

No. 177



July 2023

FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.)
NEWSLETTER

Our July 2023 meeting

Trevor Cross

*Scrimshaw: the Folk Art of the Whalers and other Maritime Trades.
The Historic and the Modern, the Common and the Rare.*



Tuesday 11 July 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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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.

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Our July meeting.

Tuesday 11 July 2023
Great Southern Room, fourth floor
State Library of Western Australia
at 5pm for 5.30pm

Our speaker will be Trevor Cross

Scrimshaw: the Folk Art of the Whalers and other Maritime Trades.

The Historic and the Modern, the Common and the Rare.

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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About our speaker - Trevor Cross



Trevor Cross, collector and researcher, has been a student of the art of scrimshaw for more than 35 years. He has travelled extensively, particularly to the east coast of the United States of America – the home of scrimshaw – and has had access to the vast collections of The Kendall Institute, New Bedford and Nantucket Whaling Museums and major private collections. He has worked with Dr Stuart Frank, the world's foremost authority, and presented papers on Australian scrimshaw at

Kendall and New Bedford symposiums. He was a close associate of the late Mr Des Liddy of Sydney, a leading authority on scrimshaw and the pioneer in the field of scientific detection of forgery and ageing of scrimshaw.

He is currently researching the background of an historic piece of scrimshaw held by the WA museum and created by JA Bute, a Marine on the voyage around the world of HMS *Beagle* 1831-36. This is the voyage on which Charles Darwin formulated his theory of evolution. It is one of only seven pieces known in the world, all of which record scenes and/or activities that took place during this voyage.

Trevor's presentation will be an illustrated address featuring work from around the World, Australian and Western Australian Collections.



Meeting dates for 2023

12 September

(AGM) Kate Gregory: *Cracking O'Reilly's Code*.

21 November

(3rd Tuesday) - End of year function - SLWA's map collection.

President's Piece

Trove – We've Done it!

In the last President's Piece I brought to your attention the very worrying news that the National Library of Australia (NLA) was contemplating having to shut the Trove digital archive down due to lack of funding. Thankfully, the concerted effort by a huge number of Australians in expressing to the Federal Government their deep displeasure at this potential shut-down has paid off. An announcement on 4 April pledged the Federal Budget will deliver the National Library of Australia \$33 million in funding over four years as well as \$9.2 million in indexed ongoing annual funding beyond that date.

In celebration of this reprieve, I thought I would share with you one or two of my favourite quotations gleaned from Western Australian newspapers thanks to Trove.

Whilst looking for some information on carol singing in nineteenth century Perth, I came upon this report in the 30 December, 1885 edition of the *Inquirer & Commercial News*:

On Thursday evening a Glee Club made its appearance in the City and discoursed some very nice Christmas Carols. The singing was very good indeed. A few instrumentalists in a bus also perambulated the City, but their execrable performance certainly did not possess the 'charm' which it is stated is capable of soothing a 'savage beast'.

When Ernest Giles and his explorers arrived in Guildford in November 1875 after finding an inland route from Adelaide to the West Coast, the *Inquirer* reported:

Wednesday, the 17th instant, is a day which will be long remembered by the inhabitants of Guildford. The passing through of Giles' party of explorers with their 17 camels in caravan order was a rare sight.

Addresses from the Municipal Council, the Odd-fellows, and the Good Templars, were read and replied to in the Courthouse.

The exploring party were entertained at a public dinner in the Mechanics' Hall, and at a ball afterwards held in the Court-house. The most amiable feeling existed between the entertainers and the entertained.

You don't get prose like that in a modern newspaper!

Finally, the *West Australian* was clearly not amused by some of the pranks which went on in Perth during the celebrations for the arrival of 1890:

LARRIKINISM IN PERTH

The band of gay and festive spirits that selects the last night of the year for their mischievous pranks was very much to the fore on New Year's Eve. Why young men should consider it necessary to indulge in such nonsense upon these occasions, it is difficult to say, and it is equally difficult to discover the connection between the birth of a New Year and the removal of gates from their hinges.

Richard Offen



Obituary

Jan Skillington

Member of staff of the Battye Library

Member of the Friends, committee member 2004-2008.

Jan was a Yorkshire lass who began her library career in her late teens in Leeds. After marriage and subsequent emigration to WA in 1964, she was employed by the Library Board of WA in the Circulation Division, becoming life-long friends with her manager Jane Cunningham (later Robinson). After the birth of her son, Matthew, Jan returned to the Circulation Division in a part-time capacity before moving to the State Library's Infolink Community Information Service and obtaining a Library Technician qualification. She then moved to the Battye Library, working on the Ephemera Collection and also as assistant to Julie Martin in the Pictorial Collection. Julie remembers Jan as a 'great help and a pleasure to work with' and who was 'very competent and a good lateral thinker'. Jan also managed the Battye Library's volunteer program.

While working in the State Library Jan became ill and although she went into remission after a period of chemotherapy, she was advised to retire.

With partner Rob, Jan had built a home in Mundijong, where she became a stalwart of the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale's Mundijong Library. She founded the Friends of the Library group there and was subsequently awarded life membership. In November 2022 her book *Mundijong Memories* was launched.

Unfortunately Jan's health deteriorated over the following months and she died in Rockingham Hospital on 20 March 2023. Her funeral service

on 29 March was well attended and included moving and emotional tributes to a lady who has left a lasting legacy in many aspects of the library world.

[Ed: With thanks to David Whiteford, who attended Jan's funeral service.]



Members' News

Shirley Babis

FHWA volunteer service of 35 years honoured

20th February 2023

For 35 years Shirley Babis has been at the State Library of WA helping the public seek out answers to the puzzles in their family trees.

At the Annual Volunteers lunch in December last year, Shirley was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for her extraordinary service, by Chairman of the Board of the Library, the Hon. John Day.



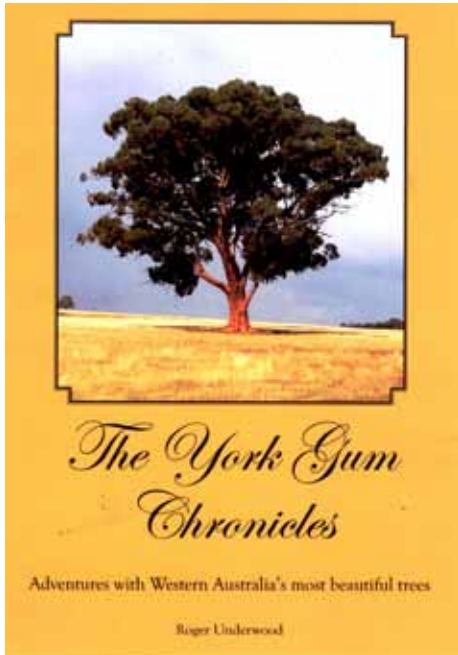
Shirley is pictured with FHWA President, Garth Walter (left) and John Day receiving her award.

The State Library volunteers, headed up by Marilyn Dimond, are the largest and longest serving group of volunteers at the library and were awarded Fellow of the Library Board in 2021 in recognition of their outstanding work.

Note: Photograph and text courtesy of [News - FHWA volunteer service of 35 years honoured](#) accessed 1 March 2023.



New Publications : Roger Underwood



Members will be interested to hear about two publications by Roger Underwood, who spoke to us at our May meeting on the Avon River. Roger's interests are wide and sometimes unusual, and these interests are reflected in stories he has written and posted on his website: www.forestleaves.blog

Story subjects range from timber bridges to curried egg sandwiches, from famous scientists to bushfires and from legendary axemen to Tolstoy.

He has recently published a book about the special trees in his life, his interaction with them and the landscapes in which they grow.

The book is called *The York Gum Chronicles – adventures with Western Australia's most beautiful trees*. It contains 34 chapters, each dealing with a different tree species and the way in which it has inspired him, crossed his path, or frustrated or astonished him.

This is not just a book for tree lovers, but also for people interested in history, literature even poetry. The chapter about the mulga tree, for example, is introduced by reference to Banjo Patterson's poem 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle', while that on the gimlet tree recalls Roger's boyhood reading about the fictional wartime commando Captain 'Gimlet' King. Also included are tales about famous West Australian foresters, wildlife scientists and bushmen - stories which take the reader from the Kimberley to the inland deserts and to the south coast. It is lightly written, with a bare minimum of botanical jargon, and is superbly illustrated, with photographs by WA's premier bushland photographers.

Copies of *York Gum Chronicles* are available for \$35 (including postage) by contacting Roger Underwood at yorkgum41@outlook.com or by ringing him on 0429 339 405.

The Royal Western Australian Historical Society (RWAHS)

Save the date for the History West Annual Lecture!

26 July 2023, 6 for 6.30pm at the UWA Club Auditorium

Dr Marie-Louise Ayres — National Library of Australia

From Perth to Canberra and back again: 3000 kilometres but only nanoseconds apart.

In this lecture, Dr Ayres will ponder the ways in which Australia's 'tyranny of distance' has nurtured a level of national collaboration around cultural collections which is extremely rare in the broader international environment.

Beginning with Western Australian heritage materials held by the National Library of Australia and the ways in which those collections can be used by Western Australians, Dr Ayres will elaborate on the professional cultures and systems that underpin Australia's rich and connected cultural collections. For further details and booking information, please see the RWAHS website: <https://histwest.org.au/events/history-west-annual-lecture-2023>



SLWA's Mark Chambers honoured in the King's Birthday List

Mark Chambers, chief Research Officer in the Aboriginal History Research Services (AHRS) was made an OAM in the recent awards. Mark's dedication to his work in assisting Aboriginal people with links to Western Australia to locate the various personal records relating to themselves and their ancestors. Most of the AHRS sources were created and held by former Government agencies and other bodies. Congratulations, Mark, on the recognition for your work and the importance of this service.

<https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/aboriginal-culture/aboriginal-history-research-services>



Our Gems of Time (a retrospective)

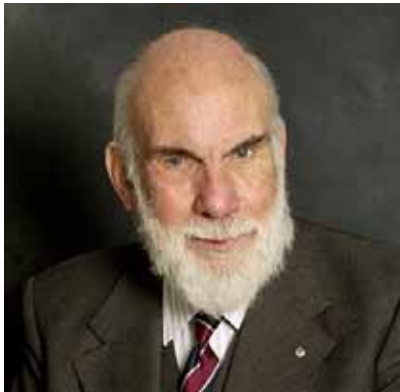
[The award of Gem of Time was presented to Professor Bolton in 2005. This is an edited version of the memoir written by his friend and colleague, Dr Lenore Layman.]

Geoffrey Curgenvan Bolton

Emeritus Professor, AO, FASSA, FAHA

5 November 1931 - 4 September 2015

Geoff had an illustrious academic career. After first class honours and an MA degree at the university of WA, he won a Hackett Studentship to Balliol College, Oxford, where he completed his doctorate. He returned to Australia to take up a research fellowship at the Australian National University, followed by a senior lectureship at the newly established Monash University before being appointed to his first Chair of History at the University of Western Australia in 1966. He took up the Foundation Chair of History at Murdoch University in 1973, later becoming head of the Australian



Studies Centre at the University of London, Professor of Australian History at the University of Queensland and then Professor of History at Edith Cowan University and in 2006 was named West Australian of the Year.

Geoff devoted his life to history and many histories flowed from him in books, articles, interviews and talks - at least fifteen books as well as a great many other publications of all sizes in which he assisted. His output was abundant and continued until his death, with his authoritative biography of Paul Hasluck (2014) his last major work. Few scholars could claim such a prolific and varied output, one that testified to his intellectual ability, energy and dedication.

Like other leading historians of his generation he spanned imperial and Australian history, a man of wide knowledge which he always wore lightly and with wit.

Open-minded and ever alert to new approaches to history, Geoff pioneered Western Australian historical writing and became an early practitioner and leader of the oral history movement. *A Fine Country To Starve In* (1972) tackled the devastating impact of the 1930's depression on a primary agricultural state. *Spoils and Spoilers: Australians Make Their Environment, 1788 to 1981* (1981) introduced environmental history. He wrote on Aboriginal-settler relations with sensitivity.

His biographical studies, both lengthy and brief, captured the characters and influence of a multitude of past West Australians. He was central to the life of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, writing 86 entries over the years. His brilliantly-titled *Land of Vision and Mirage: Western Australia since 1826* (2008) was his endeavour 'to summarise and interpret the history of Western Australia since British occupation and settlement' for his generation. In all these ways he shaped the understanding of WA history.

Geoff was a brilliant lecturer with such an encyclopedic knowledge and prodigious memory that he could step into any breach at the last minute and deliver an erudite and entertaining talk. He mostly had admirers, but listened carefully to those who occasionally disagreed and was always a kind and supportive senior historian. Geoff was not only respected but also held in great affection.

Geoff was President of the Friends of Battye Library for many years and gave unstintingly of his time and support. He is much missed.



Voices That Should Be Heard

[*This article is the 23rd in Ronda Jamieson's popular series based on the oral history collections of the Battye Library.*]

Sir Fred Chaney (1914- 2001) OH636

Sir Frederick (Fred) Charles Chaney was born in Fremantle in 1914, named after his father born in England in 1859 who, when aged 16, was sent to Australia by his father. It was punishment for 'disgracing the family' through being caught smoking near a haystack; a crime in England at the time. Two attempts to return to England did not succeed because he was again banished by his father.

After working in Fern Tree Gully in Victoria, Fred married and had two children. When his wife died, the children stayed with his wife's family and Fred moved to Western Australia. There he married Rose Stout in 1904. Five daughters were born before the longed-for son arrived and was named after his father, then aged 55.

Sir Fred remembered a very happy childhood with his sisters being 'marvellous' to him. 'People around us were ordinary people, who I think were the salt of the earth. In those days we were like a country town.' His mother left a deep impression. 'She was a kindly, generous person who devoted her whole life to other people.' He described his father as 'the most happy-go-lucky fellow I'd ever met. He just didn't seem to have a care in the world, yet he had a lot.'

There were vivid descriptions of difficulties during the Great Depression. 'To see the absolute despair on people's faces, was just something that I'll never forget. It brought the best out in a lot of people. The mere fact that we recovered from it, I think, made us a better race.'

On completing his education at Christian Brothers College, and after the death of his father, Fred went to Perth Technical College to become a teacher and a 'breadwinner for the family'. His first job was at Jarrahwood to fill in for a teacher on leave. Then he went to Malyalling, east of Narrogin, and taught in a one-teacher school with 17 students until the war broke out.

I found it a very great challenge, because I'd had this very scanty course in education, and it was a matter of learning as you went along. The kids were teaching you rather than you teaching the kids.

In 1938 Fred married Mavis Bond. She was a speech and drama teacher and joined Fred to teach arts. Their daughter was born in July 1939, the first of seven children born between 1939 and 1957. On 3 September, war was declared. Fred tried to enlist in the RAAF but waited as a reservist for 18 months. He then served as an instructor in Australia and a pilot in New Guinea and Borneo, where he won the Air Force Cross. The citation for it read: 'His courage, skill and resourcefulness have been exceptional, and have proved an inspiration to members of his unit.' He returned to Perth in September 1945.

After the war Fred continued teaching and was at the Midland School for twelve months before being offered a promotion as deputy head of Como School, followed by deputy head and then headmaster of Victoria Park

School. A vivid memory was: 'One of the saddest things that I ever had to do was administer punishment for other teachers.' Fred remained a teacher until he entered federal politics in 1955.

When he won the 1955 election, Fred found it 'hard to believe' and did not know what he was entitled to as a federal member. To his surprise, he found he was authorised to be picked up by a chauffeur-driven motor car to go to the airport. 'You suddenly realise that it's a privilege to represent a constituency in the federal parliament, but like every privilege it carries heavy responsibilities.'



In the first parliament that Fred attended, he was given the honour of moving the address in reply, which usually indicated that the Prime Minister expected the person chosen to have 'a successful parliamentary career'. Fred was 'terribly disappointed' in the speech he made. He found his fellow first-time members 'weren't slow' to tell him it was a poor speech. 'I suppose it was only about twice that I was extremely disappointed at a speech I made in Parliament House, and that was one of them.'

It's very hard to talk about what you yourself think you achieved, but I was secretary of the Standard Rail Gauge Committee for instance, and nobody thought we had a chance of achieving that, but we did. I think that I probably had some little part in the matter of aid to private schools, for which I was a great advocate. When I later on became a minister I worked very hard on the establishment of the Garden Island set-up.

Fred also took up the fight for those deprived of war service home loans and for nurses' accommodation at Hollywood Hospital, which resulted in a very good nurses home being built.

On the 20th of January 1966, Sir Robert Menzies retired and Harold Holt replaced him as Prime Minister. Holt appointed Sir Fred as the Minister for the Navy. After the election in December 1966, Sir Fred was not offered any ministerial position. It was thought that there were pressures from other members of parliament who thought there were too many

ministers from Western Australia and not enough from South Australia and Victoria.

Before the 1969 election, there was a redistribution in Fred's seat which was blamed for his loss in that election. It had been suggested that he change the seat he sat for to give him a better chance of winning but he did not think that was fair. When asked if he later regretted that decision, he replied:

It wasn't a bad decision now, looking back. I think had I done that, maybe I wouldn't have been alive now, because the life of a parliamentarian from Western Australia in federal parliament is a very rugged thing: the constant travel, the loss of sleep, the pressures that are on you.

In summing up his political career, Sir Fred referred to there being 'a lot of sameness which occasionally took the edge off politics ... it was terribly hard grinding and at times an extremely boring occupation.' He went on to say:

One of the hard things about politics is, that regardless, it really doesn't matter about your own capacity or capability or efficiency, or how hard you work, when political winds blow they don't take account of that. There are certain people that provided they receive the endorsement can stay in parliament for life. There are others on that middle area of seats who are affected by political winds. I was one of those, and even though you realise that it's not a very nice feeling and a loss is a loss, I don't do anything with the idea of losing. I go into win, and I think that's what you should do too. These people that say, "Oh, the game's the thing, it doesn't matter if you lose" to me it matters if you lose

On leaving Parliament, Sir Fred worked for a stockbroking firm, Hartley Poyntons, before being appointed as the Administrator of the Northern Territory by the John Gorton government.

In 1978, Sir Fred became the Lord Mayor of Perth, a position he held until 1982. In summing up the experience, he said:

I realised that probably a Lord Mayor of Perth has far more power than an ordinary member of either parliament, and responsibility, because a lot of the decision making finishes with him, whereas many members of parliament spend half their life as members and really never make a decision, except which aeroplane or bus they're going to catch. That's the way of politics with executive government like it is. They might believe they contribute, but I've got my doubts.

The other thing I felt was that Western Australia had been pretty kind to me, and Australia, and this was a purely voluntary job and it was a sort of me putting something back into the community to whom I owed

something. Maybe that's idealistic and maybe people will say that's not what motivates you, but that honestly is the sort of motivation I had.

On his appointment, he had severed all connections with the Liberal Party: 'I'm violently against party politics in local government.' He was also against the attitude of some towards the position.

When I first became Lord Mayor they said, "Do you want to be fitted for a top hat and a cutaway coat?" And I said, "What's this all about?" They said, "For the celebrations." I said, "No way." They said, "Well everyone's going to be dressed in period costume." I said, "That's why I object to it." I said, "There are twenty-seven councillors. If one third of them are dressed as convicts, and one third of them are dressed as labourers, then the other third can dress up in cutaway coats and top hats, then I'll be in it. But you are giving people the idea that this country was built by people in cutaway coats and top hats, which is completely false. This country was built by convicts who did all the hard slogging, the only reason they were brought into the country.

For the opening ceremony on the Esplanade, I was the only one in the official enclosure that was in an ordinary lounge suit.

Sir Fred found his time as Lord Mayor a 'very pleasant interlude'.

I met more people, became friendly with more people, and got a greater appreciation of the difficulties of local government generally. I also had a greater feeling of admiration for the work that had been done in the past in the field of local government, and how particularly lucky we are in Perth for some of our predecessors in this field, for the planning that had gone on, and the hassle-free city in which we live.

In December 1981, Fred was honoured with a knighthood and a journalist suggested that was the real reason he had taken on the role. Sir Fred felt that only a fellow with a low mentality would say a thing like that. 'When I was notified that this could occur I felt a bit embarrassed about it.'

In 1982 Sir Fred did not stand for re-election.

To finish the interview, Sir Fred was asked which of the varied roles he held in his life, he enjoyed the most.

Well, being a husband to that wife of mine, because that's been involved in every one of those other things, so in the priorities I'd put that first.

When it came to his biggest disappointment, Sir Fred replied:

I would think it would have to be being dropped from the second Holt ministry ... when I'd worked terribly hard under difficult conditions. It was probably the biggest disappointment in my life.

And what was the best thing that had happened in his life?

Living till seventy. I don't regret one moment of my life. There are things that I wish hadn't happened, that have happened, but nothing's going to change that. You can't turn back clocks, you can't unscramble eggs, and I'm content.

Ronda Jamieson



Treasures [NOT] from Trove

[This is the eleventh article in the series by Heather Campbell delving into the wonders of NLA's 'Trove' database of Western Australian newspapers. But this article explores a later article.]

A Daily News Treasure that is NOT on Trove

As our President's report in this issue has featured Treasures from Trove, here is one that is indeed a Treasure, but is not in Trove.

The *Daily News* published in Western Australia ran from July 1882 to September 1990, however the electronic version on Trove only covers 1882 to 1955, missing the opportunity to provide an insight into a display in the foyer leading to the Battye Library, still then in the old State Library. The foyer contained a display cabinet and a little additional space. Thanks to long-standing friendships, the story behind this display can be 'revealed' (as they say in the *West Australian*).

David Whiteford must take the major credit for this, as one of the main instigators and a very conscientious archivist, he not only implemented the display, but kept a newspaper cutting that appeared on the back page of the *Daily News*, 17 May 1984.

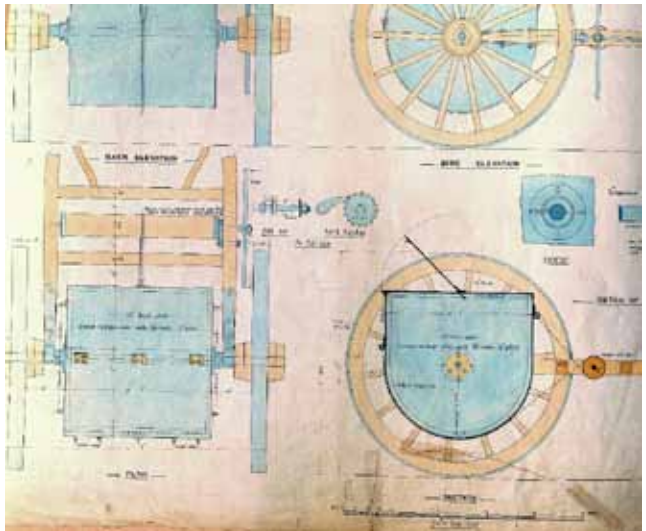
When asked to write his version of events for this newsletter David did so in a short article, titled 'Night soil and toilet seats: A display to stir... emotions', paraphrased hereunder:

Issue 203 (October 2008) of *Light Railways: Australia's magazine of industrial and narrow gauge railways* contained David's article 'A "Going Concern": Perth's sanitation tramways, a little known aspect of Perth's history'. Many years before David had researched this moving topic as his work as a librarian in the Battye Library had led him to discover bits and pieces of information that, over time, became a fully-fledged article.

Sharing this knowledge in early 1984 with colleague Heather Campbell (then known as Heather Wrigley), resulted in David supplying information and illustrative material from published and archival collections for the display, while Heather generously agreed to supply (at great inconvenience) a wooden toilet seat, with a bridled horse's head carved into the lid. The Kalamunda and Districts Historical Society were prevailed upon to lend an earth closet seat and these became the piece-de-resistance items of the display.

Also on show was a Public Works Department plan of a night-soil cart, details of late 19th century Perth sanitation, and information on a short-lived night soil tramway run from City of Perth night-soil depot where Beatty Park is now, to the wilds of what is now the Yokine Reserve / Mount Lawley Golf Course.

After the display was finalised on Monday 14 May 1984, it immediately received plenty of attention from visitors, including a journalist with the *Daily News*, Jane MacLatchy. Jane and Heather Campbell are best friends and have been since meeting at high school many years ago. Jane recalls this highlight of her journalistic career thus:



plan of night soil tip cart SROWA Cons1647 3091

The back page of the evening newspaper *Daily News* had for years been the home of the incredibly popular Rigby and Kirwan Ward. Paul Rigby drew the cartoon and Bernie Kirwan Ward wrote the words in his column Peepshow. America took Rigby, the Grim Reaper took Kirwan Ward and I took on the back page. The column was then named 'This Town'.

The five days a week pressure to find entertaining copy was unrelenting so when Heather told me her toilet seat was going on public display at the

Battye Library I was charmed beyond measure. Half-a-column sorted.

Not quite, as it happened. Extra copy was needed to bring it up to weight. This is where I get lost - just how did I come up with the details of Parkers Patent Automaton Earth Closets and Inodorous Commodes?

The information did not grace the Battye display and Google was not with us. But was the morgue? This was the name of the library in the basement of Newspaper House (the St Georges Terrace home of WA Newspapers to which the *Daily* belonged) where journalists would go to find background copy.

However, we are talking 1984: the middle of a particularly tumultuous time for WA but especially for WAN. The State was breeding WA Inc and WA Newspapers was transforming from hot lead slugs to cold-eyed computers.

Gutenberg started printing with hot metal in 1440 and WAN finished with it in November 1984 when the last of its publications was converted to electronic printing. Had the morgue been done away with when I wrote this column? Was I instead trying to code into my grey box of a processor the formula for Stories About Earth Closets?

Even if I had succeeded I don't know who would have answered because the internet as we know it was not around then. So perhaps, after all, I had gone down to the dusty old morgue and signed out a tatty old envelope full of stuff about excrement. That's how you did things in those days.

In any event the result was the Battye Library display cabinet featuring on the back page of the *Daily News*, 17 May 1984.



Come with me to culcha corner, just over the Horseshoe Bridge and burgeoning.

Here rise mighty edifices to the finer things of life. To art, to science and to letters.

Feast your jaded soul on excellence ... and while you're at it, learn all about night soil.

The Battye Library has this small but significant display on earth closets. Quite why is not clear but it makes a nice change from postage stamps.

Centre piece is a splendid wooden loo seat, a bridled horse's head carved

into the lid.

It has been lent, we are told, 'at great inconvenience by the Wrigley family of Carmel'.

Heather Wrigley, secretary of the library's oral history programme, says she is sorely missing the family seat, 'It's hell in this cold weather.'

Noblesse oblige, I'm afraid Heather. If you own exotic sanitary ware then you must expect this sort of thing.

Almost as wondrous to behold are the earth closets themselves. So overcome was one George Faithorn, medical officer of Chesham, in Buckinghamshire, that he wrote a letter to the *London Times* in 1866.

He has just viewed such a loo and was ecstatic: "I put my nostrils in close contact with the soil that had been taken from the closets this morning ... and came away with a small parcel (of soil) in my pocket ... nothing in the smallest degree disagreeable."

Some 30 year later experiments were taking place in Perth to transport night soil on 'sanitary tramways'.

On the dummy dunny run the horsedrawn cart overturned, spilling the contents.

Luckily these were cans of water. The affair caused much ribald comment and probably had a lot to do with our getting deep sewerage.

A shame in some ways if one is to believe the blandishments of Parkers Patent Automaton Earth Closets and Inodorous Commodes which much impressed our great grandparents.

I mean, wouldn't you rush out and buy one of you read: 'The first earth closet was introduced by Mr Fenn at the Rectory House, Woodstock ... and no horse, cow or pig has ever been kept or manure purchased yet ... for many years the potatoes from this garden have gained first-class prizes against all-comers from all parts of the world.'

David Whiteford, Heather Campbell and Jane MacLatchy (flushed with pride!)



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 followed up with details of her early working life as a librarian, some of the personalities of the time and working in Northbridge. Now on to ...]

Part 3: Meroula (Mollie) Lukis OBE OAM FLAA, Hon.DLitt. (Murdoch)

(13 August 1911 to 1 August 2009)

For eighteen months, I was an underling in the division headed by one of Western Australia's most influential women of the 20th century; a feminist, an icon and trailblazer in the preservation of the state's history and heritage. Yet, I was unaware of her significance and impact until many decades later. I saw her through the eyes of a raw teenager with no understanding of the world of archives and indeed, little knowledge of the world in general.

The Miss Lukis I met when I joined her staff in 1961 had, at that time, been six years as Battye Librarian and fifteen years as State Archivist. Understandably, the disparity between our roles and differences in rostered shifts meant we rarely had any contact. Only occasionally, if I ventured into the tiny galley kitchen at the back of Battye, might I find her preparing her lunch or evening meal, an egg jiggling in a saucepan of boiling water. Invariably, she asked if I was managing my assigned tasks and reminded me to ask for guidance if I had any difficulties.

She presented as brisk and assured. If she was ever ruffled, I wasn't around to see it. Well-groomed and refined, she spoke clearly and precisely in pleasant tones, and it was no surprise to learn many years later that after graduating from university, she had taught maths and physics in girls' schools, both overseas and within Australia. It was a surprise, though, to learn that during WWII, she was employed as a metrologist by the Defence Research Laboratory in Maribyrnong, Victoria, working on the measurement of weapon gauges, a position that demanded the highest level of accuracy and precision.

I did, however, see a different side to her during her interactions with the many visitors who sought her counsel in the Battye Reading Room. Her warmth and ready smile came to the fore.

Having recently been introduced to Crowley's *Records of Western Australia*, the Battye staff bible at the time, it was intriguing to see the interactions of its author, Professor Frank Crowley, with Miss Lukis during one of his frequent visits. Her calm demeanour and attentiveness were a foil for his bustle. At the same time, one of Crowley's star pupils,

Brian de Garis, often sought her guidance when working on his MA thesis shortly before being named WA's Rhodes Scholar for 1962. De Garis's association with the State Library resumed many years later when he chaired the Library Board from 1994-2000.

There was always a buzz in the reading room when the handsome, sophisticated author Gerald Glaskin, then living in the Netherlands, dropped in for a visit, but Charlie Staples was my favourite. He made no distinction of rank and was always happy to chat while waiting to speak with Miss Lukis. Courteous and affable, he was the epitome of the term 'gentleman'.

It was with women, however, that I saw Miss Lukis at her most animated, and memories of those interactions are vivid.

Ray Oldham, who with architect husband John, authored many works about Perth's built heritage and gardens, was a frequent visitor and, I'd wager, a friend from university days. Another regular was Jean Rogerson, whose long and illustrious association with UWA aligned with Miss Lukis's involvement with the WA Branch of the Australian Federation of University Women. I was also fascinated to see Miss Lukis in animated conversation with the Durack sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, on several occasions. Until then, they'd only been entries in Battye's card index and names on the covers of books I'd seen in Battye's Legal Deposit room.

Around the same time, I often sighted the imposing Henrietta Drake-Brockman in Battye Library. She was researching her book, *Voyage to Disaster*, which told the enthralling story of the 1629 wreck of the *Batavia*. I later read that she was acknowledged as one of the wreck's four co-discoverers. I also discovered that she was the daughter of Dr Roberta Jull, a medical reformer and a 1929 delegate to the League of Nations whose papers were deposited in the Battye Library not long after I joined the staff. Mrs Drake Brockman was often accompanied by her close friend, the elegant Lady Alexandra Hasluck, who, together with Miss Lukis, formed a formidable trio, Miss Lukis providing insights and access to the collections of private and government material on which both women were able to draw for their various historical works.



Mollie Lukis at her desk.
(Battye Library, SLWA
005691D)

We were always informed when Miss Lukis was out of the building, and from this, I learnt of her involvement with various groups - the Fellowship of Australian Writers, the WA Committee for Equal Opportunity, the Royal Western Australian Historical Society, the WA Branch of the National Trust, the Nomenclature Advisory Committee to Minister for Lands and there were others I'm sure. I also heard mention of the Karrakatta Club and, in ignorance, thought it had to do with the cemetery of the same name.

It was fascinating in recent years to learn something of her background and childhood, ironically from a recorded interview conducted by Erica Harvey in 1992.¹ The irony of this recording was that had not Miss Lukis set up Australia's first oral history programme in 1961, some months after I'd joined the staff, the story of her background and early years may have been lost. Her brother Rob's account of his experiences on cattle stations in the Pilbara, Gascoyne and Kimberley was also recorded by

the Oral History Unit staff in 1977, the year before his death.² What has attracted little attention is that while Miss Lukis was the recipient of several Australian awards and honours, including an OBE and OAM, her eldest brother, Air Commodore Frank Fellowes Lukis, who participated in the Gallipoli Landing as a member of the 10th Light Horse Regiment was also decorated for his service to his country, appointed OBE in 1938 and CBE in 1943 as well as being twice mentioned in despatches.



Miss Mollie Lukis conducting an interview with John Bottomley at the Battye Library, 1969. (Battye Library, SLWA 319514PD)

I learnt little about libraries and archives from Miss Lukis. What I learnt from her was that women have the right to choose their pathway in life and not be pigeonholed by their gender. I learnt that ability, hard work, determination, and self-belief should be the only determinants of a woman's success.

By example, she challenged my unconscious acceptance that there was only one direction in life. Yes, I hoped to marry and have children, but now, I also wanted something more.

Then came that shattering Friday morning in mid-Winter 1962. Miss

Lukis called me into her office. There she told me I was to hand over the project I was working on to another staff member and clear my locker; I was to commence work in the State Bibliographical Centre the following Monday. Devastated and with emotion welling up inside, I bolted for what I had always regarded as my refuge, the book stacks of the old Public Library. Dimly lit, the dark, cracked wooden shelves groaned and buckled under the weight of volumes that scarcely ever left their allotted positions. During the day, dust particles danced and whirled in the shafts of light that issued from the old sash windows. Occasionally an enterprising pigeon that had taken refuge in the roof space would swoop across the expanse. It was there, my emotions spilt over. I had failed to meet expectations; I had disappointed; I was being moved on.

I still have no idea how Miss Lukis learned of my whereabouts, but after some time, I was aware of her being alongside me. She told me that this transfer was not the result of any failure on my part. The State Librarian had determined that student librarians should have experience in all areas of the library's operations, and this was one of many 'moves' I would make during my apprenticeship. I will always be grateful that she sought me out and explained the situation.

And so, with a heavy heart, I gathered up my bits and pieces at the end of the day, said my farewells and departed what I regarded as my spiritual home. I'm sure I would have felt differently had my nineteen-year-old-self known that forty-four years later, I would make an identical journey, this time, into retirement, albeit in a different century and from a very different-looking Battye Library in a different building. And that I would have worked alongside all six of the extraordinary women who guided Battye Library to its eminent position in the State Library after Miss Lukis's retirement in 1971.



50th Anniversary of the formation of the Battye Library. December 2005.

Battye Librarians 1946 to 2005.

Seated: L to R : Ronda Jamieson, Margaret Medcalf, Mollie Lukis, Trish Allen

Standing: Jennie Carter, Lennie McCall.

(Courtesy- Trish Allen)

1. OH 2527 – Interview with Mollie Lukis conducted by Erica Harvey. 1992. (Both the sound recording, and transcript are available online).
2. OH262 – Interview with Robert Fellowes Lukis conducted by Chris Jeffrey. 1977 (Sound recording available online).



News from the State Library

Exhibitions

Laurel Nannup : What road are you going to take?

7 July – 29 September 2023

This deeply personal exhibition sees leading Noongar printmaker Laurel Nannup's extraordinary artworks presented alongside State Library



First contact, a sculpture by Laurel Nannup at Elizabeth Quay 17 November 2017. (Jeremy Phillips collection of photographs. Battye Library, SLWA, BA2671/40)

heritage collection materials, objects and photographs which provide context to the mission experiences and stories depicted in her extensive body of work. Laurel was born in Carrolup in 1943, after studying Fine Arts at Curtin University in 2001 she began creating incredibly moving works which depicted both her experience at Wandering Mission and of everyday family life. Her sculpture *First Contact* is a centrepiece public art piece of Elizabeth Quay.

her extensive body of work. Laurel was born in Carrolup in 1943, after studying Fine Arts at Curtin University in 2001 she began creating incredibly moving works which depicted both her experience at Wandering Mission and of everyday family life. Her

Game Changers : Trailblazing Stories from WA Women in Soccer

14 Jul – 28 Aug 2023

As Perth is swept up in soccer fever, the State Library spotlights stories from the women's game in WA and celebrates the pioneers who have shaped it. In addition to material from our heritage collection, discover a new oral history project and talk series capturing their stories.

Stuff! History, Home, Family, Love, Identity... and why we collect it

3 Apr – Fri 23 Jun 2023

Last chance to come into the State Library to see STUFF! an exhibition of State Library staff's favourite collection items – everything from family histories, beer-splattered rock posters, Walmajarri language children's books, and centuries-old French maps.

Librarians, behind the scenes administrators and historians chose items from our collection that strongly resonated with them. The result is a deeply personal and surprising scrapbook of WA history. STUFF! History, Home, Family, Love, Identity ... and why we collect it runs from 3 April to 23 June. A video about the State Library featuring interviews with staff has been produced in association with this exhibition and is on display as part of the exhibition as well as being available to view online.

New Acquisitions

Bon Scott letters

Two postcard letters sent from Bon Scott to his friend, Colin Moore, late 1979/ early 1980 from Europe while on tour. The letters cover a key period in AC/DC's history and include Scott's low-key discussion of the iconic, blockbuster, album 'Highway to Hell.'

'The Valentines' Bon Scott (centre) Vince Lovegrove (reaching into crowd) with drummer Warwick Finlay lead guitar Wyn Milson and guitarist Ted Ward (Ted Junko) 1966. (Stevenson, Kinder & Scott photographic collection, Batty Library, SLWA, 342437PD



Eduardo Cossio collection of photographs

Eduardo Cossio collection of photographs documents the experimental music scene in Western Australia. Images have been taken at the concert series called 'Outcomes Unknown' held in venues around Perth,

Fremantle, and Denmark, which provides a platform for emerging and established artists from diverse backgrounds.

Anne Gee's paper cut art and map prints

A collection of unique paper cuts and prints by artist Anne Gee of South Perth, Fremantle, Wadjemup, Mosman Park, the *Catalpa*, the ship *Leeuwin II*, *Hougoumont*, and Mary's Mount Primary School.

Harry Bilsby papers

James Henry (known as Harry) went to the Middle East during World War 2 and wrote a series of diaries while he was stationed overseas. Bilsby lived in Collie and Bunbury, was an upholsterer and a miner and worked for the State Electricity Commission.

The Greens (WA)

As part of the Greens (WA) 30th Anniversary History Project, a small group of volunteers completed a series of interviews with some of their long-standing members and politicians. This donation adds to the existing collection held by the State Library and comprises an additional nine oral history interviews, transcripts, and portrait photographs.

Public Programs

Family History

In 2023 the Family History talks and tours are 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 Batty Library of West Australian History.

Aboriginal Family History sessions continue monthly at 3pm on the last Wednesday of the month in the State Library building. This is an opportunity for Aboriginal families to connect with collections at the State Library and learn how to use *Storylines* to view and print thousands of photos, plus access to a growing number of oral histories, documents, sounds and movies. State Library staff also connect families to other organisations including State Records Office and the Aboriginal History Research Service.

Sharing Yarns with Uncle Ron Bradfield Jr

Ron Bradfield Jr has a well-earned reputation in WA as an incredible storyteller, listener, and conversation facilitator. These sessions at the

State Library will kick off with a legendary story from Ron before he carefully – and in a supportive way – facilitates members of the public to tell their own story.

Ron Bradfield Jnr is a saltwater man from Bardi Country, north of Broome but grew up in Geraldton, Western Australia. He now calls Whadjuk Boodjar (Perth) his home. As the CYO (Chief Yarning Officer) of Yarns R Us; Ron facilitates cultural conversations across all levels of our communities, helping Australians to revisit and explore their own personal stories – to better consider their own connections to this place – their home!

Bookings are limited via the SLWA Website:

Monday 26 June 2023 2pm – 4pm

Monday 3 July 2023 2pm – 4pm

Monday 10 July 2023 2pm – 4pm

Recently Digitised materials

The State Library's digitisation of AV materials continues apace – since December 2022 approximately 6,844 items of video, film and audio formats have been processed for digitisation. As digitised materials are becoming ready the process of describing, cataloguing, and storing both the physical and digital materials is being scoped. Opportunities for sharing and promoting the content of this sometimes never-before accessed material are being investigated.

The State Library's tape-based audio and visual collections are approximately 5% of the highly valued WA heritage collections. The content held on these formats spans more than 100 years and varies widely, from broadcast standard to amateur recordings and includes a wide range of government and private sector productions, motion picture films, short films, documentaries, music, interviews, and recordings capturing people, places, and events, all unique to Western Australia. This tape format is now obsolete and difficult if not impossible for the community to access. Digitisation is the only way of ensuring the survival of the collection and future, ongoing access for the community. Approximately \$1.3 million over four years has been allocated by the State Government to the State Library of WA to digitise at-risk multimedia collections currently held on aging medium, such as magnetic tape.

Radio interviews

The State Library's collections continue to feature on 720 ABC for History Repeated each Friday at 2pm, and on 6PR's Remember When on Sunday nights. Listen in to discover more about the State Library's collections or listen online through the State Library website.

Recent radio interviews have covered an incredibly special collection of business ledgers from J&T Muramats, a business that operated in Cossack from 1891 prospering through the early twentieth century until the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1942.

Dr Kate Gregory shared the incredible story of Jiro Muramats, his importing merchant business and his pearling ventures and role within the Cossack community. These ledgers were discovered in Japan and in May 2022 were donated to the State Library. They are fully digitised and accessible online through the State Library catalogue.

The State Library's Dr Adam Trainer was interviewed about Bon Scott's legacy as a performer and revealed another side to Bon as revealed in his personal correspondence. One of Western Australia's favourite sons, Bon Scott is well-loved as the original frontman of the rock band AC/DC and is known for his raw, honest lyrics. But did you know that Bon was also a prolific letter writer? Since 2019 the State Library of Western Australia has acquired five of Bon's letters. Two letters to his friend Colin Moore were recently added to the Library's collection alongside some of the last photos to be taken of Bon in Australia before his death.

<https://slwa.wa.gov.au/stories/slwa-abc-radio>



State Records Office - News from the Archives

More that is new in the SRO catalogue:

Last year a considerable collection of the nomenclature records from Landgate (formerly Department of Lands and Surveys) were transferred to SRO and recent additions to the SRO online catalogue include Consignment 7701, the nomenclature cards. These cards were microfiched many decades ago and the microfiche has been in constant use in, and is still available in, the Battye Library. These cards document places and topographical features throughout Western Australia.

Also received from Landgate was a set of cards and volumes of Aboriginal words, Consignment 7684. There are two types of cards – Aboriginal words with English interpretations and English words with Aboriginal interpretations.

In April some sets of government department volumes of newspaper clippings were transferred from the State Library to SRO and we thank SLWA for this. The collections are:

- 22 volumes of newspaper cuttings collected by the Premiers Department from 1911 to 1940, and including volumes dedicated to specific premiers such as James Mitchell and Philip Collier.
- Other volumes cover general events and there is one for the 1929 Western Australian centenary. These were formerly PR 676 in the Battye Library collection and are now Consignment 7702.
- 2 volumes of newspaper cuttings collected by the Public Health Department, 1903 – 1936. Formerly PR 2871 in the Battye Library and now Consignment 7703.
- 2 volumes from the Department of Agriculture, 1944 – 1953. Formerly PR 2442 in the Battye Library and now Consignment 7704.

Other additions to the State Archives Collection include:

- Consignment 7705: an album of W.A. Government Railways' outline drawings of locomotives, carriages and wagons 1906-1912. The drawings also include the total number in service within each class as at 30 June each year from 1906 to 1912.
- Consignment 7706: a set of drawings of a Christmas Island Phosphate Commission diesel locomotive that originated in Canada but was upgraded at the W.A. Government Railways' Midland Workshops in the 1970s.

Convict Records added to SRO Catalogue

Genealogical and convict researchers will be aware that access to Convict Department records in consignment 1156 has largely been through the typed AN 358 listing. SRO has commenced adding these critically important archives into the SRO's online catalogue and to date has added 407 items and 9 new series entries. Examples of these are series 5056 (search 'S5056' in the catalogue), the collection of R convict registers and S5057, the Casual Sick registers (Cons1156 CS volumes).

In conducting this work, the SRO is making some 'new finds', such as registers of local prisoners at Bunbury Gaol (for the period 1933-1962) being properly identified and catalogued (Series 5078).

The ongoing work to add local government records into the online catalogue continues. While the typed ANs are still required for many local government agencies, the minute books and rate books of the Shire of Perenjori, dating from 1924 have recently been added (S5059 and S5060) as have those of the Shire of Cranbrook, dating from 1926.

Finally, another large ongoing project is the processing of a collection of cancelled public plan townsite cadastral maps that are on aperture card. There are presently over 5,100 items of consignment 7561 in the online catalogue and they cover Abbots to Karratha so with much of 'K' and all of L – Z still to be listed there is still much to do. The cards date from the 1980s to some in the early 2000s and provide us with an important record of the towns and, as the Abbots example shows, give us a more 'recent' plan of many towns that were still gazetted but no longer have any inhabitants, whether in the goldfields, the timber country, or agricultural areas. The single Abbots plan was produced in 1988.

Behind the scenes

Digitisation Activities

Digitisation-on-Request

The SRO's digitisation-on-request service remains in steady use for public clients and government agencies alike. This service has been operating successfully since 2016. Under this service, clients can request State archives be digitised for a fee. This service is especially useful for remote clients who may be unable to visit to view archival material, although many local clients and organisations also utilise this service. Further information about this service and the fees that apply are available via the SRO website.

Digitisation Projects

The SRO has completed several large-scale projects for local government agencies, digitising Road Board Minutes and Rate books on an agency-pays basis.

The SRO has been assisting Royal Perth Hospital with digitisation of early hospital admission records and related items still in the custody of the hospital. These registers date back to 1876 and even include entries for former convicts admitted to the hospital (easily identifiable by their convict registration number noted in the volumes).

UWA Digitisation Centre

The SRO has been trialling the services of the UWA Digitisation Centre with a new project recently completed. This project comprised the digitisation of a petition presented to the Legislative Assembly in 1928 to request legislation be amended so that hotels close at 6pm. This petition is in the form of signed pages pasted onto a linen backing that has been carefully rolled but when unrolled, measures over 150 metres in length. Given the physical nature of the petition, access has not been possible to date. The petition has been digitised in sections. Digital copies have been formatted in different ways as an experiment in what is possible, including stitching all images together as one very long image (Cons 1067, item 1928/110).

Rottneest Island Commitment Book, 1863-1881. This volume is one of the original registers used to record Aboriginal prisoners being removed from different parts of the State to be imprisoned at Rottneest Island (Cons130).

A small selection of 19th century Public Works Dept plans including:

- Mulberry Plantation at East Perth (Cons 1647, item 818).
- Coffee Planting Machine for Champion Bay. We understand that this machine was designed for Bishop Serra who had recently arrived from South America, with the intent of establishing a coffee plantation in the Geraldton area (Cons 1647, item 871).
- Geraldton Public Buildings (Cons 1647, item 5257).
- Map of WA Stock Routes and Wells (Cons 1647, item 11257).

Ancestry Digitisation

The SRO has entered into a new Agreement with Ancestry Inc to digitise Grants of Probate and Letters of Administration registers (1832-1947). This digitisation project is being conducted in-house at the SRO and we have been joined by professional photographer Emma Stokes who is carrying out the digitisation. Emma has been conducting this work with enthusiasm and has shown such an interest in archival work that she is now considering further studies in this area.

Margaret Medcalf Award

Nominations for the 2023 Margaret Medcalf Award have recently closed with entries now subject to the judging process. The Margaret Medcalf Award recognises excellence in referencing and research in the use of State Archives held by the State Records Office of Western Australia

(SRO). The Award honours Ms Margaret Medcalf OAM, Western Australia's second State Archivist, for her valuable contribution to the development of archives in Western Australia. The winner of this Award receives a cash prize of \$1000 or shares this prize if there is more than one winner. Works nominated must demonstrate the use and accurate referencing of State Archives. Any work completed or published in 2022 calendar year is eligible to be submitted for nomination, and anyone, including the author of the work, may submit a nomination. Nominated works need not be published, may be fiction or non-fiction, and in any media.

The judging criteria for the Award are:

- Level of use of the State Archives Collection.
- Proficient and consistent use of referencing.
- Level of contribution to knowledge (historical, cultural, heritage, etc.)
- Original use of the State Archives Collection.
- Presentation.

This year's Award will be presented later in 2023.

Geoffrey Bolton Lecture

The second part of the 2022 Geoffrey Bolton Lecture was released as a podcast in early 2023. The speaker was Dr Julian Bolleter from UWA's School of Design and Co-Director of the Australian Urban Design Research Centre (AUDRC). The lecture explored our changing relationship with the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) – looking both 'downstream' (to the past two hundred years) and 'upstream' (to the next century). The podcast is available for listening via the SRO website (www.sro.wa.gov.au).

The Geoffrey Bolton Lecture is an annual presentation organised by the SRO to honour Geoffrey Bolton AO, Australian historian, academic and writer.

State Records Office on the airwaves

The SRO continues to explore different facets of WA history and the State Archives Collection through regular radio segments. This year, SRO's radio commitment has included:

ABC Radio (720 AM) – History Repeated with Sam Longley

- How WA marked the 1929 State Centenary.
- Bigamy cases in WA (with visiting Canadian academic Melanie Methot).

- Weeriana: restoration of enduring landmark (with current property owner Deon White).
- The East Perth Mulberry Plantation.
- Historical non-fiction based on archives (with award winning author Amanda Curtin).

The ABC turned three of these radio episodes into bigger online features on their website.

6PR Radio – Remember When with Harvey Deegan

- The records of Princess Margaret Hospital.
- Captain William Dundee: Master of Disaster.
- A brief history of Perth trolley buses.
- Ghost towns of WA.

RTRFM – Planet Perth with Jeff Bullen

The Police UFO file held in the State Archives Collection.

RTRFM has also interviewed former State Archivist Margaret Medcalf OAM on the *Herstory* podcast in which Margaret talks about her life and work in the archives. You can listen back to this podcast through the RTRFM website.

Print and Online Media

The SRO and records from the State Archives Collection feature regularly in the weekend edition of the *West Australian's* 'Untold History of WA' series written by Malcolm Quekett.

Records from the State Archives collection were also used in a recent article in *The Conversation* about citizenship legislation in the 1940s relating to Aboriginal people.

Outreach

The SRO has recently provided presentations on State Archives to:

- Fremantle Press Emerging Writers workshop.
- Notre Dame University history and archaeology students.
- National Archives Seminar (Boorloo Heritage Festival).
- National Archives Seminar (Ghost Towns of WA).

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.

David Whiteford / Damien Hassan, SROWA



Our website

Thanks to Friends' Committee members Lorraine and Cherie of Swan Genealogy, the Friends of the Batty Library website has been updated and is well worth an exploration visit.

You will find it at:

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

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

LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$500

Annual Membership

Ordinary	\$25
Joint	\$35
Concession (pensioner / full time student)	\$15
Corporate	\$50
Donation	\$ _____

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

I wish to apply for / renew membership:

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Do you wish to receive emails about meetings or events? YES or NO
How would you like to receive your Newsletter? POSTED or by EMAIL

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

BSB Number – 016-185

Account Name – Friends of Battye Library (Inc)

Account Number – 4220 58413

In the reference section, please use your initial and surname as well as 'subs' or 'donation' to ensure that your payment can be identified.

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

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

Afterwords - Steve Errington

Nineteen boys from the 'Philanthropic'

Before the first shipload of convicts arrived at Swan River in 1850 several groups of young people had been sent out as servants and farm labourers. These started with boys and girls sent by the Children's Friend Society, the first batch of whom were brought back by the Stirlings in 1834. Parkhurst boys (or lads, or apprentices) started arriving in 1842 from Parkhurst Prison, a juvenile prison on the Isle of Wight.

The third source were boys sent by the Philanthropic Society. At least 45 boys were sent to the Swan River Settlement by the 'Philanthropic' in the years 1848 and 1854. The Society's archives are held by the Surrey History Centre in Woking, and the names of 34 of the boys are clearly identified on their website.¹

The Society had been formed in 1788 but the idea of emigration to colonies needing labour emerged only in the 1840s. Boys were eventually sent to all corners of the British Empire, and Swan River gets only two lines in Muriel Whitten's history of the early decades of the Society.

The society would certainly pilot the scheme by sending a contingent of 19 boys to Swan River, Perth, 'under private arrangements' in August 1848.²

The content of our two lines hides something significant: the nineteen boys sent here were the first to be sent anywhere. They arrived in Fremantle on the barque *Ranee* on 13 December 1848. The captain spoke highly of the boys' behaviour on the voyage out, but the names weren't recorded.

Only Thomas Muggeridge is listed on the Surrey History Centre website as being sent out on the *Ranee* and he is only there by happy accident (the database is actually about admissions to the Philanthropic Farm School at Redhill in Surrey but the farm wasn't secured until after the *Ranee* had left).

On a May visit to England I went to Woking to find the missing eighteen names, thinking that they might appear in the Philanthropic Society's 1848 annual report. They didn't – the content closed in May 1848. There was no 1849 or 1850 report but it was suggested that I look at the 1851 report of the Farm School.

RETURN OF SITUATIONS AND CHARACTERS OF BOYS LEFT BY OF THE PHILANTHROPIC SOCIETY TO SWAN RIVER, FEB. 1849, 1849.

Name.	Master's Name and Address.	How employed.	Character.
Alexander, George	J. Everett, Bunbury	Thatcher	Indifferent
Boxhall, James	F. Slade, Toodyay	Domestic & genl. servt.	Partly good
Buzzard, William	Smith & Moore, Perth	Farm servant	Good
Brown, Henry	D. Moore, Fremantle	Domestic	Indifferent
Corbet, Edward	H. Mosley, Swan River	Farm servant	Indifferent
O'Connor, Daniel	S. Moore, Swan River	Idiot	Good
McCabe, Daniel	Goods to York	look for work	Good, but rather un- settled
Frost, Alexander	W. Pollard, Murrumbidgee	Farm servant	Excellent
Humphries, John Henry	D. Scott, Fremantle	Tailor (now absent at L. of France)	Excellent of France)
Hetherington, Daniel	E. de Burch, York	Farm servant	Excellent
Haggeridge, John Thomas	G. Elliot, Bunbury	Domestic	Excellent

Name.	Master's Name and address.	How employed.	Character.
Quin, Thomas	Not known		
Sullivan, William	P. Lockyer, Perth	Miller and genl. servt.	Good
Simpson, John	W. Cruise, Swan River	Farm servant	Good
Silk, John	Not known		Silk has I think left the colony.
Tunncliffe, John	C. Armstrong, Murray	Farm servant	Excellent
Tansey, George	Deserted from	the Champion	At South Australia
Wildy, Alfred	W. Burges, Northam	Shepherd	Bad
Wood, John (or Hood)	Transported for arson, now at	Rollnest Island	W. Australia

J. D. WITTENOOM, *id.*

And there, in this tiny archival survival, in an unrelated appendix, were the nineteen names, together with feedback on the boys from Colonial Chaplain JB Wittenoom, dated 10 June 1850.³

The document also included copies of letters home from Thomas Muggidge (who was delighted to be working for Resident Magistrate George Eliot in Bunbury), and Henry Brown who was in May 1849 working for Captain Richard Meares, Resident Magistrate of York ('I have ... seen two kangaroos alive, and they hop very curiously').

At least five of the boys had previously been in Parkhurst Prison⁴ but, despite this, the nineteen had a low profile in the Colony. With the striking exception of Joseph Wood who was sentenced in April 1849 to fifteen years transportation for arson, none of the nineteen are mentioned in the *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*.

Wood welcomed a familiar face to the Fremantle Round House in May 1849 when fellow *Ranee* arrival John Humphries joined him to serve 40 days for a misdemeanour.

I must add that, on the day of my visit to Woking, a volunteer called Jill was busy indexing the names of Philanthropic boys who had been mentioned in letters home. She hadn't yet reached the four 'Western Australia' pages at the back of her volume but allowed me to interrupt her labours and photograph them. The letters were written by boys sent out in 1854. Of whom, more later.

1. Royal Philanthropic School Redhill - Registers of Admissions held at Surrey History Centre (surreycc.gov.uk)

2. Muriel Whitten, *Nipping Crime in the Bud; How the Philanthropic quest was put into law*, Waterside Press, Hampshire, 2011, p. 222. The book ends with the passage of the Reformatory Schools Act in 1854.
3. The Philanthropic Farm School, Redhill, Surrey, 1851, 2271/1/3, Surrey History Centre, Woking.
4. Report on Conduct & Circumstances of Parkhurst & Millbank boys', dated 5 July 1848, HO 45/1649, The National Archives, Kew.

Steve Errington

NOTE TO READERS

Steve Errington's article 'The "populous town of Clarence" in his 'Afterwords' page, in the November 2022 issue of our *Newsletter*, has generated some interesting discussion.

Dr Shane Burke, Senior Lecturer, Archaeology and History, at the University of Notre Dame, has a different view to Steve on the location of Thomas Peel's camp, and has drawn attention to his own brief on the subject, on *ResearchGate*, at:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/371379952_The_location_of_Thomas_Peel's_camp_1829-1830

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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.friendsofbattyselibrary.org.au>

For membership information, subscription, change of address etc email Cherie at membership@friendsofbattyselibrary.org.au

For comments, requests for information, a copy of the Friends of Battye Library (Inc) Constitution, or to send articles and notices for the *Newsletter*, please contact:

Heather at battiefriends@gmail.com

or write to:

The Editor
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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
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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)

Volunteers Ring (08) 9427 3266 or email:
 volunteers@slwa.wa.gov.au

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.

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