroud and the couple made their home at East Perth.

Nell Gwynne Belperroud died at East Perth at the age of 50 on 7 June 1938 and is buried at Karrakatta.

Jennie Carter

Endnotes

1. SROWA Licensing Court records.
2. Her namesake, Nell Gwynne, was of course, famous as a mistress of King Charles II who reportedly said on his deathbed in 1685 "let not poor Nellie starve". His brother and successor King James II apparently fulfilled his wishes and granted Nell Gwynne a lifetime pension.
3. Information from Claremont Museum.
4. J Illingworth WWI AIF Service Record no. 3781 (NAA).



News from the State Library

Family History talks and tours

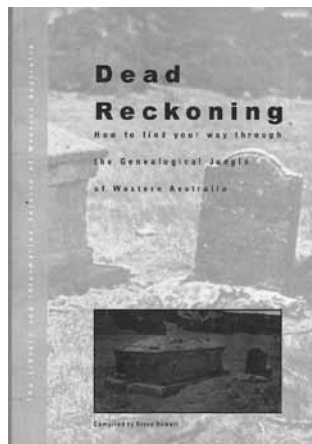
Throughout 2022 our monthly family history talks continued to draw a small, but dedicated group of people who are keen to 'get started' in family history. In 2023 the talks 'n' tours will be held at 11am on the last Wednesday of every month, January to November. Attendees find out about all the family history resources at the Library, receive family history tips and tricks, and enjoy a short tour of the JS Battye Library of West Australian History, often leaving the talk 'n' tour in a contented info-daze.

Private Archives assessment & digitisation preparation – Rare Materials Room

The private archival collections are both remarkable and varied. The collections range from solid silver coins recovered from the wreck of *De Vergulde Draeke* (*Gilt Dragon*, 1656), original letters and diaries of figures from WA history such as George Fletcher Moore, to published plans for Australia's invasion by the Japanese Imperial Force (1942), and many more. To date, 87 out of 163 Rare Materials Room private archival collections have been assessed in preparation for digitisation. The archival assessment process includes a physical viewing of every individual item, recording the number of pages to be digitised, and developing a meaningful caption to accompany each item. The adage 'a stitch in time saves nine', comes to the fore in this process as this pre-digitisation assessment work will expedite the future, technical digitisation processes for the archival collections.

Review and update of *Dead Reckoning*

Originally developed by the Library's WA history Specialist Steve Howell, and published by the Library, *Dead Reckoning* remains relevant to all family history researchers endeavouring to understand and access West Australian records. The online version of *Dead Reckoning* became popular with Library clients and reference staff (including this author) but over time, many of its links to various internal (SLWA & SRO) and third-party web resources broke. Last year saw the happy completion of a weblink review process whereby every single weblink within the



publication was checked and—where necessary—repaired or removed. After much ado, all the web links were checked and updated. Future work on this important resource will include addition of information on new collection items relevant to the topics within the book, and the addition of more online photographs.

Cartographic Notes

The Library is pleased to report 65 Cartographic Notes (CNs) have been updated, converted to PDF, and added to their respective online catalogue records. Providing online access to the updated CNs provides access to these important map and plan finding aids for clients who cannot physically visit the State Library building. A few CNs remain to be digitised and that will occur once a review of their content can be completed. The physical [hardcopy] CNs remain available on the 3rd floor of the Library.

ABC Radio—History Repeated—interviews



Harry Butler.
(Battye Library, SLWA
b5093763_7_2

The popular Dr Kate series continues every Friday at 2:00pm on ABC Radio Perth (720). Interview topics through 2022 were far ranging, including: ‘The Madam – Joan a sex worker in the 1940s’, ‘the story of Harry Butler’, ‘John Boyle O’Reilly’s poems’, ‘Connections Nightclub posters’. There were many more through 2022, and they are all available for you to hear on the Library’s SLWA on ABC webpage. The 2023 line up of topics are fascinating and will include...

...well, that would be giving it away now, wouldn’t it?

Tune in to ABC Radio Perth (720) at 2pm every Friday to hear ‘Dr Kate & Friends’ in interview, discussing various topics from WA history.

Nocturnal

The Library continues to curate exhibitions for children and families in The Story Place Gallery. The latest exhibition in this space is Nocturnal. Featuring original picture book art from the Peter Williams Collection, Nocturnal will take you on a sensory journey into the night; exploring

light and dark, shadow, movement and reflection. Nocturnal showcases many of the original donated pieces to the State Library by Dr Peter Williams, including pieces by: Steven Woolman, Jane Tanner, Narelle Oliver, Garry Fleming and Peter Guildthorpe. This exhibition is open until 27 March, on the Mezzanine Level.

Alice in Wonderland at the State Library

To celebrate the WA Museum's Wonderland exhibition from ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image) in Melbourne, the Library created a small exhibit of *Alice in Wonderland* editions from our Research Collection of Children's Literature. The Library has over 40 different editions of Lewis Carroll's works, including the Latin version, *Alicia In Terra Mirabili* and the French version added to the collection by JS Batty, *Aliciae per Speculum transitus*. *Alice in Wonderland* has been noted as one of the best loved and perhaps most influential works of children literature in the English canon.

New Acquisitions

Music posters in Western Australia, 1960s – 2010s

The Library is in the process of acquiring 114 music event posters highlighting live music in Western Australia from the 1960s to the 2010s. The posters are being purchased from James Anfuso who is a collector and valuer of Australian rock music posters and ephemera. This collection of first-run copies encompasses some of Western Australia's best-known rock and pop performers, including several posters featuring Bon Scott's early musical output, posters documenting iconic festival events such as the WA Folk Festival and those held at the Parkerville Amphitheatre, and several posters from the personal collection of renowned West Australian musician Dom Mariani documenting his various bands including The Stems, Someloves, DM3, and Majestic Kelp.



The Stems 1984.
(Dom Mariani Collection. Batty Library,
SLWA b6678629_29)

WO James Anderson’s WWII diary

A diary kept by VX15748 Warrant Officer James Anderson for the entire year of 1943, on active service in New Guinea. James Anderson was part of the 16th Small Ship Company, Royal Australian Engineers and was involved in supply operations for the construction of the Bulldog Track. He arrived in Port Moresby on AM5 *Gloria* on 10 January 1943. He records various work and leisure activities.

Eckbrecht map of the world “*Noua orbis terrarum delineatio singulari ratione accommodata meridiano tabb, rudolphi astronomicarum*”

This map was designed and engraved by the Nuremberg cartographer Philip Eckbrecht at the request of his friend Johann Kepler and shows early cartographic references to Australia. The dating of the map as circa 1658 is derived from the dedication to Leopold I, who became Holy Roman Emperor in that year. It is a significant chart as the incomplete reference to Australia illustrates the partial—but growing—understanding about world including Australia from the view of European exploration.



Centenary catalogue of farms and stations

The Joseph Charles (Firm) Centenary catalogue of farms and stations for sale in Western Australia provides an extensive list of properties sold between January 1921 and April 1929, with locality, acreage, name of the vendor and name of the purchaser.

Interviews for FIFO Oral History project

1. Bronwyn Barnes has forged a successful career to become one of a handful of women leaders in the WA mining sector operating at

both a director, and executive level. She was recognised for her achievements when she won the Outstanding Woman in Resources Award from the Chamber of Minerals & Energy WA and the Exceptional Woman in Australian Resources Award 2015.

2. Amanda Healy is from the Wonnarua Nation and has more than 35 years' experience in the male-dominated mining industry, both in Australia, and internationally. In 2004 she founded her own Engineering business in the Pilbara, and in 2014 developed Kirrikin, a social enterprise sharing profits with the Aboriginal artists.

Dominic Louis Serventy papers

Dominic Serventy was an ornithologist, born in Kalgoorlie in 1904. He was educated there and at the University of Western Australia, where he obtained a degree majoring in Zoology. He was awarded a scholarship to Cambridge University, where he obtained his doctorate. Returning to Australia, he worked with the CSIRO in Melbourne, specialising in ornithology, and later continued this work in Perth. He achieved world-wide fame as Australia's best-known ornithologist, and his *Handbook of Australian sea birds*, written with John Warham and his brother Vincent, is the definitive work on the subject. The collection includes awards, manuscripts, notebooks, diaries, photographs, and technical notes, mostly to do with natural history and conservation issues. Significant parts of the collection are his correspondence (1926-1988) and reports by various authors (1847-1986). Also includes self-publication newsletters of *The golden sun* and publication of *Biology of desert birds* in 1970.

Recently Digitised materials

Digitisation of at-risk audio-visual materials

Funding from the Office of Digital Government has enabled the Library to commence large-scale digitisation of its at-risk audio-visual collection, depicting people, places, and events unique to Western Australia and spanning more than 100 years. The collection includes amateur recordings, government and private sector productions, films, music, interviews, and other audio-visual content, largely inaccessible to the public due to technical obsolescence or its fragile physical state. Digitisation will capture and preserve the content held on now obsolete and fragile analogue formats. At the end of the 2023 financial year, approximately one quarter (8,000 items) of the Library's audio-visual collection will be digitised. As part of the project, the Library will

investigate open access options to share the newly digitised material with the public where possible.

Other exciting projects underway include the conservation and digitisation of the 40 and 80 chain cadastral map series – more than 1300 maps in total! There is still a way to go before this in-demand collection is accessible via the catalogue but staff across Collection Services are working busily to finalise this work.



State Records Office - News from the Archives

Geoffrey Bolton Lecture 2022: *Looking Upriver // Looking Downriver*

Dr Julian Bolleter explores the evolving edges of urban river-space. He looks at how they are changing, both with the ebb and flow of what is built along them, responding to the needs and aspirations of Perth dwellers, and so too, how the tides are literally turning.

Podcast available via the SRO website at:

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/announcements/geoffrey-bolton-lecture-2022-looking-upriver-looking-downriver>

New to the SRO State Archives Collection Catalogue

For much of the 18th century, the Colonial Secretary's (CS) Office undertook much of the public service duties of the colony, and its records were among the earliest collected by Dr JS Battye in the early 20th Century for what is now the State Archives collection of Western Australia. It is one of the most important record collections held in the State Records Office of WA.

Between the bound volumes of CS correspondence (1829 to 1878 – our consignment 36) and 1883's new year/file number system, the CS office had a running number subject file sequence starting from file 1 titled 'Application for Employment in the Public Service of the Colony' that contains application letters for 1878. SRO has now commenced listing these records and as this text is prepared 1,456 files are now in the online catalogue, up to file number 1399 (there are many numbers with an additional 'a' or 'b' file). The inputting of these files, into the catalogue

is ongoing, with number 1612 to be the last. The files have long been available on microfilm on the third floor of the State Library of Western Australia and can be found at Consignment 527. Work on the listing was assisted by CS correspondence registers and we are including files listed in the registers that do not appear to have survived into the State Archives. Unfortunately, this means that some possibly scintillating files are noted in the catalogue but won't be available, such as file 0315 Joseph Sheen – for relief and 0086 Alfred Pead – condemned meat (missing – not received) has been added to each relevant file title.

Here is a selection of files we do have to give you an idea of the range of subjects:

- File 0078 – J Bassett – admission to Mount Eliza Poor House.
- File 0133 - Arnott Francisco - complaint against Police Constable Andrews of Fremantle Police Station.
- File 0119 - Campbell Taylor - sending Native named 'Westgool' for shooting Native woman at Israelite Bay to Albany.
- File 0018 - Moses Pearson - remission of sentence (Albany Prison).
- File 0127 - Temperance Hall & Bushman's Home Northam - Grants for.
- File 0244 - Hannah Scotthorn - petition that Roman Catholic be prevented from building a church in front of her house.
- File 0226 - William Mills - letter requesting to know whether he is entitled to a Grant of land for marrying a half caste (Helen Hyde).
- File 0218 - Rechabites – 'Hope' Tent number 1.
- File 1216 – North West explorations by Alexander Forrest which includes a claim against estate of the late 'Tommy Pierre' by his widow 'Sally'.

Search S5023 in the SRO catalogue to find all files in series 5023 that have been added to date.

More that is new in the SRO catalogue:

Series 5027 (S5027 for catalogue search) is a series of photographs of royal visits to the Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, and includes a 1954 visit by the late Queen Elizabeth II, and a 1994 visit by Prince Charles, now King Charles III. We don't yet have digital copies of these photographs. Similarly, series 5026 is of official correspondence and programs for these visits, while consignment 7689 item 2 (series 4761)



Princess Margaret meets WA politicians
1972.

is a visitors' book that includes visits by Prince Charles, Princess Anne and Michael Jackson.

Series 5024 has been created for maps and plans created by the Convict Department and consignment 1229 has been added to the catalogue – three plans of Toodyay convict infrastructure and some other town lots in the 1850s.

One of the earliest collections accessioned by Mollie Lukis was accession (now consignment) 52, a collection of letters and notices written and issued by Governor James Stirling and Colonial

Secretary Peter Brown [later Broun] in 1829. These 86 sets of documents are now individually listed in the catalogue – and one was used for a reference enquiry within two hours of the entry going live! Some of the documents were written on board the *Parmelia* while Stirling was enroute to the new colony. There are letters about government stores, staff appointments, land regulations, the official list of *Parmelia* passengers, and even permission for Mr Shilton to sleep in the government store. Digital masters have been made of these documents. Search Cons52 to find details of the collection.

Behind the scenes

The State Records has recently completed processing records from Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, received prior to the hospital closing. As well as hospital registers (which are restricted access archives), these records also include photographic prints from different Royal Tours, a dignitaries Visitors' Book (including the signatures of Princes Charles, the America's Cup Party in 1986 and even Michael Jackson who visited the hospital in 1985 when in Perth) and samples of Chateau Princess Margaret wine labels which were produced following the visit of Princess Margaret.

The State Records has also started initial processing of:

- Large sets of unprocessed government photographs, including those

of the WA Government Railways, Tourism Commission, WA Museum and other agencies.

- Significant collections of records from the Perth Market Authority, which provide a comprehensive overview and history of Market operations from the 1920s when it commenced as a government-run enterprise. The Perth Market Authority was privatised in 2016.
- Records received from the Animal Resources Centre, which is due to become privatised in mid-2023.

State Records Office Newsletter and Socials

The State Records Office's online newsletter is published every quarter. You can subscribe to the newsletter via the SRO's web site at <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/state-records-office-of-western-australia>

We have also been continuing to tell our stories on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/StateRecordsOfficeWA> and Twitter and encourage readers to follow the SRO for interesting stories every week.

'A balanced life'.

Photograph enclosed on Education
Dept file, c1925, school unknown.
(<https://archive.sro.wa.gov.au/.../centenary-of-the-state>)



State Records Office on the airwaves

The State Records Office and State Library are continuing a regular chat on ABC 720 Perth called 'History Repeated'. Tune in Friday afternoons and look out for online stories on the ABC Perth Radio web site. The SRO and State Library are also sharing a regular chat with Harvey Deegan on 6PR on Sunday evenings 'Remember When' – taking it in turns every fortnight (once a month each for the SRO and State Library) with a new story from the archives. You can also catch-up on these stories via our web site at *Stories from the Archives*.

Damian Shepherd

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We need a completed form for our records, so please return it either by post or as an attachment to an email to ***membership@friendsofbattyselibrary.org.au*** with your online receipt number.

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

Afterwords

***The West Australian Times* and newspaper DNA**

I've always loved newspapers and I've had the *The West Australian* delivered to my front lawn since 1976. Mind you, there is no longer the annoyance of the loud thump of its arrival waking me up at too early an hour. Some days it's more of a worry that a crow might fly off with it for nest building. But I wouldn't be without it.

It still troubles some people that our daily paper is not called *The Western Australian*. That critical decision was made way back in 1879.

The paper we usually just call 'the West' dates back to 1833 when it began life as the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, a four-page weekly published on Saturdays. The year 1848 brought a change of name to *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*.

Given my interest in early colonial history I have downloaded, printed and had bound the first sixteen years of issues. Of course, you can search the contents on Trove and in browse mode you can even see each individual page on the screen thanks to the National Library's brilliant technology. But I enjoy the benefits of browsing in printed volumes, marking my serendipitous discoveries with my trusty 2B pencil.

There was another name change in 1864 – to *Perth Gazette and West Australian Times* - bringing us closer to the present title.

I was reminded of all this over Christmas when I read a new, small book on Charles Harper of Woodbridge who, with Sir Thomas Cockburn-Campbell, bought the newspaper in 1879.¹

The author of the book got the 1864 title slightly wrong and also ignored the fact that it was an amalgamation of two rival newspapers, not just a name change. The newspaper itself did the same thing in its first attempt at documenting its history – see the *Western Mail*, 19 October 1901, page 13. The *Perth Gazette* had amalgamated with the *West Australian Times*.

In 1874 the owners dispensed with the *Perth Gazette* part of the title which harked back to a time when the paper was semi-official (and was even printed on a government-owned Stanhope printing press). An official *Government Gazette* had been published since 1836.

Simply dropping the *Perth Gazette* part would have left the title as *West*

Australian Times, suggesting that ten years earlier the *West Australian Times* had actually taken over the old *Perth Gazette*. So the owners made it the *Western Australian Times*, and this was the masthead that Harper and Cockburn-Campbell bought five years later.

The *West Australian Times* has always been something of a mystery to me. It ran for only 53 issues, from 1 October 1863 until 29 September 1864, appearing every Thursday, price sixpence. Perhaps I should download it and take it to Officeworks for printing and binding. But 1863-64 is a bit modern for me.



Masthead of *West Australian Times*. (Trove)

However, I have just learned something significant about it – I now at least know who the owner and editor was. He was Edward Landor, who first came to Swan River as a young barrister for the good of his health in 1841. He returned to England in 1846 and while away wrote a WA classic, *The Bushman: life in a new country*, first published in London in 1847 with illustration by Lt A Irby of the 51st Regiment. He returned to Swan River with a wife and children in 1859.

All issues of his paper were printed by Richard Pether, later the first Government Printer. Pether signed the official copies of the *Times* that were sent to the Colonial Secretary and can all be seen on Trove today.

Harper and Cockburn-Campbell took control of the *Western Australian Times* in September 1879 and on 18 November they made the final name change. They could have just dropped the word 'Times' so we would now have *The Western Australian*. They didn't. Nor did they explain why they didn't.

Steve Errington

Endnote

1. John Prescott Harper, *The Story of Woodbridge House and its builder Charles Harper*, Perth, 2022, p. 12.

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

Life membership \$500

Annual membership

Ordinary	\$25
Joint	\$35
Pensioner / student / junior	\$15
Corporate	\$50

Meetings

General meetings are held each year in March, May, July, September (the Annual General Meeting), and November (also the end of year function). They 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, except for the November function which finishes around 8.00pm.

Newsletter

Three issues will be published each year in March, July, and November (flyers will be sent out in May and September). Articles from members and supporters are very welcome and the deadline for copy for the newsletter is 5 February, 5 June, and 10 October. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject articles and notices for publication.

Contact details

Friends of Battye Library website:

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

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 editor, Heather Campbell at *hgmessina@bigpond.com*

or write to:

The President
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 Website www.slwa.wa.gov.au
Email: info@slwa.wa.gov.au

Specialist staff: Dr Kate Gregory (Battye Historian)
 Mr John Hughes (Team Leader Senior Subject Specialist)

State Records Office

The SRO Search Room has co-located to the Battye Library, third floor of the State Library, Alexander Library Building. To access these materials in the Leah Cohen Reading Room a Researcher's Ticket will still be required.

Retrievals

As per usual times for SRO retrievals.

Telephone (08) 9427 3600, website www.sro.wa.gov.au, email: sro@sro.wa.gov.au.

The Genealogy Centre

Opening hours- The hours that the Genealogy Centre will be accessible will remain the same as Battye Library opening hours on the third floor.

Volunteers from Family History Western Australia, formerly the WA Genealogical Society (WAGS), are available to assist researchers on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9.30 am to 1.00 pm.

Specialist staff for Family History: for Family History information call Tuesday to Thursday on 08 9427 3247 or email info@slwa.wa.gov.au.