



FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.) NEWSLETTER

ABN 571625138800

Charles Lane Poole and Premier Mitchell: a drama of conservation, politics and personalities

Dr John Dargavel

Visiting Fellow, Fenner School of Environment and Society ANU



Charles Lane-Poole (back row, 3rd from right) at the
Forestry Conference Perth in 1917.

(Photo courtesy Battye Library 012675D)

The meeting will be held on
Tuesday 10 March 2009,
5.30pm for 6pm start

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

Please see details on Page 3

Our Meeting

Tuesday 10 March 2009
Great Southern Room, 4th floor
State Library of Western Australia
5.30pm for 6.00pm. (Please note later starting time)

Our speaker will be Dr John Dargavel

Charles Lane Poole and Premier Mitchell

Charles Lane Poole arrived in Western Australia in 1916 to put the State's forests in good order. He was well qualified, experienced, energetic, passionate about forest conservation and intolerant. He laid the foundations of modern forestry in legislation, organisation, training, science, technology, publicity and much else. He was continually frustrated in his attempts to control the timber industry and have the best forests of the Southwest reserved from clearing.

Sir James Mitchell, Premier from 1919-1924 and 1930-1933 was a keen advocate of the group settlement scheme. WA was heavily in debt and relied on the London money market to re-finance its loans. When Lane Poole needed to curtail the timber concessions granted to the British-owned Millars Timber and Trading Co., the scene was set for a stormy conflict that only ended with Lane Poole's resignation in 1921 and a Royal Commission.

We will be going to dinner at a nearby restaurant after the meeting and members and guests are most welcome to join us. Bookings can be made on the night.

Important notices:

Due to bookings of the Great Southern Room which are not scheduled to finish until 5pm, our meetings for this year will be starting half an hour later and begin at 5.30pm for 6pm.

Newsletter: Due to rising costs, our newsletter will revert to being produced four times this year - March, June, September and November.

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.

About our speaker - Dr John Dargavel

Dr Dargavel is an honorary Visiting Fellow in the Fenner School for Environment and Society at the Australian National University where he is actively engaged in forest history research. He has degrees in forestry from the Universities of Edinburgh and Melbourne.

His doctorate from the Australian National University analysed the historical development of the Tasmanian wood industries. He worked as a forester in government and industry for over twenty years, before moving to the Australian National University in 1978. He has researched and taught in the areas of forest economics, politics and history. He is the immediate past President of the Australian Forest History Society.

John is the author of more than 70 published papers covering forest management, industrial and labour history, trade, forest and environmental politics, and cultural aspects of landscape and remembrance. He has edited 10 books of conference proceedings on forest policy and history. His book on Australian forest history, *Fashioning Australia's Forests* (Oxford University Press) was published in 1995 and a biography, *The Zealous Conservator: a life of Charles Lane Poole* (University of Western Australia Press) in 2008.

John has also kindly donated a copy of his latest book to the Friends as a raffle prize. As John remarked "I spent many hours in the Battye and more in the State Archives downstairs. I am especially pleased to talk to Friends meeting, as I am Vice-President of our Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives at ANU.



Dr John Dargavel

(Photo courtesy Dr Dargavel)

At the conclusion of the meeting, Dr Dargavel's biography of Charles Lane Poole will be launched and available for sale. John will be happy to sign copies for members and guests.

Message from the President.

Dear Friends,

Happy 2009 to you all. I am positive this will be good year both for Battye Library and the State Records Office.

In January, with Nick Drew the Friends Treasurer, I was invited to an informal meeting with Susan Ashcroft the State Library's new Director of Client Services. We were very impressed with Susan who was eager to hear about our history and objectives, and she told us about the future plans for the Library. These include moving the Research Room from the 4th floor to the 3rd where the Historical Records Rescue Consortium was based for about 3 years, and big changes for the ground floor, some of these changes are described in more detail later in this newsletter. At the next Committee meeting Susan will be giving us more details which I can then pass on to our members.

Since Malcolm Traill left in November I am pleased to announce Sarah Brown has settled in well as the new Battye Historian. Some of you might have met her at our end of year dinner when she helped us behind-the-scenes.

We have organised some very good speakers for this year and so I do hope to see you at our Meetings (to support the Battye Library!!) and, if you wish, afterwards at our informal dinners. With very best wishes

Pamela Statham Drew

Our speakers program for this year's General Meetings is being finalised. To date the schedule of addresses is:

10 March - Dr John Dargavel - Lane Poole

12 May - to be confirmed

14 July - Annual General Meeting: State Library and State Records Office staff - Projects, initiatives and innovations.

8 September - Dr Ronda Jamieson - biographer of Sir Charles Court.

24 November - End of year function - speaker to be confirmed.

Further information about speakers will be published in the next newsletter.

Meet Susan Ashcroft, Director of Client Services, State Library

Susan has had experience working in various library sectors during her career. She has worked in special libraries, academic libraries, public libraries and a state library.

In 2001, Susan was the Director: Public Library Services at the State Library of Western Australia for over four years after which she went to live in the UK. During her time there, she ran a public library service in inner London.

Susan has experience in areas such as marketing, information consultancy and, investment and trade, and throughout her time within government was also involved in policy development.

(Information extracted from the State Library's website: http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/about_us/who_we_are/senior_staff)

News from the Director, Client Services

Redevelopment of the ground floor

The State Library is redeveloping its ground floor area and renovations are to commence next month. Clients will see a major change to the area. A new community space will be created that focuses on providing improved access to technology and digital information.

The area will have significantly increased numbers of workstations and clients will be encouraged to use their laptops via the free wifi network at desks and lounges. There will be flexible configurations in place that will allow groups to work and study together. Computers will be able to be used also for small informal training sessions, group talks and for awareness-raising of electronic resources.

Access to national and international newspapers in hard copy and electronic format will continue to be available from the ground floor however all other materials will be removed and distributed amongst the other floors or housed in stack areas.

As part of the redevelopment there will also be a new flexible exhibition space, and a redeveloped Welcome Desk.

ST200X microform scanners training at the State Library

The State Library is happy to announce that ST200X microform scanner training sessions are now available. Sessions will be conducted between

9:30 – 10:30am on Wednesday 18th February and 4th and 18th March at the 1st floor Genealogy Centre. Bookings are required and can be made by contacting the State Library on 9427 3111. If you cannot make it to the training sessions, there are a number of “Super Users” who are also available to assist clients. The Library has also prepared a series of in-depth ST200X user guides that will help with the use of the new equipment.

Susan Ashcroft

Notes from the Battye Historian

Dead Reckoning

The long awaited update of *Dead Reckoning: How to find your way through the genealogical jungle of Western Australia* is now underway. Thanks to the Sholl Bequest, Steve Howell, Senior Subject Specialist - Battye, is busy revising this comprehensive guide to the publications and documentary collections which contain information relevant to family history in Western Australia. The State Library hopes to have the update completed by the end of March, and ready for viewing on the State Library's website shortly thereafter. The revised edition will be fully text searchable, and will be a valuable addition to our online databases.

Jack Fletcher's papers

The State Library has very recently acquired the papers of Jack Fletcher who came to Western Australia from the US in 1965 with a view to establishing a massive agricultural business which would turn the Fitzroy River Valley in the Kimberley into a foodbowl. Jack Fletcher has long been an enthusiastic advocate for renewable resource development in the Kimberley. The acquisition of his personal diaries from 1964-1984 and the records of the Australian Land and Cattle Company – the largest and most successful private investment in renewable resource development in the Kimberley – is a great addition to our collections.

The Police Gazettes

In November we alerted you to a new exciting development in scanning technology: Caval's new Kirtas high-speed scanner. We are now pleased to advise that our test of this new scanner resulted in a fully searchable, fantastic viewing quality, digital copy of the Police Gazette. The State Library, supported by the Sholl Bequest, now plans to have digitised all copies of the Police Gazettes from 1876-1900.

Upon completion of the digitisation the State Library will make these texts fully available online. This will be of major benefit to many researchers.
Sarah Brown.

Email addresses needed

To enable us to share information and keep members up to date on important happenings, we have a group email list for current members. If you would like to be kept informed of important matters or forthcoming events relevant to the Battye Library and the State Records Office, please email me at bevnjen@gmail.com or Nick Drew at nickdrew@bigpond.com .

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

State Library Bookshop - discount for members

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

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

Archival quality materials

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

Jennie Carter

Lunchtime Seminars at the State Records Office of WA

Each year the State Records Office offers a series of Lunchtime seminars featuring a variety of topics. These seminars are designed to inform researchers about the State Records Office and the collection it houses, and also about the research carried out by researchers using the archives in

the SRO. Seminars provide researchers with an opportunity to meet fellow researchers, learn about staff members of the SRO, and they also provide a forum for questions and discussions in a relatively informal setting.

Lunchtime seminar program for 2009:

The State Records Office of Western Australia invites you to the 2009 series of these popular events. Seminars are held from 12.30-1.30pm on the advertised day. Dates and venues will be confirmed and advertised a fortnight before each seminar. Attendees are encouraged to bring their sandwiches and drinks to the seminars. Tea and coffee are provided.

Proposed dates, presenters, topics and venues for 2009 are:

Wed 18 February - Speaker: David Hutchison - Topic: *Many Years a Thief* – the story of John Gavin, the 15 year old boy who became the first European legally executed in Western Australia. Venue: Southwest Room, Ground Floor, Alexander Library Building, Perth Cultural Centre

Tues 7 April – Speaker: Gerard Foley - Topic: *Before Siam* - Anna Leonowens in Western Australia. Venue: Great Southern Room, 4th floor Alexander Library Building,

Wed 27 May - Speaker: Tom Reynolds – Topic: *Business Records in the State archives collection.* Venue: Southwest Room, Ground Floor, Alexander Library Building,

Tues 7 July – Speaker: South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council - Topic: In celebration of NAIDOC week - *Archives and the Indigenous experience in the South West.* Venue: Great Southern Room, 4th floor Alexander Library Building,

Tues 6 Oct - Speaker: Professor Anna Haebich - Topic: *The Story of Martha Rendell* – the last woman hanged in WA. Venue: Great Southern Room, 4th floor Alexander Library Building.

Wed 18 Nov – Speaker: to be advised - Topic: to be advised. Venue: to be advised.

The State Records Office also welcomes suggestions for further seminar themes, as well as offers to present a seminar.

Bookings can be made in person at the Search Room Desk or by telephone on 9427 3360.

Gerard Foley, Archivist (Seminar Organiser)

State Records Office news

Margaret Medcalf Award

The State Records Office is pleased to call for Nominations for the Margaret Medcalf Award for works produced in the calendar year 2008.

A cash prize of \$1,000 is awarded to the winner of the award. Nominations close on 31 March 2009. The Award winner will be announced in May 2009.

This annual Award honours Margaret Medcalf, the second State Archivist for Western Australia (1971-1989), for her valuable contribution to the development of archives in Western Australia.

Nominated works must demonstrate use of archival sources, and substantial (but not necessarily exclusive) use of State archives held by the State Records Office. They may be fiction or non-fiction and may comprise any format (i.e. book, article, conference paper, website, index, etc). Nominated works can be published or unpublished.

Nominations may be submitted by anyone, including the author of the work.

The State Records Office will request copies of works from nominees for presentation to the judging panel and short-listed works will be retained by the SRO. The judging panel for the Award consists of a member of the State Records Commission, the Director of State Records and a well-known WA-based historian.

The judging criteria for the Award are:

Level of use of the State archives collection: How much does the work rely on archival sources for its argument? What proportion of the cited works are State archives?

Use of referencing: How well does the work reference the sources in the State archives collection? How easy would it be to locate the archival sources the author references?

Level of contribution to knowledge: (historical, cultural, heritage, etc).

Original use of the State archives collection: Does the work use new archival material or use different sources to answer questions or highlight issues? Is well known archival material dealt with in a new or different way?

Presentation: How well has the work been crafted? How well does it stimulate interest in the material? Does the work have community appeal?

Completed nomination forms should be sent to:

Director: State Records,
Alexander Library Building,
Perth Cultural Centre, Perth, WA 6000

by close of business Tuesday, 31 March 2009.

Gerard Foley

Members' news

Rob O'Connor QC - retirement

One of our Friends of Battye Library Committee members and our Honorary legal adviser, prominent Perth Queens Counsel Robert O'Connor, retired at the end of January.

Rob hosted a retirement party for about 200 people including the Governor Dr Ken Michael, AC at the Weld Club, where his son Peter was MC for the occasion. Rob's daughters Simone and Stephanie gave speeches in honour of their father and Patrick Mugliston, a barrister from Rob's Francis Burt Chambers, gave a very glowing speech outlining Rob's legal career and his many achievements.

Rob worked for fifteen years in the Australian Taxation Office in Perth and at Head Office in Canberra, seven years as a solicitor and partner at Mallesons, five and a half years as a junior barrister and 19 years as a Queen's Counsel at the Francis Burt Chambers

Rob was Deputy Chairman of the Government House Foundation for six years, and a member of the Board of the Constitutional Centre of WA for seven years

He was on the Council of the Royal Western Historical Society for two years and is the Law Society representative on the State Records Advisory Committee A few years ago he served two years on the Management

Committee of the Friends of Batty Library and rejoined it again in 2007. We are all pleased that he intends to keep up these community interests in his retirement as well as seeing more of his grandchildren and travelling.

We wish him all the very best.

Pamela Statham Drew



Members of the Friends of Batty Library (Inc) with Rob O'Connor QC 29 January 2009

L-R: June Shenton-Turner, Bill James, Pamela Statham Drew, Rob, Ruth Marchant James, Jennie Carter, Margaret Medcalf, Lennie McCall (partly obscured).

(Photo courtesy Nick Drew)

Another role for Nick

Nick Drew, our ever efficient and indefatigable Treasurer, was recently elected as Treasurer of the History Council of WA and also Hon Treasurer of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies Inc. which is the peak body based in Canberra representing the interests of approximately 950 historical societies across Australia.

Sholl Bequest

The State Records Office's CSO project

Since 2007, the State Records Office has been working on a project to list the correspondence files of the Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO), dating from between 1883 and 1918. These historically significant records document the day-to-day running of the Swan River Colony – and later the State of Western Australia – during a time of rapid growth and change. The Colonial Secretary's Office records are considered the backbone of the State archives collection and cover an extensive range of subjects. Access to this material has traditionally proved difficult for researchers, as the records were not sufficiently described or listed to make them useful and the records as a whole remained under-utilised for research purposes. The aim of this project has been to ensure they are fully described and made accessible through AEON, the SRO's online catalogue. This project has been made possible through funding provided by the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) through its Sholl Bequest.

Funding from the Friends meant that a project officer, Andrew Morant, could be employed to work on the files and over 14,000 Colonial Secretary's Office files have been listed. Dating from 1883 until the granting of Responsible Government in 1890, these files are now accessible through the SRO's website via AEON and may be viewed on application in the State Records Office Search Room.

Some of the subjects covered in Andrew's listing are files relating to:

- Inquests and legal cases;
- Parliamentary and electoral matters;
- The construction and maintenance of railways, telegraphs, water supplies and other infrastructure;
- The establishment of police, local health boards and schools throughout Western Australia;
- Immigration, customs and naturalization applications and certificates;
- International correspondence and liaison;
- Employment applications;
- Relief to the poor;
- Correspondence with religious bodies.

The files of this period also document activity in the goldfields as the gold rush commences. The files record negotiations in the lead up to self-government and by 1890 there is even debate about Federation. For genealogists, the files contain extensive references to the names of

officials, settlers and Aboriginal people.

All project funding has now been utilized and the State Records Office acknowledges and warmly thanks FOBS for supporting increasing access to the State's Archives.

Gerard Foley

To the 'End of the Earth' for a silk newspaper

Recently, as a result of a campaign by the National Library of Australia and State and Territory Libraries to locate Australia's missing newspapers, a rare silk edition of the Meekatharra Miner of 7 August 1909 was donated to the Battye Library (we are always on the lookout for newspapers to fill gaps in our collection, so please contact us if you find any issues). The production of a few issues of the first edition of a newspaper printed on silk or cotton (usually pink, blue or cream) was a common practice in Western Australia in the early years of the 20th century. They are a beautiful and enduring memento of a newspaper's birth and the Battye Library has about a dozen in its collection.

Meekatharra is a gold town and a centre for pastoral and mining interests in the East Murchison, some 764 kilometres north-east of Perth. With a population of about 2,000, it is the centre of a shire of c100,000 square kilometres (about the size of South Korea) of semi-desert where mining, sheep and cattle are the major activities. 'Meekatharra' is thought to mean 'place of little water' - given the town's position on the edge of the desert and its annual rainfall of less than 250 mm, an apt description.

First settlement of Meekatharra began in 1894, but it was not until gold was discovered in May 1896, that the town prospered. However, success was short-lived until a second gold discovery in 1899. In 1901 the Meekatharra State Battery began operation and the town was officially gazetted on 25 December 1903. From 1906-1908 Alfred Canning developed the Canning Stock Route of 54 wells from the East Kimberley to the Murchison. The railway came to Meekatharra in 1910 and the town became the railhead at the end of the route, ensuring its survival. Shipment of wool began in 1910 and it continued to serve local pastoral interests until it closed in 1978.

Today the gold mining activities of the past have left a rich legacy for the

town, as the relics of yesteryear still dot the countryside, to the delight of the tourist. Many still go prospecting, often with success. The new Meeka Rangelands Discovery Trail provides an insight into this mining past along with the town's Indigenous heritage. Meekatharra also is the first town in Australia to be powered by solar energy and its 2181 metre runway (built by the Americans during the war) was Perth's alternative in case of emergency.

Meekatharra did achieve brief notoriety in October 1977 when (then) Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser visited the town on 7 October. While there, his plane developed engine trouble and he was stranded for a few hours until Lang Hancock offered him the use of his private jet to fly home. A few days later, at a luncheon, Tamie Fraser was heard to refer to Meekatharra as "the end of the earth." The people of Meekatharra took this in good fun and invited Mrs Fraser to their Rocktober Cup race meeting in October 1978. Mrs Fraser accepted and undertook a range of activities while there (including the presentation of the cup). Her graciousness and willingness to make amends for her remark won the hearts of the Meekatharra people.

Steve Howell
(Senior Subject Specialist; Batty Library)



Mrs Tamie Fraser ca1977.
(photo courtesy State Library of Victoria - Image Number: hp001040)



Example of a page from *The Camp Chronicle* 1915, a silk newspaper in the Batty Library's collection. (To view this and other treasures of the Batty Library see: <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/treasures/index.htm>)

Exhibitions and events

No exhibitions are planned for the State Library's Centre for the Book until April 2009, following the reorganisation of the ground floor space.

Exciting new textile and history project for RWAHS

WA textile artist Wendy Lugg will create new work inspired by local history as she undertakes a short term artist residency with the Royal Western Australian Historical Society, in a mutually beneficial arrangement.

The artist will be afforded an opportunity to delve deeply into the Society's comprehensive collection of costume and heritage artefacts, as well as its library resources in order to develop artworks exploring the intertwining of history, place and identity. For the Society, the residency activities will offer a new means to encourage the community to reflect on, explore and experience the stories contained in our state's material cultural heritage.

Funding from the WA Department of Culture and the Arts has enabled the Society to host Wendy Lugg's residency. The artist has a substantial international career spanning more than 20 years and is highly experienced, with a broad-ranging arts practice including exhibiting, curatorial work, writing and delivering public and educational programs at home and overseas.

A strong interest in domestic textiles and their associated stories and cultural traditions has informed the artist's work for many years. Having travelled the world researching other cultural traditions, she is excited by this opportunity to explore her own identity as a Western Australian whose grandparents all came to this State from elsewhere.

Throughout the residency the community will be able to view the artist's work and inspirations on display in the Society Museum. At the conclusion of the residency Wendy will exhibit her new works alongside items from the collection, continuing the dialogue between artefact and artwork which is becoming a hallmark of her work.

The artist will be primarily based at Stirling House, 49 Broadway, Nedlands, but will also visit metropolitan and regional affiliated societies and museums, speaking and conducting workshops in places ranging from Nedlands to Fremantle, Mundaring to Kalgoorlie. Wendy's

residency was launched on Tuesday 10th February and will culminate in exhibitions in the Museum at Stirling House and in the State Library of Western Australia.

[Information submitted by Deb Wilson (Executive Officer RWAHS).]

Historic WA archival film screenings

The State Library regularly presents film screenings in the comfortable surroundings of the Alexander Library Building theatre.

The Wednesday Film matinee resumes on 4 February 2009 and features films and videos from the collections held by the State Library. Screenings usually run for about 60 minutes.

Screening start time 12.30pm. Admission FREE

25 March WA Memories On Film

A selection of short films from the State Film Archives

Lamb for world market [1959] (colour; sound; 11 min) (Preparation of fat lambs for export to the U.K.)

All on a summer's day [1969] (colour; sound; 12 min) (Follows the working day of an MTT bus crew.)

Royalty returns [1963] (colour; sound; 19 min) (Queen Elizabeth's and Prince Philip's tour of Western Australia)

Moving mountains [1969] (colour; sound; 18 min) (Operation of Hamersley Iron development at Mt. Tom Price.)

Of interest to government archives researchers

British 30 year rule under scrutiny

An independent team has been reviewing the UK government's 30 year rule (the term used for: (1) the requirement to transfer public records to The National Archives or an alternative place of deposit by the time they are 30 years old and (2) the expiry of some exemptions in the FOI Act after 30 years). <http://www.30yearrulereview.org.uk>

The chief recommendation - that official papers be made public after 15 years instead of 30 was welcomed by the British Justice Secretary, saying the Government agreed there should be a phased “substantial reduction” in the (access) time limit. <http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/announcement290109a.htm>

This will be of particular interest to Australian researchers of government archives here. There have been calls in Australia, including WA, to reduce the time that Cabinet documents, in particular, are closed. There are also broader implications for the regime of transfer and the period for opening records at National Archives Australia, and other archives which have a generic closed access period.

(Supplied by Julia Wallis, Executive Officer of the History Council of WA.)

‘History in the Pub’

The History Council of Western Australia hosted another highly successful ‘History in the Pub’ session at the Albion Hotel, Cottesloe on 18 January. The guest speaker was Ruth Marchant James who will be well known to our members as one the Friends ‘Gems of Time ‘ which was conferred on her in 2006. Ruth is a noted Western Australian historian and last year we were delighted to learn that she had won the Premier’s Award for History.

Ruth spoke about aspects of her research for her award winning history *Cottesloe: A Town of Distinction*. Despite the heat on a sunny Sunday afternoon, more than 100 people crowded in to hear Ruth give a lively and entertaining talk. Afterwards, Ruth signed copies of her book for the many people who were keen to learn more about this historic suburb.



Ruth (centre) signing copies of her history book, *Cottesloe: A Town of Distinction*.

(Photo courtesy Jenny Edgecombe)

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June 2009



FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.) NEWSLETTER

ABN 571625138800

Annual General Meeting

Gerard Foley
State Records Office
Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO)
files 1883 to 1890

and

Steve Howell
State Library of WA
Dead Reckoning online



**1890 - The last Executive Council
before Responsible Government.**

Standing L-R: J Amherst, A O Lefroy,
Sir J Forrest, J. A Wright, Sir J.G. Lee
Steere; Sitting L-R: Sir M Fraser, Gov-
ernor Sir F N Broome, C N Warton.
(Courtesy Battye Library 032657PD)

Our meeting will be held on
Tuesday 14 July 2009
5.30pm for 6.00pm
(Please note later starting time)

Great Southern Room, 4th floor
State Library of Western Australia
Please see details on Page 3

Objectives

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

Patron Mrs Ruth Reid

Emeritus President Professor Geoffrey Bolton

Committee (2008-2009)

President Dr Pamela Statham Drew

Vice President Mrs Gillian O'Mara

Secretary Mrs Lorraine Dearnley

Treasurer Mr Nick Drew

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

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

Newsletter editor Ms Jennie Carter

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

All correspondence to:
The Secretary, PO Box 216, Northbridge WA 6865

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

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 14 July 2009

Great Southern Room, 4th floor

State Library of Western Australia

5.30pm for 6.00pm. (Please note later starting time)

Following the meeting and the submission of annual reports from the President, the CEO and State Librarian, Margaret Allen, and the Director of the State Records Office, Cathrin Cassarchis, staff will give presentations on two of the interesting new projects that have been funded by the Friends of Battye Library Inc.

Our speakers will be

Gerard Foley of the State Records Office

“The Colonial Secretary’s Office (CSO) files 1883 to 1890”

and

Steve Howell of the State Library of WA

“Dead Reckoning online”

We will be going to dinner at a nearby restaurant after the meeting and members and guests are most welcome to join us. Bookings can be made on the night.

Important notices:

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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.

About our speakers - Gerard Foley and Steve Howell

Gerard Foley is a Senior Archivist at the State Records Office of WA with responsibility for overseeing the operations of the Search Room; matters relating to restricted access archives; and the SRO's public programs, which include the Margaret Medcalf Award, the Geoffrey Bolton Lecture and a series of Lunchtime Seminars each year.

Gerard will be speaking about the results of the project to list the files of the Colonial Secretary's Office, which was made possible through funding provided by the Friends of Battye through its Sholl Bequest. 14,000 files dating from 1883 to 1890 were listed by Andrew Morant, and Gerard will talk about the project and the significant and interesting historical items that have been uncovered through his good work.

Steve Howell is the Senior Subject Specialist, Battye Library. He has been with the Battye Library for 32 years and is an acknowledged expert in Western Australian research using the Battye Library's collections. Steve is the author of *Dead Reckoning: How to find your way through the genealogical jungle of Western Australia* which was first published in 1997 and is currently being updated. It is planned that *Dead Reckoning* will soon be accessible from the State Library's website.

Steve will speak about his work on this exciting new project and how members will be able to use the online version in their own research.

Our speakers' program for 2009

8 September :

Dr Ronda Jamieson (biographer of Sir Charles Court.)

24 November :

End of year function (speaker to be confirmed.)

The National Library's Literary Journey of Australia tour - 12 days.

Departs 19 August 2009 and tour host will be Phillip Jones, Curator, author and historian of the South Australian Museum. Visiting Sydney, Kakadu, Arnhem Land, Darwin, Kimberley, Broome, Alice Springs and the Birdsville Track. Cost \$12,995. Further information ph: 1800 252 053; www.billpeachjourneys.com.au.

Message from the President.

Dear Friends,

Last month we were treated to one of Father Ted's wonderfully whimsical talks, this time on the *Curious Conveyances of Colonial Clergymen*. Turned out the conveyances were shanks pony, horses, bicycles, camels, various motor vehicles and maybe a boat (there was some controversy about the latter). Our Annual General meeting should be just as interesting as we will hear what has been going on behind the scenes at Battye and the State Records Office.

Can I entice any of you to nominate for our Committee? We meet at 4pm every second Tuesday in the months not covered by a general meeting. Business is usually over by 5pm or 5.30pm at the latest. Your society needs new ideas and replenishing energy – so do think about it. Nomination forms are in this issue of the newsletter.

Our Oral History Rescue project is inching closer towards action of some sort as the State Library has now provided a letter to Lotterywest assuring them of co-lateral support. Fingers crossed Lotterywest approves the grant.

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM on 14 July

Pamela Statham Drew

Current and recent projects funded by the Friends of Battye Library

Sholl Bequest

Robyn Taylor "Artists, Artisans and Manufacturing" database. 2009

Steve Howell "Dead Reckoning - online version". 2009

SLWA "Digitising and providing online access to the *Police Gazettes* 1876-1900". 2009

Battye 50th year grant

Julie Martin "WA Legislative Assembly Electoral Districts 1904-2000" index and guide. 2009

General Fund

Andrew Morant "CSO files - SRO online project" AEON access. 2008

SRO "Historical maps online" digitisation and online access. 2009/2010.

News from the Battye Historian

Strategic Directions

In April 2009 the State Library released its Strategic Directions 2009 – 2011 which represents its aspirations and focus as it continues to evolve its services to meet the needs of the Western Australian Community in an increasingly complex digital information world. The new Strategic Directions outline the Library's values and priority areas, which include:

1. Capturing the Western Australian Story
2. Enriching client experiences
3. Making content more accessible
4. Developing partnerships and community connections
5. Enhancing the public library network

For anyone interested in reading more, please visit our website: www.slwa.wa.gov.au/about_us/who_we_are/strategic_directions

Redevelopment of Ground Floor

The redevelopment of the ground floor is progressing as planned: the public toilets are now refurbished, cabling is currently being finalised and recruitment for new staff is currently underway. Upon completion (which is anticipated to be August) the new "Discovery Lounge" will provide clients with access to increased numbers of computers through SLWA workstations or wireless access, promote collections through a range of exhibitions and displays and promote the Library's newspaper collections in hard copy and digital format. The Discovery Lounge will be a welcoming and exciting space that will reflect contemporary practice in large public and research libraries.

Researchers' Room

At the end of June the State Library aims to open its relocated Researchers' Room which will enhance and enable improved service delivery and cater to the needs of all clients wanting access to rare materials and archives from the collections of the State Library. The Researchers' Room will be situated in the Battye Library reading room on the 3rd floor and will include five new computers and a new Canon Powershot G10 digital camera, complete with computer tethering software and copy stand. The Researchers' Room will support and expand client use of rare books and archival collections, provide greater access to materials for research, and provide a space for those undertaking sustained research projects to work efficiently and securely. Clients will also have access to specialist reference staff five days a week at particular times during the day.

The Place

On Sunday 24 May “The Place”, a new area for children and families at the State Library, was opened by the Hon John Day, Minister for Culture and the Arts. This new area is designed to provide children with books and stories to explore, as well as celebrating reading, writing and literacy. Children will be able see how stories are created with displays of drafts, manuscripts and original illustrations from Australian children’s picture books. This new area will also showcase the State Library’s collections for a new group of readers and researchers to discover, connecting students with our Western Australian heritage. A gallery and exhibition space will profile Western Australian writers and illustrators for children as well as linking with the Library’s heritage collection through education programs, events and activities.

Catalogue Only PCs

From 1 June, each floor of the State Library will have at least ONE “catalogue only” computer. These computers will be positioned next to the information desks on each floor and will be clearly signed.

Exhibitions Committee

The State Library has recently established an Exhibitions Committee to ensure the effective planning, coordination and implementation of displays, exhibitions and associated events across the State Library of Western Australia. The Committee has a clear mandate to showcase and profile State Library collections.

Krantz and Sheldon collection

The State Library, in partnership with the Heritage Council, is working on a project proposal to preserve and digitise some of the Krantz and Sheldon Collection, which consists of a large number of plans and approximately 200 boxes of records donated to the Battye Library by George Sheldon in 2002. The plans cover landmark buildings in Perth, government projects such as schools, hospital and state housing works, as well as many private buildings and apartment blocks. The records consist of letters, financial records, minutes and files relating to architectural projects, including architect instructions, building contracts, photographs and specifications. This is a wonderful partnership opportunity which will ensure that this important collection is preserved and readily accessible.

Australian Joint Copying Project (AJCP)

The Australian Joint Copying Project sought to microfilm important historical documents relating to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific housed in Britain. The State Library now offers a course on the AJCP which looks at the types of records available that might be of interest to family historians and explains how the collection is organised. The use of the AJCP handbooks and other indexes is also explained. Information from this new course will form the basis for a new information page on the State Library website. For anyone interested in the course please contact Tricia Fairweather on tricia.fairweather@slwa.wa.gov.au or 08 9427 3395.

Sarah Brown

Email addresses needed

To enable us to share information and keep members up to date on important happenings, we have a group email list for current members. If you would like to be kept informed of important matters or forthcoming events relevant to the Battye Library and the State Records Office, please email me at bevnjen@gmail.com or Nick Drew at nickdrew@bigpond.com .

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

State Library Bookshop - discount for members

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

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

Archival quality materials

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

Jennie Carter

State Records Office News

Lunchtime Seminars

Previously known as Sandwich Seminars, these events are designed to inform researchers about the State Records Office (SRO) and its collections. Speakers include SRO staff, researchers and Government agency staff. The program is organized by Gerard Foley of the SRO. The talks are usually held from 12.30 to 1.30 (on the advertised date) in the South-west room, which adjoins the SRO microfilm area on the ground floor of the Alexander Library Building.

On Wednesday 3 June Tom Reynolds, Archives Research Officer at the SRO, spoke about 'Business Regulation in WA 1858 -1990: Companies office records in the State archives collection'

The following seminars will be held later this year:

Tuesday 7 July - a speaker from the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council will give a NAIDOC week presentation, on the topic:

'Archives and the Indigenous experience in the South West'

Venue - Great Southern Room, 4th floor Alexander Library Building

Tuesday 6 October – Professor Anna Haebich, of Griffith University,

The story of Martha Rendell: last woman to be hanged in WA.

Venue – Great Southern Room, 4th floor Alexander Library Building

Margaret Medcalf Award

The State Records Commission established the Margaret Medcalf Award in 2003 for excellence in research and referencing utilizing original sources held in the State archives collection. This annual Award honours Miss Margaret Medcalf, the second State Archivist for Western Australia (1971-1989), for her valuable contribution to the development of archives in Western Australia.

The judging panel this year consisted of Dr Jean Chetkovich, from the Centre for Western Australian History at the University of WA, Ms Justine McDermott, State Records Commissioner, and Ms Cathrin Cassarchis, Director of State Records.

Ms Isla Macphail is this year's winner of the Award for her book, *Highest Privilege and Bounden Duty: A study of Western Australian parliamentary elections 1829-1901*. Commissioned by the Western

Australian Electoral Commission, the book was researched and written to celebrate 100 years of the Electoral Act 1907. At a special ceremony held on 20 May, Ms McDermott assisted Miss Medcalf with the presentation of a prize of \$1,000 to Isla Macphail.

A special certificate of commendation was also awarded to the book *Mowanjum: 50 years community history*, compiled and edited by Mary Anne Jebb, and published by Mowanjum Aboriginal Community and Mowanjum Artists, Spirit of the Wandjina Aboriginal Corporation.

Search Room Anniversary

In April 2009 the SRO celebrated the tenth anniversary of the opening of its public Search Room on the ground floor of the Alexander Library Building. The occasion generated media coverage in the West Australian on 14 April, in an article which highlighted the importance of convict records held by the SRO.

Cabinet Papers Launch

Since 2002 the SRO has organised a function, on or close to Foundation Day, to commemorate the annual release of the WA Cabinet papers from a 30 year access embargo. The release of the 1978 State Cabinet records saw good media coverage through The West Australia and through radio interviews on 720AM Local Radio and RTRFM Morning Magazine.

The papers reveal the concerns of Sir Charles Court's government about various issues, including: the serious health effects of asbestos on the remaining residents of Wittenoom and the decision to close the town forever; the expansion of Bauxite mining in the South West; plans for Uranium mining at Yeelirrie; and approval for drought relief and cloud seeding research. In 1978 State Cabinet also approved late night shopping one night a week; public service dress reforms allowing public servants to wear shirts without ties; and plans to mark the 150th anniversary of British settlement in WA in 1979. However, Cabinet did not approve of Sunday Football, or moves to ban tinted windows on vehicles.

More detailed information about the records can be found in the SRO's online Guide to the 1978 cabinet records; see www.sro.wa.gov.au/whatsnew

Volunteers

Pat Paterson, and Ann and Bruce Buchanan continue to be regular volunteers at SRO during 2009. Pat spends her Tuesdays relabeling archive boxes, and inserting stable liners in these boxes to protect the records stored within. The Buchanans continue to index references to convicts in the CSO outward letterbooks.

Tom Reynolds

State Records Commission News

There are two new appointees to the State Records Commission. In March 2009, the Governor of Western Australia appointed Ms Justine McDermott as a Commission member for three years, under the terms of the State Records Act 2000. Ms McDermott replaces the former Governor's appointee, Kandy-Jane Henderson, who retired from the Commission in 2008 after joining as an inaugural member in 2002.

Ms McDermott has worked in the field of information management since 1989, and is currently employed as the Manager, Archives and Records Management at the University of Western Australia. Justine's broad experience in the information management profession, spanning Commonwealth and State government organizations, make her very well equipped for her role as Commissioner.

Mr Sven Bluemmel, who was appointed as the new Information Commissioner in May, also joins the Commission as an ex officio member. Mr Bluemmel replaces Mr John Lightowlers, who previously acted in the position. Prior to taking up his appointment in May 2009, Sven held senior positions in the Public Sector Commission, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department. Sven also practised law in the private sector in Melbourne and Perth, where he was recognised as one of the leading lawyers in the areas of information and privacy law in the national publication Legal Profiles.

The SRO gratefully acknowledges the significant contributions made by Kandy Jane Henderson and John Lightowlers during their terms. The expertise and knowledge they brought to their respective roles was immensely valuable to the work of the Commission.

Cathrin Cassarchis
Director, State Records Office

Launch of the Wittenoom History - Dr Ken Michael AC

On May 25th, His Excellency Dr Ken Michael AC, Governor of Western Australia launched, the book by Jacqueline O'Brien and Pamela Statham Drew *On We Go: The Wittenoom Way: Legacy of a Colonial Chaplain*. Opening his speech the governor said:-

“This is a remarkable book, detailing the extraordinary life of the Reverend John Burdett Wittenoom as the Swan River Colony’s first Chaplain and the contribution that he and, subsequently, his family made to the growth and development of Western Australia. Four generations have been traced in detail in this handsomely illustrated volume and throughout runs a dominant theme of public service.

It began with the arrival of The Reverend John Wittenoom, with his four sons and sister in January 1830. Not only did John perform all the duties of a Colonial Chaplain – when there was no other minister of any religion in the colony, he also founded our system of education. By conducting baptisms, marriages and burials during 35 years, John also touched almost every family in the isolated colony, and through his passion for music lifted their spirits.

We learn of the Reverend’s relationship with Governor Stirling and later Governor John Hutt, the building of the first church, Rush Church, and later St George’s Church, officially opened on the 20th of January 1845. At that opening, The Reverend appropriately chose the sermon, 1 Kings 8.13: “I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to dwell in forever”.

We find an enormous public regard for his work in the community due to, as the book says, “his temperament of an unquestionable optimism, the more remarkable for all the difficulties he had experienced in the colony’s foundation years”. This was so much so that at his death on the 23rd of January in 1855, at the age of 66, “no fewer than 400 people attended his funeral and almost all the shops in Perth closed for the day as a mark of respect for the passing of one of the town’s most esteemed citizens”.

The next Wittenoom to command such a funeral turn out was his grandson, Sir Edward, the longest serving Parliamentarian in Australia to that time. After establishing a pastoral empire with his younger brother Frank, Edward had been nominated for the Legislative Council under representative government in 1883. He was made the Minister for Mines, Telegraph and Education in 1894 under Premier John Forrest and, after a

stint in London as Agent General, returned to WA to become the President of the Legislative Council in the new State Parliament after Federation.

He was a larger-than-life character who saw no virtue in government funded tertiary education. In fact, he harangued Parliament that creating a university here in the West was a complete waste of money as there was a perfectly good railway across the Nullabor to South Australia which already had one. Fortunately, his views in this instance did not prevail!

Sir Edward who we learn delighted in telling people he had been the last person to be knighted by Queen Victoria before she died, was also responsible for attracting considerable investment into the West. While overseas he had made many contacts and joined the boards of a number of companies with branches in Australia. Like his grandfather, he had a powerful presence both inside and outside Parliament and again, like his grandfather, he married twice, choosing a woman half his age.



Rev. J.B. Wittenoom - Colonial Chaplain, ca. 1850 (Courtesy Battye Library 150759P)

The Reverend John, when 51 had married Mary Helms aged 29, while Edward, when a venerable 70, had married 28-year-old Isobel du Boulay. Edward's son Charles continued the trend when 54, choosing for his second wife 25-year-old Pat Hanrahan. The staunchly Anglican family were shocked as Pat was Catholic, but Charles went ahead and the marriage was a very happy one. Charles also played a large part in public life. Indeed, when he joined the Legislative Council in 1928 he became, with Sir Edward, one of the very few father and son teams in Australia to have served in the same House of Parliament at the same time. Charles fought hard for the man on the land and particularly for Albany, the major town in his South Province electorate. He believed the town had so many natural advantages that it was criminal not to further develop the harbour and rail-head. Throughout his 17 years as Mayor of Albany he never lost faith in the future of the town.

Public service has not only been the province of the men in the Wittenoom family. The Reverend Wittenoom's granddaughter – through his marriage to Mary Helms - was none other than Edith Cowan, the first woman to be elected to Parliament in Australia and a great campaigner for the rights of women, children and animals.

As the epilogue says: "When the Reverend John Wittenoom arrived in the Swan River colony in 1830, he and his mother, sister and sons took their places on an unfolding canvas in an isolated part of the British Empire. For nearly two centuries since then the family has been a part of the development of Western Australia from a tiny fragile colony into statehood and federation. Throughout the generations, sons to bear the Wittenoom name have been rare, but the many daughters have taken their inheritance and talents into other families, making their contributions under other names. Now these descendents of the Colonial Chaplain live and work all over the world."

The book mainly deals with the men who carried the Wittenoom name and the stories of at least eight such men are recorded. As explained by the authors, the title stems from the 4th generation Charlie Wittenoom's favourite toast: he would call out in his best mayoral voice at family celebratory dinner parties: "On we go!"

Pamela Statham Drew

Important - Membership renewal

Please don't forget that your membership renewal is due on 1st July.

Your membership of the Friends of Battye Library is crucial in enabling us to undertake important projects to assist in acquiring, preserving, and making available Western Australian archival and documentary materials. Another of the Friends' key roles is to help publicise and promote the collections of the J S Battye Library of West Australian History and the State Records Office as well as to advocate for the collecting, building and care of the State's Western Australian documentary heritage.

A membership form is included in this newsletter and we are pleased to offer an online payment facility, for those who use internet banking, to make paying your subscription even easier.

A sincere thank you for your continued support of the Friends of Battye Library.

Pioneers Memorial Service 2009

The 55th Anniversary Pioneers Memorial Service conducted by the Royal Western Australia Historical Society (RWAHS) in association with the Western Australian Genealogical Society and The National Trust, was held on a perfect sunny autumn afternoon on Sunday 24 May in the St Bartholomew's Chapel, East Perth cemetery, .

Gillian O'Mara, the Friends of Battye Library Vice President, gave the citation with about ten of our Friends of Battye Library members attending the Service.

This year's service was to commemorate the Enrolled Pensioner Guards buried in the cemetery. Rev Canon Dr Michael Evers conducted the service with the welcome by RWAHS President the Hon Robert Nicholson AO, followed by a very informative citation into the contribution made to the colony of Western Australia by the Pensioner Guards with assistance from Jean McDonald and Ian Barnes from the Enrolled Pensioner Guard Special Group. Two of the Pensioner Guards were specifically honoured in Gillian's citation these being Martin O'Dea and William Thomas Wimbridge.

After the service Gillian conducted a tour of the graveyard to visit some the graves that had been identified as Pensioner Guards with red ribbons. Flower petals were provided for those attending the ceremony to scatter on the graves. Following the function, afternoon tea was served at Gloucester Park.

Pamela Statham Drew

Gillian O'Mara delivering the key note address at the Pioneers Memorial Service held in St Bartholomew's Chapel East Perth.

(Courtesy Nick Drew)



Perth in 1961 – Letter from my Grandfather Alison Gregg

Recently I've spent a lot of time clearing out cupboards. Following our recent house move, I decided I simply had to start on the daunting task of sorting all the inherited family letters, photographs and other previous documents not yet unpacked.

What a treasure trove I found! I thought Friends of Battye members might like to share a letter sent in 1961 by my grandfather John English Barr to a relative in Northern Ireland. My parents Alan and Millicent Barr had recently visited the Barr family in Belfast. They must have told Grandpa about a particular dish they enjoyed there, because it seems he requested the recipe. This is his letter of thanks.

He also passes on family news, then goes on to describe Perth and its preparations for staging the Commonwealth Games the following year. I've copied the text just as he typed it, other than correcting some wayward spelling and punctuation for the sake of readability.

Grandpa Barr came from a generation when teachers compelled left-handed children to write with primitive ink pens held in their right hands. In consequence his handwriting was always atrocious and he bought a typewriter as soon as he could afford one. The only writing I've ever seen in his hand was his signature on letters and legal documents. This is his letter:

41 Elizabeth St
North Perth. 15th Nov 61

Dear Miss Barr

Thank you for the RECIPE - it seems A bit out of place this season of the year - it looks as if I have the honor of using it in another capacity meantime. How to cook a goose - more appropriate. By the way Turkey is more to the front here. The wanderers have returned and [are] settling down to refuel the banking account etc. They report that your parents proved great company - made me wish that I were there - sure they would have sent me off - alternative - find A bed for the night. Millicent is now over in Melb to welcome the new baby (her daughter Alison's). Tomorrow we celebrate BDays - Mother 81 on 15th & Dad 89 on 16th Inst . Everyone tells me that I am wonderful - I feel good - perhaps WELL would be more appropriate. Sorry to say Mother is not too well at present & requires attention - just the March of Time. Alan has this weekend off and is taking me with him down to his seaside

residence - daughter Heather (teacher) is coming over from Collie in her car to do the cooking.

Examinations are the whole go here for the next few weeks. Just announced - 22 new Doctors - sure there was a few special dinners - probably 22. I was present when Alan's son Marshall's Pass was declared - touching to see the head shake hands 'Congratulations DR' - first call. Amongst them was a girl - more like A big school girl - she nearly fainted; however 2 friends took charge of her.

How about coming out to the GAMES here at the end of next year? All sorts of preparations are going on just now - contracts have been let to build 1500 houses to accommodate the athletes - A large swimming pool - racing tracks etc – fancy all out of land that was bush 12 months ago. The houses are costing between 4 & 5 thousand each, plus land another thousand. After the Games the houses will probably be sold by auction - a new City about 6 to 8 miles out towards the ocean.

Sure Perth is on the crest of the wave at present - everyone busy - plenty of money. Railways Ad for boys yesterday - start at 15 - 5[pound] odd per week to start. Talking Drs – Lindsay's son Andrew starts 1st year Med coming year. His young brother Robert is about 8 years - another to follow on. I enjoyed seeing the slides of my old home - now 100 yrs. Also Church Gt James St. Too late to find out anything about Agnes McDonald - A girl friend of my teen years. The family were all musicians .

16 th. This is to close down - I'm waiting for Alan to get your address. Mrs B joins me in wishing you & family All the best for Xmas - New Year & beyond. Cheerio J. E. Barr.

Hot as fire here to day



Alison Gregg's Grandfather (John English Barr) and his son Alan Alison Barr (Alison's father) taken at North Beach in late 1920s or early 30s;

Colonial Clergymen and their Curious Kinds of Conveyances

The following precis of the paper read to the Friends of Battye Library by Rev'd Fr E. W. Doncaster at our last general meeting has been provided by Annie Medley.

Today with our busy lives we think little of the roads, rail and sea travel that allow us to keep our various and many appointments and plane travel is the norm for many busy individuals. On May 12th 2009, the Friends paused to reflect the not so easy days of travel in Western Australia for those intrepid clergy bold enough to take up the challenge.

Through the use of pictures and some colorful stories Fr. Ted Doncaster delivered a presentation enjoyed by all present which highlighted just how, especially in the early days, the clergy got around this rugged country. Whether they were stranded in the bush - only to be met by their own "undertaker", a tireless cyclist on dirt tracks having to retrace his steps by foot to pick up parts, bogged in cars on muddy tracks or flying to Rottneest in tiny planes for Sunday service all showed that in times of hardship they had a fortitude to make do and get on with the job, often with a sense of humor. For those who missed out, this talk will be presented to The Royal Western Australian Historical Society in early 2010.

Annie Q. Medley



Rev'd H.W. Simpson "Indian" motor 28 cycle with side-car. (Courtesy Battye Library 4131B/4)

Members' news

We are delighted to announce that two of our long term members, who are both Friends of Battye Library 'Gems of Time', have also been honoured by appointments to the Order of Australia in recognition of their outstanding achievement and service to the community.

Lennie McCall AM

Lennie has been awarded the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for service to the preservation and promotion of history through state and national organisations, and to librarianship. Her professional career as a

librarian began as a young cadet in 1956 and at her retirement in 1998, she was the Director of the J S Battye Library of West Australian History. As one of Western Australia's pre-eminent librarians she has been instrumental in shaping policy and practice for the State Library and the Battye Library. As Director of the Battye Library Lennie was responsible for lifting its profile and attracting donations of valuable and unique Western Australian materials. She is also a strong advocate for the development of library and information services for Indigenous people and communities.

Lennie has been a key member of the Friends of Battye Library since its formation in 1981 and was for many years an *ex officio* member of the management committee. She was one of the driving forces behind the successful Historical Records Rescue Consortium, and is also Chairman of Council for the Royal Western Australian Historical Society. Gracious and charming, with a keen sense of humour, Lennie is indefatigable in her commitment to collecting and preserving Western Australia's history.

Ruth Marchant James OAM

Ruth has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to the community through the documentation of the history of Western Australia. She is a celebrated author, historian and leading authority on Western Australian history, particularly, that of the foundation of the Swan River Colony and the early years of Western Australia. Her most recent book is *Cottesloe - a town of distinction* which won the Premier's award for History in 2008.

Ruth with her husband, Bill James, has been an active member of the Friends of Battye Library Inc. for many years and is always generous with her time and knowledge. One of her favourite sayings is, "If you think you can, you can. If you think you can't, you're right." Even in her senior years, there is not much Ruth can't do. Her humour, energy, enthusiasm and zest for life are truly remarkable.

Our warmest congratulations to both Lennie and Ruth on their well-deserved honours.

Jennie Carter

The James Sykes Battye Fellowship

Report from the inaugural Battye Fellow Dr Sue Graham-Taylor

History of the Swan River

The James Sykes Battye Memorial Fellowship was established through the Leah Jane Cohen bequest to commemorate the 50th Anniversary



Portrait of Dr J S Battye, first State Librarian.
(Courtesy Battye Library)

of the J S Battye Library of West Australian History. I was honoured to be appointed the inaugural Battye Fellow, to commence my research in October 2007.

The aims of the Fellowship are to:

Promote the Battye Library as a centre of original research and scholarship in WA,

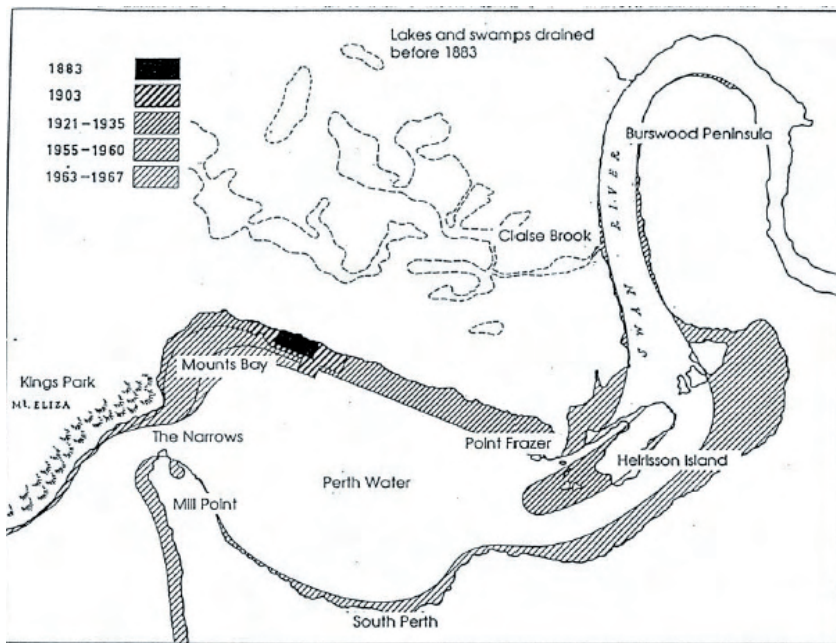
Encourage the use of the unique collections of the Battye Library;

Encourage research, publication, presentation and discussion based on them.

My topic, the history of the Swan River, arose from an active interest in the present state of the Swan as a River under stress from an environmental perspective and my interest as a historian in human use and abuse of the River. The Swan River lies at the heart of Perth and in 2004 was awarded the status of Western Australia's first heritage icon. The Swan River has linked suburbs and regions, the hills and the sea. It has been a transport route, a source of food, a sewer, a rubbish dump but also a spiritual place and a place where people are able to reflect and recreate. However, there has been no complete history of the River and its community connections.

In my application for the Battye Fellowship, I initially proposed to use the extensive Battye and State Records Office collections, as well as community voices in the form of oral histories, to document the community history of the Swan River. However, I was persuaded to narrow the focus

of my work and I chose to restrict myself to Perth Water - an area then under discussion in the context of the Perth Waterfront – Landcorp’s plans for linking Perth’s foreshore with the city.



Foreshore infilling

Map courtesy Sue Graham-Taylor.

It did not take me long to realize that even this reduced scope would be a problem. First, it is difficult to look at the River except in the context of the whole catchment. The total catchment of the Swan Avon River is 125,000 square kilometres, so activities very far from Perth, and often at some distance from the River, impact on the River itself and are a key part of any history of the Swan River.

Secondly, the research I sought to undertake was very broad, including engineering, planning, ecological knowledge, hydrological, political knowledge and thirdly, the community connection to the River, both Indigenous and non Indigenous was clear, but the problem was how to harness this as part of the project.

Very little has been written on the history of rivers in Australia with rivers generally seen by historians as the backdrop to history, rather than as

a vital and living part of that history. To the Noongar traditional owners and custodians, Western Australia's Swan River, the Derbal Yerrigan, has remained at the heart of their culture and heritage for more than 40,000 years. Their knowledge has not to date been taken into account in planning for the future of the River.

In documenting engineering works and changes that involved dredging and reshaping the river, as well as the construction of infrastructure



Aerial photograph of the Narrows Bridge and freeway construction.

3 March 1964

Photo: Aerial Surveys Australia. (Courtesy Battye Library 257867PD)

such as bridges, I relied on government files, particularly the Public Works Department, Planning, Main Roads, and the State Gardens Board, as well as newspapers. I also relied heavily on maps of all sorts – early exploration maps, sketches by colonists, plans from government departments particularly PWD plans and above all photographs, of which the Battye Library has a fantastic collection. The story of pollution of the River involved records of individual facilities and industries as well as newspapers and the Battye's records of community groups such as the Swan River Pollution Committee and the Society for the Protection of Kings Park and the Swan River.

Recreation on and around the River was another huge area where there was a wealth of secondary and primary material in the Battye collection. The involvement of the community in the protection of the River became clear early, but I was unsure just how would I involve people with the project. Fortunately this proved easy – but I would have liked to have taken this a bit further. I had a bit of radio and newspaper publicity when I was awarded the Fellowship. This meant that I was constantly being asked to speak about the River at a variety of functions, adjusting my talk

to the part of the River where I was speaking.

My first Community Forum held at the Library looked at the future of the Swan River, with speakers on the state of the River, the various proposals for the riverfront and the heritage values of the recreation ground/Esplanade area. A few months later, I organised a second Community Forum, this time using photographs to encourage people to reflect on their connections with the River. Selected stories were interspersed with voices from the floor. Speakers covered Indigenous cultural connections, yachting, swimming, fishing and boat building. A couple of poets read their work and the Swan River Trust provided an overview at the end.

The project saw successful community interaction with the State Library of WA on an important community issue. I am in the process of producing a web site to provide information about the history of the Swan and a book using around 100 key photographs, largely from the extensive Battye collection, relating to *Perth Water: the Heart of a City*. I



Royal Perth Yacht Club jetty c.1919. Photo by Izzy Orloff. Royal Perth Yacht Club's original location was at the bottom of William Street. Perth City Baths built in 1897, were superseded by Crawley Baths in 1914 and demolished in 1920. (Courtesy Battye Library 112364PD)

have also completed a great deal of work towards a major history of the Swan River. I hope to continue working with the Battye Library on this issue, perhaps producing an exhibition based on my work and organizing a broader Conference on River History.

To be awarded the Battye Fellowship was an immense privilege. I was able to work within the Battye Library, a huge and valuable repository of Western Australian history. I worked with librarians and archivists behind the scenes, to get an understanding of their roles, their challenges and their achievements and I recognised the growing importance of libraries as community information hubs.

Sue Graham-Taylor

Battye Library Survey and State Library response

Last year a group convened by the History Council of Western Australia which represented a broad range of history organisations, including the Friends of Battye Library Inc., conducted a survey of Battye Library users. The survey was also supported and promoted by the State Library and attracted replies from a range of clients, but almost 90% identified themselves as long term users of the Battye Library. In general the comments were positive, and it is clear that there is loyal support for the Battye Library and its staff, but there were some items of concern that the CEO and State Librarian, Margaret Allen, agreed to consider. Survey respondents were also apprehensive that the name 'J S Battye Library of West Australian History' or its shortened form 'Battye Library', would under the Library restructure, eventually disappear.

The State Library has addressed some key issues.

1. It is anticipated that problems with research access in the Battye Library's reading room, and concerns about security of materials on the fourth floor will be alleviated with the opening of the new Researchers' Room at the end of this month.
2. Training and assistance for reference desk staff has concentrated on building up knowledge of the Battye collections.

In addition, the CEO, in a letter written to the President of the History Council, dated 15 May 2009, stated.

".. the Battye Library is and will remain a central part of the State Library of Western Australia. I would further like to reassure you that there is no intention to change the name of the Battye Library and in any instances where the name has been removed from the catalogue or web site, it has been done so in line with the library's systemised approach to naming conventions. The State Library is dedicated to maintaining the Battye Library as the world's most comprehensive and diverse repository of Western Australian materials."

At the Friends of Battye Library Committee meeting on 9 June , it was resolved to accept with appreciation the CEO's assurance and to review the situation in six months time.

Pamela Statham Drew

Jack's back - Our holiday at winter's outset

180 Years since the founding of Western Australia!

215 Years since the original 'glorious 1st of June'!

I write this piece a week or so before the important anniversary that we now mark rather quietly but which brings us the one holiday and long weekend of our winter months. It has set me to consider the history and timing of some of the public holidays that Western Australians have enjoyed over the years.

The questionable Foundation day of his own choosing was certainly well feted while Governor Stirling was at the helm. Naturally enough, it was the first holiday of purely local significance to be added to the several inherited from the church calendar and British practice. One of these, for the first few years, was the anniversary of the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, on 29 May, but presumably this proved too inconveniently close to the 1st of June to warrant continuance.

Just a week after Stirling's return from his lengthy visit to England in August 1834, a Government notice in the *Perth Gazette* announced that eight days would be observed annually as public service holidays. Besides the three religious occasions of Good Friday, Christmas Day and Whitmonday, they were the anniversaries of the King's birthday (21 August), the Queen's birthday (14 August), the Battle of Waterloo (18 June), the Battle of Trafalgar (21 October), and the Foundation of the Colony which was again emphasised as the 1st of June. Thus it meant quite a plethora of holidays in the wintertime, and even Whitsun could fall as late as 13 June!

During the 1840s, Foundation Day was usually enlivened by such amusements as horse racing, a regatta and a tradesman's ball. Then in 1850 the colony received a much-needed fillip with the arrival of the first shipload of convicts on 1 June, its twenty-first birthday.

Governor Kennedy has won a reputation for the thorough shake-up he gave the public service soon after his arrival in July 1855, and clearly he would have allowed little scope for idleness and frivolity. So a *Gazette* notice in November declared that in future there would be only four public service holidays - Christmas Day, Good Friday, the Queen's Birthday, and Coronation Day. However, perhaps he was succumbing to local pressure when Foundation Day was restored as a fifth one on

the list in 1860. Throughout the world generally, the rationale of public holidays developed considerably in the latter nineteenth century. Their status was further defined here by the Bank Holidays Act of 1884, which followed example in England of 1871.

The next local holiday added to the calendar marked the inauguration of Responsible Government in 1890. Governor Robinson formally proclaimed the adoption of the new Constitution at a ceremony held on Perth Esplanade in 21 October, the day after he came back from England to begin a third term in office here. Proclamation Day continued to be a holiday for the next thirty years. From 1892 it also served to accommodate Eight Hours Day, when the trade union movement underlined its achievements with a procession through the city streets. In 1922, renamed Labour Day, the holiday was moved to the first Monday in May, so falling into line with many other countries. Finally, in 1949, it was again transferred to the first Monday in March. This removed it from proximity to the nationwide holiday for Anzac Day, but it was the more reliable weather that was really the decisive factor in this choice.

Another example of a dual holiday is that of the Queen's Birthday, in which not so long ago was repositioned for observance on the Monday of Royal Show week and thereby justified the cessation of the Show Day holiday that formerly took place on the Wednesday. It is because of the proximity of Foundation Day that Western Australia alone celebrates the official royal birthday in springtime and at a far different date from the other States and other Commonwealth countries.

In 1972 a small semi-government body was created called the Western Australia Week Council, whose purpose was to promote a range of events and activities associated with heritage matters. Renamed as Celebrate W.A. in 1994, it directs a prime focus on Foundation Day, but has also placed some emphasis on the Proclamation anniversary.

Turning to the private sphere, we note the formation in the year 2000 of the Nelson Society of Australia, which has its base in Perth. This worthy body arranges various public functions on or near 21 October to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's death.

There is little likelihood of a public holiday ever returning on 21 October, but one that would celebrate both Trafalgar and Self-Government would surely have appeared a very pleasing prospect to our founding Governor!

Jack Honniball

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

Life membership \$500

Annual membership

Ordinary \$20

Joint \$30

Pensioner / student / junior \$10

Corporate \$50

Meetings

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

Newsletter

Published four times per year - March, June, September and November (no newsletter is published in May). Articles from members and supporters are very welcome and the deadline for copy for the newsletter is 10 February, 10 June, 10 August and 15 October each year. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject articles and notices for publication.

Contact details

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

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

The editor, Jennie Carter at bevnjen@gmail.com

or write to:

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

J S Battye Library of West Australian History

Opening hours Mon/Thurs 9.00 am - 8.00 pm
 Friday 9.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Sat/Sun 10.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Public holidays - closed (from 1 July 2009)

Retrievals Every half hour during opening hours.

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

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

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

State Records Office

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

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

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

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

The Genealogy Centre

(First Floor State Library) for Family History research.

Opening hours- as per Battye Library opening hours.

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

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

NO. 134



Sept 2009

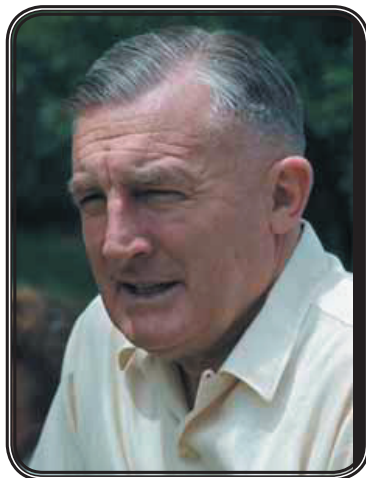
FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.) NEWSLETTER

ABN 571625138800

Guest speaker
Dr Ronda Jamieson

*Writing a
biography of
Charles Court:*

*why it has
not been done
before now.'*



Sir Charles Court (1911-2007)
Photograph by Richard Woldendorp
1970s.

(Image courtesy Battye Library 215781PD)

Our meeting will be held on
Tuesday 8 September 2009
5.30pm for 6.00pm
(Please note later starting time)

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

Please see details on Page 3

Objectives

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

Patron Mrs Ruth Reid

Emeritus President Professor Geoffrey Bolton

Committee (2009-2010)

President Dr Pamela Statham Drew

Vice President Mrs Gillian O'Mara

Secretary Mrs Lorraine Dearnley

Treasurer Mr Nick Drew

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

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

Newsletter editor Ms Jennie Carter

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

All correspondence to:
The Secretary, PO Box 216, Northbridge WA 6865

ISSN 1035-8692

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

Our Meeting

**Tuesday 8 September 2009
Great Southern Room, 4th floor
State Library of Western Australia
5.30pm for 6.00pm. (Please note later starting time)**

Our speaker will be

Ronda Jamieson

**‘Writing a biography of Charles Court:
why it has not been done before now’**



We will be going to dinner at a nearby restaurant after the meeting and members and guests are most welcome to join us. Bookings can be made on the night.

Important notices:

Due to bookings of the Great Southern Room which are not scheduled to finish until 5pm, our meetings for this year will be starting half an hour later and begin at 5.30pm for 6pm.

Newsletter: Due to rising costs, our newsletter will revert to being produced four times this year - March, June, September and November.

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 Batty Library desk on the 3rd floor for access to the staff lift to the fourth floor.

About our speaker

Ronda Jamieson describes her experiences in the paid workforce since the age of 15 as immensely varied and fulfilling. Since retirement as Director of the Battye Library in early 2005, she has been enjoying having more time for family, especially grandchildren, and is writing a biography of Sir Charles Court which has turned out to be one of her most challenging undertakings.

She is a mentor to students at Lynwood High School, serves on committees, including the board of People Learn Productions (publications for people with disabilities), the Friends of Battye Library, and is the president of the Professional Historians Association (WA).



Ronda with baby Lloyd, one of her six grandchildren.

Our meetings and speakers' program for 2009 / 2010

24 November 2009 - End of year function

Dr Robyn Taylor - *Early artists and artisans in WA*

9 March 2010

Dr Pamela Statham Drew & Jacqueline O'Brien -
The Wittenoom story

11 May 2010

Prof. Bob Reece - *Robert Menli Lyon*

13 July 2010 - Annual General Meeting

OHRRG - *Saving our oral history heritage*

14 September 2010

June Caunt - *Post war migration experiences*

23 November 2010 - End of year function

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

Farewell Mollie Lukis



Meroula (Mollie) Frances Fellowes Lukis
OBE, OAM, BA Hons & DipEd (UWA), FLAA, Hon. D. Litt.
(Murdoch).
(1911 - 2009)

Following is the text of a eulogy prepared by Lennie McCall and Margaret Medcalf and delivered by Lennie at Mollie's funeral held on 6 August 2009 at St Margaret's Anglican Church Nedlands.

Miss Meroula Frances Fellowes Lukis

Nora [Mollie's niece] has invited Margaret Medcalf and myself to tell you something about Mollie's career. Margaret joined the State Archives in 1955 as a Graduate Assistant and worked with Mollie until she was appointed State Archivist on Mollie's retirement. I first met Mollie when I was a student Librarian at the State Library in the late 1950s .

We have jointly written the following which I am pleased to read.

Mollie was born on 13 August 1911 in Donnybrook. She lived on a farm at Balingup, being privately tutored until completing her Junior certificate, after which she attended St Mary's Church of England Girls School West Perth. She went on to The University of Western Australia and completed a BA Honours degree in 1932 and Diploma of Education in 1933.

She commenced a teaching career in mathematics and taught in Melbourne, overseas and at St Hildas. From 1941 to 1944 she worked in Metrology at the Defence Research Laboratories at Maribynong Victoria

Late in 1944 the WA Government was persuaded to officially create a government archives collection and to appoint a person to undertake this work.

The appointee was a surprising choice : a young woman with maths training and no library or history experience. This was Mollie. She started in March 1945 in one room with an operating budget of 250 Pounds. She confessed later that when she read that advertisement she had not known what an archivist was.



She studied all the literature she could find on the subject, visited South Australia where a State Archives was already functioning and gradually built up systems and policies, some of which are still in place today. Mollie travelled overseas on a number of occasions, once on a Carnegie grant and another time with a group sponsored by the German Government and brought back ideas suitable to be put into practice here.

Through her great energy and organisational ability by the time of her retirement in 1971 the State Archives and J S Batty Library of West Australian History were an acclaimed world class Library and prime resource on WA history. She herself was a tremendous resource for researchers as having built up the collection she knew its contents and could guide people to the information they were seeking. In the days before computers she

was the key. I give two quotes here:

One is:

“All researchers who have been associated with her benefited from her breadth of knowledge, untiring enthusiasm, her unassuming nature and never failing courtesy in assisting all who have sought her help for their historical research.”

And another quote about her:

“I recollect my somewhat nervous dealings, as a thesis writer, with an authoritative and articulate Battye Librarian who ran a tight ship and was not to be trifled with, but who always delivered a thoroughly professional service”

Mollie was generous with her support for, and input to, a number of community organisations, mainly in the fields of Western Australian history and the promotion of education and opportunities for women.

I have talked about her pioneering work in creating and building up the State Archives but she also played a wider role in the library sphere with her membership of the inaugural Library Board of Western Australia in 1952-55 and 1974-77. She was awarded a Fellowship of the Library Board in 1989. She was also a member of the Library Association of Australia and in 1963 was awarded a Fellowship of that organisation In recognition of her work with archives.

Mollie played a major role in support of the Western Australian Museum, most notably on the Maritime Archaeology Advisory Committee in 1965-71, for a time as its Chairman. This was a critical time when the 17th century Dutch shipwrecks were being discovered along the Western Australian coast and Commonwealth and State legislation was being formulated to deal with the situation.

Her support for women's rights was demonstrated in her active membership of the W.A. Committee for Equal Opportunity, 1958-73, culminating in the achievement of their purpose.

She was a member of the Australian Federation of University Women (W.A. Branch) from 1947. This committee worked towards the goal of establishing a purpose built University Women's College, achieved in 1960 under the name of St Catherine's College.

She was a member of the St Catherine's College Council in 1964-82 and

its Chairman from 1979-82. She was awarded a Fellowship of the College in 1986.

Miss Lukis has been a strong supporter of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society ever since taking up her position of State Archivist in 1945. She advised the Society on the formation of its collection policy and had the Society's records in her care at the Archives from 1955 onwards. She was a member of the Society's Council from 1953-59 and was created a Fellow of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society in 1971. She has remained a staunch promoter of the Society and was always willing to assist with its activities. She was often called upon as a source of information concerning Western Australian people and history or professional matters. She had built up a vast network of people she knew or had been associated with in one way or another.

One of her favourite activities was regular attendance as a member of the Karrakatta Club which she joined in 1948. In the 70s she chaired the Current Affairs committee jointly with Noel Stewart. She strongly promoted the work of the club in enlisting new members.

At the formation of the National Trust of Australia (WA) in 1959, Miss Lukis became a Foundation Member and during the ensuing years she gave this organization unstinting and constructive service. She was awarded Honorary membership in 1994.

She was elected to the first Council of the Trust and remained a member until 1975; she was a member of the Buildings Committee (and its successors in title) from its inception; and she was a long-term member of the Publications Committee, in which capacity she wrote extensively for Trust publications and for the Historic book series. For thirty five years she was a leader, an active worker and a source of wise counsel in the National Trust.

She was generous in the time she gave to the promotion of the Archives and WA history generally in talks and articles. In 1985 she co-authored with Alexandra Hasluck a photographic record of Perth entitled Victorian and Edwardian Perth.

The Honours she has been given are:

OAM 2004

OBE 1976

Hon D Litt Murdoch 1985

Mollie was a caring person and used to entertain us at staff parties in her

home and we have continued a warm friendship with her until the end. She was a truly remarkable woman who made the community a better place for all of us. She believed in equal opportunity for both women and men and that we should all make the most of our lives.

Mollie certainly was a role model to many people.

Margaret Medcalf and Lennie McCall

Mollie Lukis - Building the Battye Library's collection

Mollie was not only the first archivist in this State, she was the first woman and the third archivist appointed in Australia.

Most of the early deposits she was responsible for were personal papers, but increasingly regional and local history was covered in collecting trips. A growing interest in business, institutional and labour history was noted and records sought accordingly. Donations were received from stations in the North West, firms of solicitors and accountants, trade unions, gold mines, clubs and associations, and the archives was made the official repository for periodicals for organisations such as the Perth Chamber of Commerce, the WA branch of the Australian Labor Party and Westralian Farmers Co-operative.' A microfilm program was started in 1951.

Mollie Lukis started collecting oral history in 1961 out of concern that many of the pioneers in country districts were getting old and it was they who knew the early history of their districts. She undertook an oral history project in her first year of interviews, choosing the Collie coalmining industry which she felt would change or disappear in time, and including coalminers' wives. Her oral history program was the first in any Australian state by two decades, and grew to be the largest in any state library. The earliest date of birth of a person interviewed is 1863.

In travelling around the State seeking archival records, Mollie was very aware of the needs of regional areas and was responsible for copying materials held in the Battye Library to start what we now call local studies collections in public libraries.

Ronda Jamieson

The Mollie Lukis Award

The Mollie Lukis Award for Excellence in Archival Practice is presented to an individual or work team, in either the State Records Office or the State Library of Western Australia, for their outstanding contribution to any aspect of appraising, collecting, arranging, preserving and making available materials which reflect the cultural heritage of Western Australia.

This award honours the contribution of Mollie Lukis, who was the first State Archivist and, on her retirement, was in charge of the State Archives and the J S Battye Library of West Australian History. It was awarded for the first time in 2001 to mark Mollie Lukis' 90th birthday.

Important - Membership renewal

Our sincere appreciation to those who have renewed their subscription for the coming year.

Your membership of the Friends of Battye Library is crucial in enabling us to undertake important projects to assist in acquiring, preserving, and making available Western Australian archival and documentary materials. Another of the Friends' key roles is to help publicise and promote the collections of the J S Battye Library of West Australian History and the State Records Office as well as to advocate for the collecting, building and care of the State's Western Australian documentary heritage.

If you have not yet sent in your subs, a membership form is included on page 27 of this newsletter and we are pleased to offer an online payment facility, for those who use internet banking, to make paying your subscription even easier.

A sincere thank you for your continued support of the Friends of Battye Library.

Jennie Carter

Message from the President.

Dear Friends

It has been good to hear from some of you in notes accompanying the subscriptions - we are always pleased to hear of your doings. There seems to be a lot planned in the way of family reunions for 2010 - isn't it amazing the way time flies - it only seems yesterday we were all worried sick that our computers would malfunction as we turned into the new century!

Your committee has been planning our end of year function - this year on the 17th November, and in response to many requests we have decided to run a quiz again over dinner - mostly Australian history. If any of you have a really good question or two please send them to me. As you can see from the cover our next speaker is very well known to most of you. Ronda Jamieson was the driving force behind Battye Library for many years and since retirement has put her indomitable energy into writing Sir Charles Court's biography - it should be a fascinating talk. I hope to see you there!

Cheers for now.

Pamela Statham Drew

News from the Battye Historian - State Library happenings in August

Redevelopment of the Ground Floor

The State Library is nearing completion with the redevelopment of its ground floor area which will provide clients with a new community space that focuses on providing improved access to technology and digital information.

The area will have significantly increased numbers of workstations and clients will be encouraged to use their laptops via the free wifi network at desks and lounges. There will be flexible configurations in place that will allow groups to work and study together. Computers will be able to be used also for small informal training sessions, group talks and for awareness-raising of electronic resources.

Access to national and international newspapers in hard copy and electronic format will continue to be available from the ground floor, however all other materials will be removed and distributed amongst the other floors or housed

in stack areas.

As part of the redevelopment there will also be a new flexible exhibition space, and a redeveloped Welcome Desk.

Reading Room

The State Library has recently opened its relocated Researchers' Room – renamed 'The Reading Room' – so to enhance and enable improved service delivery and cater to the needs of all clients wanting access to rare materials and archives from the collections of the State Library. The Reading Room has four new computers and a new Canon Powershot G10 digital camera, complete with computer tethering software and copy stand. The Reading Room will further support and expand client use of rare books and archival collections, provide greater access to materials for research, and provide a space for those undertaking sustained research projects to work efficiently and securely.

With the opening of the new room, clients now also have access to specialist reference staff 3 days a week at particular times during the day.

Digitisation Projects

In this modern (digital) age, the State Library is seeking to increase its output of digitised items and to make these items readily available through its online catalogue. The Police Gazettes and the updated Dead Reckoning are two examples of work undertaken in line with this objective.

Late last year we alerted you to a new exciting development in scanning technology: CAVAL's new Kirtas high-speed scanner. Following a trial run of the Kirtas, the State Library, supported by the Friends of Battye and the Sholl Bequest, digitised the WA Police Gazettes from 1876-1900. In the coming weeks, the police gazettes will be available online through the SLWA catalogue and will be fully text searchable. This will be of major benefit to many researchers.

The long awaited update of Dead Reckoning: How to find your way through the genealogical jungle of Western Australia is nearly complete. Thanks to the Friends of Battye and the Sholl Bequest, Steve Howell, Senior Subject Specialist - Battye, has been busy revising this comprehensive guide to the publications and documentary collections which contain information relevant to family history in Western Australia. The revised edition will be fully text searchable, and will be a valuable addition to our online databases.

Collection Development Policy and New Collections

SLWA has recently updated its Collection Development Policy which will guide its collecting for the coming years. This Policy has recently been finalised and will be available to the public shortly.

In terms of our collecting, SLWA's heritage collection has been enriched by several significant donations during the 08/09 period, and these include:

- The Vite Italinae / Italian Lives in WA archive of oral histories, images and documents, including approximately 80 oral histories as well as a number of significant document collections, which include photographs, letters, diaries, journals and manuscripts belonging to individuals and families.
- The Australian Land & Cattle Company records including personal diaries of co-founder and managing director Jack Fletcher, 1964-84;
- The Mary Durack Literary and family Archive including papers of H. C. Miller and Robin Miller Dicks;
- The Hole in the Wall Theatre Company records;
- The Great Southern Roller Flour Mills (now Allied Mills) records 1913-84;
- The Australian College of Mental Health Nurses records; and
- The William John Tate (Federal and State Government land valuer) – photographic collection

Sarah Brown

SRO seminars

Tuesday 6 October – please note change of time

Professor Anna Haebich, of Griffith University, will speak on

The story of Martha Rendell: last woman to be hanged in WA.

This seminar is produced in conjunction with the Fremantle Prison and will be held at the prison on the evening of Tuesday 6 October to mark the 100th anniversary of the execution of Martha Rendell. Further details will be made available on SRO's website soon. For bookings, please ring 9427 3360.

What's on at the State Library - August to September 2009

State Library & WAAPA Free Lunchtime Concerts

Fridays @ 12.30pm -31 July- 4 September 2009

In the State Library Theatre

Be entertained on Friday lunchtimes during the City of Perth Winter Arts Season as WAAPA's talented staff and students perform a series of free concerts and performances. Don't miss this exciting opportunity to hear Perth's upcoming stars of the music world. Bookings not required.

Program:

31 July - Piano Pieces

Exquisite piano music from across the ages. Directed by David Wickham

7 August - Vocal Showcase

Classical vocal students sing Lieder to Broadway. Directed by Patricia Price.

14 August - Chamber strings

Intimate classical music for chamber strings. Directed by Peter Tanfield.

21 August - WAAPA Big Band

An electrifying explosion of sound. Directed by Adrian Kelly

28 August - Big Funk Band

Classic 60's through to cutting edge funk. Directed by Ric Eastman

4 September - Latin Ensemble

The hot sounds of samba, rumba and bossa nova.

[from the State Library Website]

Oral History Association of Australia (WA Branch) Inc.

The next Beginners Oral History Interviewing Workshop will be held on Saturday 14 November 2009 at the National Trust Headquarters, West Perth from 9am until 4pm.

The fee of \$88.00 includes the Oral History handbook, a DVD and all course materials.

For details please contact Doug Ayre. Mob: 0430 405 633 or Email: history@westnet.com.au

HURRY! – places are filling fast.

Annual General Meeting - reports presented

President Friends of Battye Library (Inc)

Dear Friends,

Once again a busy year.

Our biggest news, of which more later, is that we have just landed another Lotterywest grant – for \$849,000 this time – to conserve the oral history tapes. If you recall we asked for money to cover oral history records when we put in for the initial HRRC grant – when we asked for \$5million - but Oral history tapes and Electronic records were excised to bring us down to the \$3 million we were given. It has taken a couple of years to get this application through and Mary-Ann Jebb and especially Kris Bizacca are to be congratulated for their effort and dedication to the Cause!. We are all tickled pink it is now a goer...but of course all the hard work now starts to actually preserve the priority tapes!

Our first Friends meeting for this financial year was last September when David Black gave us a brief history and his reminiscences of Perth Modern school – plus an outline of the plans for its future – hence the title ‘Perth Modern School Reborn’. If anyone still wants copies of his book David will oblige – he can be contacted at Curtin University.

Our end of year function in November was a highlight for our Emeritus President, Professor Geoff Bolton allowed us to have a mini launch of his new book Land of vision and Mirage and graced us with a thought provoking talk on the differences between his approach to the writing of WA history with that of his predecessor Professor Frank Crowley who had written Australia’s Western Third in the 1960s.

Another book launch featured at our March meeting this year. Dr John Dargavel spoke about his research for The Zealous Conservator: A Life of Charles Lane Poole just published by UWA Press. Few of us knew much about this enigmatic man who, although in WA for such a short time, left an indelible mark on our Forests and reserves.

At our May meeting we conferred our postponed Gem of time awards to Father Ted Doncaster and Lennie McCall. I hope you noted that your Society recognized Lennie’s contribution before the announcement of her Order of Australia award! Father Ted gave the speech that evening titled “Colonial Clergymen and their curious Conveyances”

- and curious they were from Shanks pony to horses, bicycles, trains and cars. It was a gem of a talk from our newest gem!

Now for some really exciting news. Thanks to the creators Lorraine Clarke and Cherie Strickland- of Swan Genealogy, and to facilitators Sarah Brown and the Library, we can announce that we now have a Friends of Battye Library Website. It is not online yet – but will be very soon. Lorraine and Cherie will now show you our new resource....

Lorraine and Cherie have given us a wonderful deal - as part of the service in putting together the website the girls have agreed to be responsible for keeping it up-to date and interesting. So double thank-you's to them both

Tonight our two speakers Steve Howell and Gerard Foley will again provide interesting information on issues coming out of our State Record Office and Battye Library – but first, as usual at our AGMs, we will hear a brief report of the years doings from our Treasurer and from SRO and the State Library.

Pamela Statham Drew
President

Treasurers Report

I am presenting the annual accounts on power point to save paper, etc

AS you can see from the Trial Balance as at 30th June 2009, we have in Friends of Battye Cheque a balance of \$4,365

The No 2 account being the HRRC account has a balance of \$36,706 this is mainly due to the interest earned on the Lotterywest grant.

We also have the gift fund account for tax deductible donations and 2 Term Deposits.

The Term Deposit for \$23,788 is for FOBS spare funds for future projects.

The Term Deposit for \$32,598 is for the private donor donation of \$30,000 plus interest for the OHHRG Project.

Nick Drew
Treasurer

State Records Office

Just 16 months into my appointment as Director of State Records, I can report that it has been an incredibly busy time for the SRO and the State Records Commission.

By way of an overview, the following report touches on just some of the initiatives, achievements, strategies and events occurring during the last year.

State Records Commission

Welcome two new Commissioners

Ms Justine McDermott – Governor's appointee to the Commission – Justine is the Manager, Archives and Records Management Services at the University of Western Australia and formerly worked at the Sydney office of the National Archives of Australia; Edith Cowan University and the Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority. Justine brings 20 years of invaluable experience, in the field of information management, to the work of the Commission.

Mr Sven Bluemmel – newly appointed Information Commissioner and State Records Commissioner – Sven practised law in both Melbourne and Perth and was recognized as one of the leading lawyers in the areas of information and privacy law. He has held senior positions in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and brings a wealth of experience to the work of the Commission.

Farewell two Commissioners

Ms Kandy-Jane Henderson - With great reluctance Commissioners said farewell to Kandy-Jane who retired from the Commission in December 2008. As the inaugural Governor's appointee to the Commission, Kandy-Jane was appointed, for a three year term, in July 2001 and reappointed for further terms in 2004 and 2007.

Kandy-Jane played a significant role on the Commission and over the 7.5 year term she impressed Commissioners with her experience, her great sense of optimism and humour; and her wise counsel.

Mr John Lightowers – Undertook the role of Information Commissioner in an acting capacity for two years and hence became a State Records Commissioner for the same period of time until the appointment of Sven in May this year. John was inexhaustibly enthusiastic and passionate

about the work of the Commission and the State Records Office and although only in the role for a very short time, his influence and commitment was immensely appreciated.

SRC Activities

The Commission met four times this financial year;

One of those meetings was held in Geraldton which provided an excellent opportunity for Commissioners to meet with government clients within the region. The next meeting is to be held in Mandurah in October.

Guidelines

Two new SRO Guidelines are now available on the SRO website:

Managing Email Records to assist with the identification and management of business emails in accordance with SRC Standard 8 – Digital Recordkeeping; and

Managing Digital Records also to assist with the implementation of SRC Standard 8 – Digital Recordkeeping.

Further Guidelines in development include one for the use of Web 2.0 Technologies within government. Web 2.0 technologies like Blogs; Wikis; Twitter and other social networking systems are becoming increasingly popular throughout government as tools for communicating with clients and exploring potential client markets. Government must develop mechanisms for capturing State records created and received via these technologies and the guideline will assist with those processes.

General Disposal Authorities (GDA) A General Disposal Authority for Source Records has been developed and published on the SRO website. This GDA allows agencies to dispose of original documentation once scanned to certain standards. Review of the Local Government GDA has commenced with some initial collaboration with the Local Government Records Management Group. A completely revised draft of the GDA will soon be available on the SRO website for stakeholder comment.

Events

The SRO holds a variety of public programs and events throughout the year aimed at all sectors of the Western Australian community.

The Margaret Medcalf Award for excellence in researching and referencing archival records was presented to Ms Isla Macphail for her book *Highest Privilege and Bounden Duty: A study of Western Australian parliamentary elections 1829-1901*, on 20 May 2009. Despite its uninviting appearance it

is an excellent and entertaining read and I can highly recommend it.

The Lonnie Awards for 2008:

This Award is sponsored by the State Records Commission and is presented for the manner in which agencies annual reports address their compliance requirements under the State Records Act. Awards were presented on 26 June 2009:

The Disability Services Commission was this year's worthy recipient of the Commission's award for excellence; with a special commendation given to the Fremantle Port Authority for the exceptionally high standard of reporting on their recordkeeping and further planned initiatives.

Cabinet Records Release

The 1978 State Cabinet Papers were released from 30 year embargo in time for June 1st, Foundation Day. This year it was positioned as a media event which resulted in a two page spread in the West Australian on 1st June and subsequent interviews on ABC Radio and RTR FM in the week following.

Geoffrey Bolton Lecture

On 20 October 2008 Justice Michael Kirby AC of the High Court of Australia delivered the Geoffrey Bolton Lecture at the Government House Ballroom. In his Lecture Justice Kirby explored the ongoing significance of teaching legal history to Australian lawyers, calling for a restoration of legal history to the core curriculum of Australian Law Schools. This year the date of the GB lecture is on 10th November and our guest speaker will be Lyn Beazley, Chief Scientist.

Lunchtime seminars are designed to inform researchers about the SRO and its collections and the research carried out using the State archives collection. They are relatively informal events and over the past 12 months a quite diverse range of topics have been covered.

7 April 2009 was the 10th anniversary of the opening of the SRO Search Room and SRO received coverage in the West Australian in an article about the work of the SRO in preserving and placing WA's Convict Records on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, and the fact they are made accessible by the SRO.

SRO Activities

SRO is grateful for the support received through Friends of Battye that enabled us to complete a listing of Colonial Secretary's Office files 1883 to 1918 through a Sholl Bequest with project officer Andrew Morant.

Recent confirmation of funding for a Historical Maps Online Project which will allow us to make software modifications and load digitized maps and plans to our AEON system for public access, commencing with town site plans.

Volunteers

Like any small organization providing both whole of government services and services to the community, the SRO relies heavily on the work of highly valued volunteers. This included a Commonwealth work experience program operating since 2004, in collaboration with Centrelink, with the aim of capturing and formatting accession inventories.

We are grateful to Pat Paterson, for her relabeling and preservation work and Anne and Bruce Buchanan for their indexing work

Strategic Focus

The past year has been a year marked by budget cuts which have put a huge strain on our moving forward strategically. In this climate we have continued to develop the following:

Digital Archive Pilot Initiative

The SRO has entered into partnership with iVEC, a centre of advanced computing in WA, and a joint venture between CSIRO, the University of Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology, Murdoch University of Western Australia, and Central TAFE to host the development of a pilot Digital Archive;

Digital records from a small group of agencies are now being accepted into the pilot to test capabilities. This project will contribute to future planning for the business case for archival storage and a digital archive for WA.

ORDA

The development of the system for the **O**nline **R**eceipt and processing of **R**ecords **D**isposal **A**uthorities is progressing.

In order to work toward the capacity to put forward a robust business case for SRO funding and a new repository to support a whole of government agenda we have spent significant time:

- Finalising a ZBB to inform our work programs and to build a strong base for funding submissions. This now complete
- Finalising our Strategic and Communications Plans
- Focusing on building relationships – We hosted a visit by the Minister earlier this year to formally introduce him to the work of the SRO and our

collections. This was successful in engaging the Minister and we look forward to building on this relationship going forward.

- We are also looking to welcome other senior government officials later this month and again, inform them of the SRO's work, challenges and needs.
- Continuing to explore partnership opportunities for the realization of our goals.

I'd like to finish by acknowledging the support of individuals that make up organizations like Friends of Battye. We have an enormous agenda and such support gives us the encouragement to continue.

Cathrin Cassarchis
Director, State Records Office

State Library

2008-09 was the final year of our previous Strategic Directions, and brought a new Minister and new government.

Generally in SLWA some significant achievements included the

- Evaluation of Better Beginnings Family Literacy Program which demonstrated the positive and real outcomes of the program
- Collaboration with other State and National Libraries on Reimagining Library Services strategic plan to help shape Library Services in the digital environment of the 21st century
- Use of SLWA's services has continued to grow with a 9% increase in users of our services despite the ground floor being closed for a quarter of the year and nearly 1.2 million visits to the Library building.
- On going changes to processing enabling greater emphasis on heritage materials processing and description
- Lotterywest Oral History grant of \$849,000 to digitise 50% (7,500 hours) of oral history stored on traditional tape formats.

Strategic Directions

- In April 2009 the State Library released its Strategic Directions 2009 – 2011 which represents our aspirations and focus as it continues

to evolve its services to meet the needs of the Western Australian Community in an increasingly complex digital information world.

- The new Strategic Directions outline the Library's values and priority areas, which include:

1. Capturing the Western Australian Story
2. Enriching client experiences
3. Making content more accessible
4. Developing partnerships and community connections
5. Enhancing the public library network

It was also a year of physical changes and ongoing structural changes, some of the highlights of which are:

Physical

Ground Floor Refurbishment

- Public toilets refurbished
- Discovery lounge to be finalised in August and includes 50 public PC's, group study facilities, new mid sized venue space, new bookshop, new exhibition area, welcome desk and lockers
- Ground floor – digital service delivery and resources
- New café operator

Reading Room

- The State Library has recently opened its relocated Researchers' Room – renamed 'The Reading Room' – so to enhance and enable improved service delivery and cater to the needs of all clients wanting access to rare materials and archives from the collections of the State Library.

- The Reading Room has four new computers and a new Canon Powershot G10 digital camera, complete with computer tethering software and copy stand.

- The Reading Room will further support and expand client use of rare books and archival collections, provide greater access to materials for research, and provide a space for those undertaking sustained research projects to work efficiently and securely.

- Clients will initially have access to specialist reference staff 3 days a week at particular times during the day.

Digitisation Studio

- Expansion of digitisation space in the 3rd floor conservation area and removal of traditional photographic laboratory
- Additional scanners (including a large A0 flat bed scanner) purchased and replacement of microfilm duplicator

The Place

- A space on the mezzanine for children, families and school groups enabling the Library to promote literacy and connect with SLWA's heritage resources.

And planning is underway for creation of sound studios for Oral History preservation (needed for Lotterywest project) and new café fit out.

Structural

Some changes in senior staff including the appointment of Mark Woodcock as Director, Strategic and Corporate Services and the return of Susan Ashcroft to the role of Director – Client Services and Alison Sutherland to Director – Resource Services.

Battye Historian

Late last year the State Library appointed its first Historian to help provide strategic direction for the Battye collections and its clients. Sarah will talk further about some more detailed achievements in a few minutes.

History Council Survey

Early last year The History Council, on behalf of Friends of Battye, the Professional Historians, the Royals, WAGS and the Oral History Association, in conjunction with SLWA, undertook a survey of users of the J S Battye Library of West Australian History.

Following from the Survey the State Library has worked with the History Council, as the representative body, to improve its services and facilities.

Legislation

We continue to argue the case for an update to the Library Board of Western Australia Act to include amongst other things legal deposit legislation for print and digital publications in line with other jurisdictions.

Looking forward to 2009/10:

- Budget wise we have to implement the 3% savings required by government
- Project to develop a vision for the building for 2020 and beyond.
- Oral History digitisation with the OHRRG project through FOBs
- Legislation – we will continue to argue the case
- Public Library Reform Agenda
- Increased digital content

Margaret Allen
CEO and State Librarian.

Saving the State's oral histories - Lotterywest grant received

An application to Lotterywest a large grant to preserve and make accessible to the public, the oral history collection held in the Battye Library, has been successful, and we have recently been informed that a generous grant of \$849,000 has been approved.

As was the case with the Historical Records Rescue Consortium {HRRC} project, the grant will be administered by the Friends of Battye Library (Inc). While it will mean a lot more work for our efficient and indefatigable Treasurer, Nick Drew, we are delighted by the news. Congratulations to all who were involved and a sincere thank you to the farsighted staff and members of the Lotterywest Board who understand the importance of saving such a wonderful heritage resource.

The application was developed by representatives of many interested groups, including the Friends of Battye Library, the Oral History Association of Australia WA Branch, the Professional Historians Association and the Royal Western Australian Historical Society, and will be managed by a combined stakeholder group, the Oral Historical Records Rescue Group (OHRRG).

This important and exciting two year project will result in the preservation of 7,500 hours of interviews collected since 1969 by transferring them from increasingly obsolete cassette tape to digital format. This process not only allows for their better care and protection through the longer lasting digital format, it will also mean that once permissions have been given, the voices of Western Australians can be more easily made available to the public through such means as the State Library's website.

The Battye Library Goes Into DET.

The State Library of Western Australia together with the Department of Education and Training (DET) has formed a partnership which will help bring the collections of the Battye Library to many young Western Australians.

An initial one year agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in late 2008 by the two agencies. The aim of this agreement is to identify and provide DET with digitised copies of original or primary source material suitable for inclusion in a teacher's resource kit designed to cover the new national history curriculum, K-10 Society and the Environment.

Working with DET, the State Library's Subject Specialists have identified suitable material for inclusion in the teacher resource entitled 'Colonial Australia'. This package covers significant events in the colonisation of Australia from 1770 to 1868, including the settlement of the Swan River Colony, and compares and contrasts the development of the colony at Sydney Cove with that of the Swan River.



Painting of Rio de Janeiro from John Septimus Roe's logbook 1817. Courtesy Battye Library.

An original 1830s diary, certificate, letters and other archival documents were identified and passed to the Library's Preservation & Maintenance staff to prepare for digitising. As some of the material was extremely fragile the Paper Conservator spent many hours completing the delicate work of repairing the material for scanning.

Digital copies have now been created and provided to DET. Teachers in public schools throughout Western Australia will access this material through the department's web portal which provides an online collection of resources for use in the classroom, and through an educational package to be produced by the Department of Education and Training.

As part of the Library's Strategic Directions in Making collections more accessible, digital copies of these items may now also be added to the State Library's Battye Library digital collection.

Carmel McRobert
Subject Specialist : Battye Library

Email addresses needed

To enable us to share information and keep members up to date on important happenings, we have a group email list for current members. If you would like to be kept informed of important matters or forthcoming events relevant to the Battye Library and the State Records Office, please email me at bevnjen@gmail.com or Nick Drew at nickdrew@bigpond.com .

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

State Library Bookshop - discount for members

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

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

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

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

Mon - Fri: 10am - 5pm

Sat & Sun: 12noon - 5pm

Archival quality materials

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

Jennie Carter

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

LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$500

Annual Membership

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

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

I wish to apply for / renew membership:

Name _____

Organisation _____

Address _____

_____ post code _____

Tel: Day _____ Evening _____

Mobile _____ Email _____

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

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

cheque to: The Treasurer
 Friends of Battye Library
 PO Box 216
 NORTHBRIDGE 6865

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

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

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

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

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

Jack's back - Farewell Mollie!

This gives an opportunity to record my own little tribute to Mollie Lukis along with the admirable eulogies already delivered and the host of other obituaries that will be appearing in print.

I first introduced myself to Miss Lukis when I was a university student undertaking research in local history for my Honours degree in Arts. That was when her Archives domain was at the rear of the old State Library building within the late Dr Battye's former living quarters facing Francis Street. Very soon afterwards it was renamed the Battye Library and moved into the more central and better furnished premises it was to occupy for nearly thirty years. There in 1958 I was very pleased to secure a position as a Student Librarian, at a time when the total staff of the branch numbered six and the modern equipment we operated included the first two microfilm readers and the newfangled photocopying machine.

It was my good fortune to work in Mollie's fascinating and fast growing realm for nearly five years altogether, and she was certainly all one could wish for as a most capable manager, a very fair boss and a kindly mentor. I was particularly grateful for a number of private tutorials she gave me when I was studying for an Archives unit in the then obligatory pursuit of the Registration Certificate of the Library Association of Australia. She also encouraged me to join the (Royal) Western Australian Historical Society and to produce the first of the several research papers I have presented to it over the years. Then in the early 1970s I again had the benefit of Mollie's wisdom and guidance as a fellow member of a committee which oversaw the formation of the State Film Archives, a small entity which passed from the aegis of the Education Department to the Library Board in 1978.

In recent years Mollie has more than once provided me with rewarding feedback and indeed a compliment in saying she had enjoyed reading 'Jack's Back' in her newsletter. So, personally, I am very appreciative of the influence Mollie has had on shaping my own professional career and related interests, and I feel sure I am far from being the only person thus indebted. And it is no reflection on her equally dedicated successors in office to say that I believe it is still principally due to Mollie Lukis that the Battye Library holds the fine reputation and high esteem that it enjoys in the general community today.

Jack Honniball

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

Life membership \$500

Annual membership

Ordinary \$20

Joint \$30

Pensioner / student / junior \$10

Corporate \$50

Meetings

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

Newsletter

Published four times per year - March, June, September and November (no newsletter is published in May). Articles from members and supporters are very welcome and the deadline for copy for the newsletter is 10 February, 10 June, 10 August and 15 October each year. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject articles and notices for publication.

Contact details

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

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

The editor, Jennie Carter at bevnjen@gmail.com

or write to:

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

J S Battye Library of West Australian History

Opening hours Mon/Thurs 9.00 am - 8.00 pm
 Friday 9.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Sat/Sun 10.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Public holidays - closed (from 1 July 2009)

Retrievals Every half hour during opening hours.

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

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

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

State Records Office

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

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

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

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

The Genealogy Centre

(First Floor State Library) for Family History research.

Opening hours- as per Battye Library opening hours.

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

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

NO. 135



November 2009

FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.) NEWSLETTER

ABN 571625138800

End of year function 17 November

Dr Robyn Taylor

Which artist is that?

A Battye field guide for finding lost and forgotten artists



Painting theatrical scenery 1937 - artist unknown.
(Courtesy Battye Library 095340PD)

Our meeting will be held on
Tuesday 17 November 2009
5.30pm for 6.00pm
(Please note later starting time)

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

Please see details on Page 3

Objectives

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

Patron Mrs Ruth Reid

Emeritus President Professor Geoffrey Bolton

Committee (2009-2010)

President Dr Pamela Statham Drew

Vice President Mrs Gillian O'Mara

Secretary Mrs Lorraine Dearnley

Treasurer Mr Nick Drew

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

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

Newsletter editor Ms Jennie Carter

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

All correspondence to:
The Secretary, PO Box 216, Northbridge WA 6865

ISSN 1035-8692

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

Our End of Year Meeting

**Tuesday 17 November 2009
Great Southern Room, 4th floor
State Library of Western Australia
5.30pm for 6.00pm. (Please note later starting time)**

Our speaker will be Dr Robyn Taylor



Robyn will be speaking about her Sholl Bequest project researching the artists and artisans who worked behind the scenes of our manufacturing industries during the early decades of the 20th century.

Following the meeting you are invited to help us celebrate another successful year for the Friends and to join us for a catered dinner (including all drinks) on the 4th floor of the State Library at 7pm.

The award winning Spit Roast dinner consists of prime roast beef as well as roast pork with apple sauce, jacket potatoes with sour cream and a choice of four salads: Caesar, garden, New York Coleslaw, Sorrento pasta - or a bit of each! Desert is also provided. Drinks are water, red and white wine and orange juice or lemon squash.

-- Cost \$25 per head --

We must advise the caterer of the numbers attending Friday 13 November 2009 and we need a minimum of thirty (30) people.

Bookings are essential so please RSVP to Jennie Carter on 9279 8777, or by email at bevnjen@gmail.com.

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.

About our speaker

Robyn works as a freelance historian and heritage consultant from her rural retreat in Toodyay. Her areas of interest include Western Australian history, art, architecture and cultural heritage. She has curated major art exhibitions, undertaken surveys of public art, and provided heritage assessments and histories on numerous buildings and sites in WA. When she moved to Toodyay she assisted Rica Erickson with her book *Toodyay Homesteads Past & Present* (2006).

Robyn is a member of the Professional Historians Association (WA), History Council, and the Friends of the Battye Library (Inc). She is a past Councillor of the Heritage Council of WA, and has been a National Trust Councillor since 1993. In 2004 she received a Champion Award from the Governor [His Excellency Lieut-Gen. John Sanderson, AC] for her work in the built environment.

In her previous life Robyn lectured on art history and visual cultural at the Curtin University of Technology and the University of WA. This background has spurred her interest in discovering more about WA's artistic history and heritage. She is currently working on a project titled 'Honouring Creative Women' for the National Council of Women WA.

Which artist is that? A Battye field guide for finding lost and forgotten artists

With assistance from the Maud Sholl Bequest I have been undertaking research into the Battye Library's collections. My aim is to find out if these collections would reveal the names and practices of the artists and artisans who worked behind the scenes of our manufacturing industries during the early decades of the 20th century. From my own research I knew there were professionally trained artists who had to work in various industries in order to put bread on the family table. Their work enhanced the beauty and refinement of the products that were being manufactured, but their names sank into oblivion.

My talk will focus on the reasons why it is important to know who these artists were and what they did; what I have discovered in various collections held by the Battye Library; and how I propose, with the assistance of former State Library cataloguer Beth Frayne, to present this information in a format that will benefit other researchers in the fields of art, architecture and cultural heritage.

In these straitened times when our cultural institutions are suffering, it is time to start laying the groundwork for a future renaissance. This project is just one very small step towards that goal.

Message from our President.

Dear Friends

Hopefully you can all come to our end of year function on Tuesday 17 November. We will start at 5.30 pm for a 6.00 start. After Robyn's talk we will be adjourning to the staff canteen area for a delicious in-house roast dinner for you with sweets afterwards.

We also hope to award our Gem of Time for 2009, and during dinner we will be running a couple of quizzes on Australian, especially Western Australian history.

Do come a bit early, if you can, to see the new discovery lounge on the ground floor. This is a new initiative to provide computer access to more students, and it is proving immensely popular. This should also free up the 3rd floor area for Battye Library researchers. Don't forget also to visit the wonderful tranquil new Reading Room on the 3rd floor within the Battye Library which features up to the minute digital copying facilities, plenty of space to spread out your research material, as well as improved access to the Battye Library subject Specialists.

The book-shop too has been renovated and is worth a look, and remember you still have a 15% discount on books you buy as a friend. You may be interested to know that history is still catching children's imagination. I was part of a roster of RWAHS volunteers staffing a large booth at the recent Royal Show and children were most interested in some of the exhibits and photographs on display. Several identified photos they had seen at school from the Library's online picture collection.

That's it for now. I do hope to see as many of you as possible at our End of Year function on November 17th. It promises to be a terrific night and a golden opportunity for us all to relax and catch up with old friends.

Pamela Statham Drew

launch of *Dead Reckoning* at our End of Year function

Steve Howell, Senior Subject Specialist, Battye Library will give a short presentation at our meeting on 17 November 2009 of the new updated and online version of his popular publication *Dead Reckoning: How to find your way through the genealogical jungle of Western Australia*.

Our meetings and speakers' program for 2010

9 March 2010

Dr Pamela Statham Drew & Jacqueline O'Brien -
The Wittenoom story

11 May 2010

Prof. Bob Reece - *Robert Menli Lyon*

13 July 2010 - Annual General Meeting

The Oral History Records Rescue Group (OHRRG)
Saving our oral history heritage

14 September 2010

June Caunt - *Post war migration experiences*

23 November 2010 - End of year function

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

Farewell Dr Rica Erickson AM

Rica died on 8 September at the age of 101 years and will be long remembered as one of Western Australia's leading historians, genealogists, naturalists, and botanic artists.

Rica was born Frederica Lucy Sandilands on 10 August 1908 in Boulder. She became a teacher and in 1934 took up a position at the Bolgart school where she met and in 1936 married, Sydney Erickson (1908-



(Image courtesy Battye Library)

1987). Rica became involved in community, historical, naturalist, and sporting activities and led a crusade to protect the local bush. She was instrumental in persuading Premier Sir David Brand to increase road reserves to preserve wildflowers.

In 1951, *Orchids of the West*, was published. She was 60 years old when the first of her historical works the *Drummonds of Hawthornden* was written. One of her greatest achievements was to gain the co-operation of historians, genealogists, and researchers to produce the

Dictionary of Western Australians 1829-1914, which is still the single most valuable source for early Western Australian family history. A website, hosted by the State Library, was created in 2003 to honour her and her work: <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/erickson/index.html>

In recognition of her many contributions, Rica received countless awards, honours and accolades, including Honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of WA and Member of the Order of Australia, and became the Friends first 'Gem of Time' in 2003. Her talents were formidable, yet Rica's keen intellect, coupled with her gentle humour and generosity of spirit endeared her to everyone she met.

(Jennie Carter)

[Dr Joanna Sassoon has kindly allowed us to reprint the following tribute to Rica which has been condensed from that circulated to the WA Information Network (WAIN) online group.]

One of Rica's major acts of courage was to publish the list of convict names that she and her group of volunteers had indexed from records held by the State Archives and Battye Library for the sesquicentenary in 1979. This was done at a time when having a convict ancestor was seen as a stain, particularly in the small settlements of WA, yet she believed that this was an important aspect of history to have in the public domain. How right she was and she lived to see her decision vindicated, convict

ancestry celebrated and the convict records placed on the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register.

I remember giving a visual tour of Kalgoorlie buildings in Kalgoorlie many years ago to the RWAHS meeting for those to frail to go on the walking tour. Rica was in the front row, and I knew I had to be careful with my facts with her in the audience. I put up a photograph of the interior of a photographic studio in Kalgoorlie and asked for comment. Rica had everyone spellbound with her story of visiting there as a three year old, being given a bunch of flowers and being told to sit still, then being told she could get up and go, and when walking through the door from the studio the bunch of flowers taken away from her. She didn't remember the photographic session or have the photograph produced, but remembers how upset she was at losing the flowers.

(Joanna Sassoon)

State Library News

The State Library makes an exhibition of itself

Those of you who regularly use the State Library of Western Australia will have noticed the renovations taking place on the ground floor of the building since March. These have been completed and the area, named the Discovery Lounge, opened to the public on 5 October. The Discovery Lounge is a bright, welcoming and flexible community space, focusing on the provision of improved access to technology and digital information. It has 52 computers with flexible booking times and provision for the use of laptops via the free wifi network at desks, while sitting on moveable lounges and chairs, or on the floor. Groups can work together on projects and some computers can be used for small informal training sessions and group talks.

Another part of the Discovery Lounge is the revamped exhibition area. Designed to be flexible, with free-standing, moveable walls, it can be configured to handle both large and small exhibitions. To commemorate the opening of the Discovery Lounge, the State Library has prepared an exhibition called *Our Story, Our Treasures, the State Library of Western Australia*, which focuses on the history, the people in charge and some of the treasures which make up the collections of the State Library of Western Australia.

Some interesting facts came to light during research for the exhibition. For example, did you know the Dewey Decimal System was not used by the Library until 1909. Prior to that a system similar to that used by the Public Library of Victoria was used. The collection was divided into 26 subject groupings, corresponding to the capital letters of the alphabet. Each bay of shelving in a subject grouping was given a Roman numeral, each shelf in a bay was given a lower case letter of the alphabet and each book was given a number. So the designation D xvi h 23 would indicate it was book 23 on shelf 8 of bay 16 in subject number D. This system was adequate while the Library's collection was small, but not once it reached 100,000 books.

Some of you might think that Dr Battye was the first person in charge of the Library, followed by Ali Sharr, Bob Sharman, Lynn Allen, Claire Forte and Margaret Allen, but Dr Battye was, in fact, the 3rd person in charge. I wonder how many of you have heard of William Charles Townsend, clerk in charge of the Victoria Public Library when it opened on 26 January 1889, at the princely salary of £10 per month. He left in March 1890, possibly to become the publican of the Guildford Hotel. He was followed by Basil Porter, an ex-soldier down on his luck, who lasted four years, resigning when he went blind (The West Australian referred to it as "the sad and sudden calamity which shut out the light of day to Mr Basil Porter, the zealous guardian of the Victoria Public Library").



Governor Broome laying the foundation stone for the Victoria Public Library, Perth 1887. (Courtesy Battye Library, 000617D)

These, and many other facts, can be found at the exhibition, along with some of the treasures from the Library, most never exhibited before. Included are items from the Battye Library, such as Alfred Hawes Stone's plan of the garden of Alpha Cottage 1835; Mrs Eliza Shaw's sleeve ornaments; an architectural plan by Sir John Talbot Hobbs; an illuminated address presented to the Reverend David Howell Griffith; a silk program for *Charles II or The Merry Monarch*, performed on 4

September 1839; Bishop Henry Hutton Parry's Seal; Thomas Turner's sketchbook of houses he'd lived in; a book of poems by John Boyle O'Reilly, bound in vellum, with a brass clip and covered in shorthand; and Arthur Esam's 1894 painting of The Gold Escort at Kalgoorlie and many more.

From the State Library you can find a 1537 Bible; the Samaveda on palm leaves and assembled like a venetian blind; William Pyne's 1808 *Microcosm*, showing scenes of rural England; the smallest English dictionary in the world; Rolly Taker's portfolio of America's Cup yachts; Chinese colour woodcuts; Auguste Racinet's beautiful costume history; and various items illustrating the dreamtime, tropical fish, kingfishers, insects, fungi, roses and fruit amongst others.

As there is still work continuing on the ground floor, the full exhibition area cannot be used at present. When the full area is available, more material will be shown, including a photographic history of the State Library. The exhibition will run until late in December, so if you have the time, pop in and have a look.

Steve Howell (Senior Subject Specialist, Battye Library)

News from the Battye Historian

The Discovery Lounge

The State Library is excited to announce the Discovery Lounge opened on October 5. The State Library has redeveloped the ground floor to create a new and exciting place - The Discovery Lounge. This area is a community space that is bright, welcoming and flexible, focusing on providing State Library clients with improved access to technology and digital information.

In this area there are increased numbers of workstations available with a flexible booking system. Clients are also encouraged to use their own laptops via the free wifi network. These flexible configurations allow groups to work together on projects. Some of the computers can be used for small informal training sessions, group talks and for awareness-raising of electronic resources.

The Discovery Lounge is a highly visible and interactive space that will

attract a great deal of use from the novice user to the technologically savvy. The State Library encourages clients to engage with electronic databases and newspapers, as well as the internet. Where appropriate staff will direct clients to the Library's upper floors and inform them of how they can gain access to the information and/or collections they are seeking.

Our Stories Our Treasures, the State Library of Western Australia

To mark the opening of the new Discovery Lounge, the State Library is showcasing a brief history of its own people, place and collections. This exhibition provides a history of the development of the State Library of Western Australia. It also showcases a range of materials from the collection, demonstrating how the collections have evolved over time. The exhibition will run from October through to the end of December.

2009 Battye Fellowship

Dr Jane Davis is the winner of the State Library's second Battye Fellowship. Dr Davis' project, entitled *Longing or Belonging? Finding Home in Colonial Western Australia*, will challenge the current widely-held assumptions about settlers and the Australian environment. It will focus on twenty-one colonists who settled in the South West of Western Australia between 1829 and 1907, and the extent to which they developed a sense of home and belonging through their relationships with and perceptions of the landscapes they encountered. Making extensive use of materials in the Battye Library, including personal archives, newspapers and ephemeral materials, this project will argue against the dominant pioneer narrative that portrays colonists as threatened and alienated by a harsh environment and instead demonstrate that, among a wide variety of responses, some colonist developed strong connections with, and even affection for, their 'new' place in Western Australia.

In addition to a number of public presentations, the outcomes of this project will include an exhibition showcasing the personal diaries, journals and letters of key colonialists who settled in WA (including George Fletcher Moore, John Ramsden Wollaston, Gerald de Courcy Lefroy, Maude Wordsworth James and Eliza Shaw) and a multimedia website introducing key figures in Western Australia's colonial history and providing an overview of their lives and the social context in which they developed a sense of belonging in their new homeland.

SLURP

SLURP, the **S**tate Library of WA's **L**imber and **U**seful **R**eformatting **A**pplication, has gone live, with the first digitised objects accessible online shortly. The new system will allow the rapid and simple ingest of metadata and capture of digital objects and it will interface automatically and seamlessly with the library's catalogue. SLURP automatically creates derivatives for web access and archival purposes. In addition, the application creates unique, persistent identifiers and presents digital objects to end users as embedded objects within a web page. The application has been developed in-house at the library and is based on open source applications.

Better Beginnings

The State Government, through the State Library of Western Australia, will continue to fund the Better Beginnings family literacy program in 2009-10. Currently 80% of WA local governments are participating and over 70,000 reading packs have been delivered to families with new babies since the program commenced in 2005.

Rio Tinto's WA Future Fund has agreed to fund a pilot program, during 2009/10, extending Better Beginnings to provide early literacy resources and information to families with children aged four and five years. Building on Better Beginnings' successful strategies and strong partnerships, the twelve month pilot will be trialled in selected remote, regional and metropolitan communities.

As a key partner, the Department of Education and Training will work with The State Library to identify communities and schools to participate in the pilot and will assist in the program's delivery. A strong focus of the pilot will be to develop and deliver appropriate resources to families from indigenous and culturally diverse backgrounds within communities. Once identified, libraries and schools will be invited to participate and will be briefed on the program's details. Based on outcomes from the pilot and an independent evaluation by Edith Cowan University, it is intended to eventually roll out the extended program state-wide.

Sarah Brown

Have you visited the Friends of Battye Library Website yet?

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

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

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

State Records Office News

Historical Maps Online Project

The Friends of the Battye Library Inc agreed in June 2009 to fund some modifications to the State Records Office of Western Australia's (SRO) archives catalogue - AEON - to be able to provide online access to its digitised map collection. Work on the software was carried out in August and the new functionality for AEON now provides the ability to display large images and multiple page images, including:

Zoom in/out capability, to view the fine detail of large-scale maps.

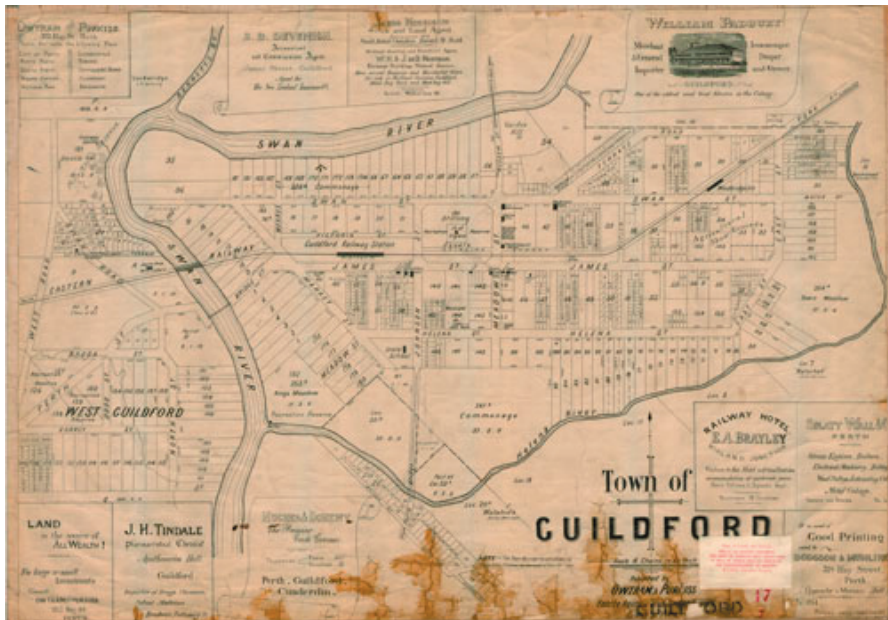
Click and drag capability, to move the displayed image around the screen.

A print control, configured to print the displayed image onto one page (rather than over multiple pages). Maps are best printed in landscape mode.

Page turning capability, to scroll through multiple images or pages of a displayed record (similar to turning through the pages of a book).

As well as this, clients can save a displayed image to their own computer by right-clicking with their mouse and choosing *save*. Different web browsers also provide added capability such as full screen viewing,

conversion to pdf, etc. All digitised images are being titled with their series, consignment and item details so that this information is captured when a client saves the image. This will assist with any subsequent tracing of the record that may be required (as well as providing the basis for record referencing purposes).



Guildford 17/7A. Town of Guildford 1902. [Published by Owtram & Purkiss, Estate Agents and Sworn Valuers, 363 Hay Street, Perth. Compiled and lithographed by C. M. Purkiss 10/08/1902 scale: 4 chains to an inch]. (Courtesy State Records Office - Maps Online)

This work is a significant improvement in providing access to the State archives collection and the State Records Office is grateful to the Friends funding this development. In theory, any digitised record from the State archives collection can now be displayed through AEON.

There are approximately 6000 maps that SRO has had digitised over the last nine years by Preservation and Maintenance staff at the State Library, which will now be loaded to AEON. It is anticipated these will be fully accessible through AEON by mid-2010. To see what is available through the Maps Online Project, visit AEON (www.sro.wa.gov.au/aeon), choose *Record Series in Advanced Search* and search on Series No. 235. There are several hundred townsite plans that have been fully

loaded to this Series. Each digitised map hangs off each catalogue entry for individual items.

The maps have been digitised at a high enough resolution to capture their fine detail. This means they are quite large digital files: approximately 4Mb for each map. Because of this, accessing them via AEON may not be instant. For clients on broadband, this may take a couple of seconds. For clients on dial-up, accessing may take a bit longer.

The SRO will publicise this initiative in the near future when additional digital content has been loaded. Once again, the SRO thanks the Friends for funding this work.

The Story of Martha Rendell.

In early October this year Professor Anna Haebich presented two public lectures at Fremantle Prison about the trial and execution of Martha Rendell, who was hanged in October 1909, for the murder by poison of three of her defacto husband's children in East Perth. The lectures were presented on 6th and 8th October to coincide with the centenary of Martha's death, and were jointly sponsored by Fremantle Prison and the State Records Office.

Professor Haebich is currently based at Griffith University in Queensland, and is well known for her published works on Aboriginal history. During her lecture Anna mentioned that she became interested in Rendell (who was not Aboriginal) through her participation in a project documenting the lives of Aboriginal women in Fremantle Prison. Women prisoners were held at Fremantle until the opening of Bandyup Prison in 1970.

Friends may recall a full page newspaper article promoting Anna's talk, titled "Stepmother haunts Fremantle Gallows" , written by Flip Prior, and published in the *West Australian* on Saturday 5 September this year. In this article and at her public lecture, Anna remarked on parallels between Martha Rendell and Lindy Chamberlain; not only in the way the media and the public reacted to their prosecution, but also because in her view the two women were 'tried and convicted on circumstantial evidence'. Anna is developing this theory in a 'documentary novel' tentatively called *Murdering Stepmothers* in

which she hopes to dispel the ‘Wicked Stepmother syndrome’ which she thinks has coloured most contemporary and historical accounts of Martha Rendell’s trial and execution.

Amongst the items on display outside the lecture hall at the prison were two key official records held by the State Records Office. These records are, a register of female prisoners, opened at the relevant page to reveal the final photographs taken of Martha Rendell and a document signed by all who witnessed her execution – which occurred shortly after 8am on Wednesday 6 October 1909.

Following Anna’s lecture, Oonagh Quigley the assistant curator at the Prison, led curious members of the audience on a tour of the scaffold where Martha Rendell died. Martha was one of three women executed in Western Australia and the only one of these to be hanged at Fremantle Prison. She is buried in the prison graveyard beside Eric Cooke, the last person to be legally executed there.



The gallows at Fremantle Prison. “It was never seen by those sentenced to death because they had a hood drawn over their head before entering this room.” (Courtesy www.creativespirits.info/.../prison.html)

The State Records Office thanks Professor Haebich for her excellent presentation, and congratulates Sandra Murray and the curatorial team at the Prison, along with Gerard Foley of the SRO, on a successful event.

Tom Reynolds

SRO Lunctime seminar - final for 2009

Andrew Gill :*Petitions and politics in mid 19th century Western Australia.*

Wednesday 18 November – 12.30pm to 1.30pm - In the Great Southern Room, 4th floor - State Library.

Bookings can be made at the State Records Office Search Room Desk or by ringing 9427 3360.

Email addresses needed

To enable us to share information and keep members up to date on important happenings, we have a group email list for current members. If you would like to be kept informed of important matters or forthcoming events relevant to the Battye Library and the State Records Office, please email me at bevnjen@gmail.com or Nick Drew at nickdrew@bigpond.com

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

State Library Bookshop - discount for members

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

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

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

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

Mon - Fri: 10am - 5pm

Sat & Sun: 12noon - 5pm

Archival quality materials

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

Jennie Carter

Good luck for Gwambygine.

I am part of a group of enthusiasts who put in for a grant under the Federal Government's Job Stimulus Plan for funds to restore the old farmhouse at Gwambygine. I came across the old building when researching for the Wittenoom book – the Reverend's eldest sons had created the house of rammed earth in 1835-6 and, at one of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society's conferences in York, Tony Clack, a local with a passion for history, said he actually knew where the house was!! Great excitement. Since then it has been given Heritage listing and a full Heritage Assessment was done in 2007 by Heritage Architect Ron Bodycoat and Historian and Friend Dr Robyn Taylor (our November Guest Speaker).

Since then the house has deteriorated – largely through storms shifting the corrugated iron roof allowing water damage to earthen walls - and white ants. Re-roofing was a must to save the building. Hence the application for a grant through the York based River Conservation Society (led by Cicely Howell and Tony Clack.) And we were successful. We have been awarded \$110,000 for the project which will employ a dozen or so young unemployed from the York region to help with the restoration.

Why is the building so important? Gwambygine is one of the earliest surviving homesteads in the State. Located on bank of Avon River and consists of a homestead, a stone barn, shearing shed, post and rail stock pens, sheep dip, a c1950s concrete block garage, remains of a tennis court and remains of garden beds and an orchard. The homestead is constructed of rammed earth and brick render and has north and south wings with verandahs along the sides of the building. The corrugated galvanised iron roof is mostly hipped and has a centre gablet at the entry. The original land grant of Gwambygine included Cave Hill, with its aboriginal cave paintings. Gwambygine Pool, directly below the house, is one of the last two remaining permanent pools in the Avon River in the York district.

The property is also linked to some of the best known family's in the state, for the Wittenooms passed the property on to the Hick's family on condition they looked after Henry Wittenoom, an invalid who died on the property in 1884. One of the Hick's family married Clifton (from the Australind Clifton line) and the property has remained in their hands ever since.

We hope that when the restoration is complete we can open the house once a month on a regular basis and by arrangement for tour groups. At

that stage we will be asking everyone for help in finding appropriately dated crockery, furniture and bed linen etc. We are all very excited about the project which is going to take most of our spare time in the next eight months or so.

If any of you are going to York and would like to see the property, it is out on the Beverly road, past the Gwambygine Avon Ascent (yes, not descent) Reserve and immediately after the Wittenoom Bridge.

Pamela Statham Drew



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

Maps, music, microfilm and more

Discover more than just books @ Your State Library.

When: Tuesdays 12.30pm (weekly)

Where: Meet next to the coffee shop or ask at Reception.

This free 50 minute guided tour of the State Library will introduce you to our unique collections and take you behind the scenes. Bookings not required (except for groups).

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

LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$500

Annual Membership

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

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

I wish to apply for / renew membership:

Name _____

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Tel: Day _____ Evening _____

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

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

The Treasurer
Friends of Battye Library
PO Box 216
NORTHBRIDGE 6865

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

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

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

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

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

Jack's Back: Some early Victorian characters

Very likely quite a few Friends will have seen and enjoyed the film *The Young Victoria*, which was shown in many cinemas recently. I certainly found it an excellent production – in nearly all respects. It has provided me with a focus for this column in regard to two of its main supporting characters.

My chief dissatisfaction was in the apparent age of Lord Melbourne, who was the Queen's kindly mentor as her first Prime Minister. The real statesman was aged 58 at the time of her accession, whereas the bewhiskered actor who played him looked somewhere between 28 and 38! Admittedly, Britain had a Prime Minister as young as 24 in Pitt back in 1783. The present depiction has clearly been a case of exercising the filmmaker's licence, such as to suggest most palatably to modern audiences the strong possibility of a romance between Melbourne and the young monarch. But indeed, such was their close association in 1837-39 that many people did in fact believe a marriage would result.

It set me thinking it is rather a pity that nowadays our local geographical nomenclature pays so little heed to the good William Lamb, 2nd Viscount Melbourne (1779-1848). After all, we are continually reminded of the names of his contemporaries like Peel, Canning, Hay, Murray, Melville, etc. Actually, early maps show that Perth once had a Lamb Street, which long ago became Aberdeen Street. It also had a Melbourne Street (originally Road), which is now the eastern fork of Milligan Street, and the last echo of this today is the Melbourne Hotel in that precinct. And it is true that in the Midlands we have a Melbourne land district that survives from the early days, its relevance confined to land titles.

The second personage of interest in the film is the ambitious schemer, Sir John Ponsonby Conroy (1786-1854). I find he now ranks an entry in the *Missing Persons* Volume of Britain's *Dictionary of National Biography* (published in 1993). An army officer by profession, he was for thirty years altogether the major-domo to first the Duke, and then the widowed Duchess, of Kent. He liked to believe and to intimate that his own wife was a natural child of the Duke! Eventually, however, Conroy proved dishonest and was found guilty of grossly mismanaging the Duchess's funds. In 1839 Wellington persuaded him to resign his post and to live abroad for a while. Modern biographers find no real evidence of any improper relationship between the Duchess and her Comptroller, and the film seems reasonable in its portrayals of the two.

A link with the local scene exists in the person of John Augustus Conroy,

who spent four years here in prominent government service in the early 1850s. He arrived at Fremantle in December 1851 to be Assistant Superintendent of the Convict Establishment. Quoting from Alexandra Hasluck's *Royal Engineer* (1973), he was thus described by a fellow voyager, Lieut Du Cane:

'Conroy...was in the Indian army & had to leave for a duel – his uncle is Sir J. Conroy – who was equerry to the Duchess of Kent, & about whom there was some scandal - ...been very fast – seems to have been in very good society – His wife...nice looking – they have not had 2d for the last few years & have been doing all sorts of things -...very amusing fellow – not overstocked with principle I suspect...'

It was not long before the colonists were blaming the convict system for an increase in crime and drunkenness, and steps were therefore taken to build up a stronger Police Force. Moving from imperial to colonial employ, Conroy was appointed the first Superintendent of Police in March 1853 and to the grander designation of Commissioner in June 1854. His experience as such is well covered in the early history of the Force that Mollie Bentley produced, *Grandfather was a Policeman* (1993).

In short, Conroy won approval of his work while Fitzgerald was Governor, but soon fell into disfavour in the thorough shake-up of the public service that followed when Kennedy took over the vice-regal reins in July 1855. The police were insufficiently vigilant and the magistracy too lenient, in the eyes of the new Governor, and 'irregularities' came to his notice increasingly. The whole situation deteriorated rapidly for both Conroy and the Police Magistrate, Yule, and the two were suspended from duty while their performances were referred to the home authorities in London. Both men sailed to England early in 1856 and in due course were largely exonerated of misconduct. Conroy was advised he could return to the colony (as Yule in fact did), but might be confronted with further enquiry there. He remained on half-pay till the end of the year, but 'perhaps wisely', in Mollie's words, decided not to return. In February 1857 his wife and children left Perth to rejoin him. We have learnt nothing further of them all.

So, thanks to Mollie's research and writing, the younger Conroy's repute has improved a good deal, but nevertheless the two careers suggest this was in some measure a case of like uncle, like nephew.

Further licence: The film departs from fact in having Prince Albert present at Victoria's coronation and the ball that followed. But in general the detail is admirably done.

(Jack Honniball)

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

Life membership \$500

Annual membership

Ordinary \$20

Joint \$30

Pensioner / student / junior \$10

Corporate \$50

Meetings

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

Newsletter

Published four times per year - March, June, September and November (no newsletter is published in May). Articles from members and supporters are very welcome and the deadline for copy for the newsletter is 10 February, 10 June, 10 August and 15 October each year. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject articles and notices for publication.

Contact details

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

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

The editor, Jennie Carter at bevnjen@gmail.com

or write to:

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

J S Battye Library of West Australian History

Opening hours Mon/Thurs 9.00 am - 8.00 pm
 Friday 9.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Sat/Sun 10.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Public holidays - closed (from 1 July 2009)

Retrievals Every half hour during opening hours.

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

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

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

State Records Office

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

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

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

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

The Genealogy Centre

(First Floor State Library) for Family History research.

Opening hours- as per Battye Library opening hours.

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

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