

No. 174



July 2022

FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.)
NEWSLETTER

Our July 2022 meeting

Bevan Carter

Tales from the grave



Tuesday 12 July 2022 at 5.00pm for 5.30pm. See details on page 3.

Objectives

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

Patron Mrs Ruth Reid AM

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

Our July meeting.

Tuesday 12 July 2022
Great Southern Room, fourth floor
State Library of Western Australia
at 5pm for 5.30pm

Our speaker will be Bevan Carter

Tales from the grave: unearthing family mysteries

After the meeting, members are very welcome to join us for a meal at a nearby Perth restaurant. Nick Drew will take bookings on the night.

Members please note: this information is correct at the time of going to print, but given the situation with recent outbreaks of Covid19, restrictions put in place before our scheduled meeting may mean cancellation, or limits placed on the numbers of people allowed to congregate in the Great Southern Room.

An email will be sent out before the meeting to let you know if there are to be any changes. For those of you not on email, it is best if you could ring the library (9427 3111) on, or shortly before the meeting for clarification.

Problem with the stairs?

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

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About Bevan Carter

Bevan got seriously bitten by the genealogy bug some 40 years ago when assisting his sister Anne Mead to research and write the Carter family history. Since then he has produced many written works, among them *From Norfolk poacher to Northam farmer: the life times, and descendants of Robert Carter and Phoebe Oxbury*, *Nyungah land: records of invasion and theft of Aboriginal land on the Swan River 1829-1850*, and, in collaboration with wife, Jennie, *Settlement to city: a history of the Armadale district and its people*, and *King Eddies: a history of WA's premier women's hospital*.



He has been a long term member of the Friends of Battye Library and of Family History WA (formerly WAGS) where he is Convenor of the Convict Group. Bevan has several projects on the go, including involvement in a major website currently being developed by members of the Convict Group which aims to document the lives of convicts transported to Australia and what happened to them afterwards.

About Bevan's talk

Family graves can be a fount of information for genealogists and family historians – if you know where to dig further (please pardon the pun).

An excellent case study is presented by Bevan who has researched the lives of Josiah and Mary Dewis who arrived in WA in 1862. Their headstone lists five names including those of three of their daughters – the inscription, however, does not tell the whole story. Building on meticulous original research carried out by Lorraine Clarke and Cherie Strickland, Bevan has unearthed some fascinating tales to tell.



Meeting dates for 2022

- 13 September** (AGM) Prof Alistair Paterson, UWA and Dr Kate Gregory: *Collecting Western Australia*
- 22 November** (4th Tuesday) - End of year function.
Judy McGuinness: *Salvado's brother Santos, their letters, and the New Norcia Mission.*

President's Piece

In our last issue, we farewelled Margaret Allen who retired earlier this year. On behalf of the Friends Committee I take pleasure in extending our warmest welcome to the new CEO and State Librarian, Catherine Clark, who has kindly provided a short biography (see page 6) to introduce herself to you all.

WA Premier's Book Awards

One of the benefits of being President of the Friends of the Battye Library is that I now get invited to State Library functions that I wouldn't ordinarily be able to attend. One of these is the WA Premier's Book Awards Ceremony. Managed by the State Library, these awards are sponsored by the Western Australian Government to support, develop and recognise excellence in Western Australian writing.

The awards came into being in 1982 when the State Government created them to honour and celebrate the literary achievements of Western Australian writers. Until 1990 the awards were known as the WA Week Literary Awards, with categories including poetry, non-fiction, fiction, Western Australian history, children's book and several others. From the winners of each category, an overall winner was chosen and presented with the 'Premier's Prize'.

Disappointingly, and much to the displeasure of the WA arts sector, the Barnett government reduced the awards to a biennial event. Thankfully, in 2018, the present government reinstated the annual award format, which currently consists of four categories: the Western Australian Writer's Fellowship (valued at \$60,000), the Premier's Prize for Writing for Children (\$15,000), the Premier's Prize for an Emerging Writer (\$15,000) and the Daisy Utemorrhah Award for Indigenous Authors (\$15,000 and publishing contract with Magabala Books).

I was delighted to be able to attend this year's award ceremony (for books published in 2021) in the middle of June. In addition to the prizes mentioned above there was an extra item on the agenda, which was to induct posthumously the Martu writer, Doris Pilkington Garimara AM (1937-2014), into the Western Australian Writers Hall of Fame.

Taken from her home in the Kimberley at the age of four and placed in the Moore River Native Settlement, Doris later used that experience to write of injustice and the strength of connection to country. Her profoundly Western Australian stories have inspired a new generation of Indigenous writers, influencing the ways in which Western Australians view themselves through a complex history.

The winners of this year's awards can be found on the State Library website and in this *Newsletter*, but the list will not convey the joy and surprise on the faces of recipients, who each gained a substantial monetary prize to help them on their way in the literary world. (The winners are featured on page 29.)

In the current economic climate, it is very pleasing to find this little oasis in the desert of arts funding. Having said that, it is to be devoutly wished that Western Australia's Premier's Book Awards will sometime in the near future reinstate an award or recognition specifically for Western Australian history.

Richard Offen



[It is a pleasure to introduce to members our new head of the State Library of Western Australia – in her own words.]

Ms Catherine Clark, CEO and State Librarian

After moving to Australia from Scotland as a teenager, I commenced my professional career in public libraries and following experience in school and special libraries in the UK, have worked in academic libraries for over 20 years at both The University of Western Australia and Curtin University. My leadership roles have focused on the design and delivery of library, learning and IT services across a range of portfolio areas. I have also enjoyed working with archival collections at UWA and as



Director of the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library.

Additional leadership roles have included: Member of the Board of the Council of Australian University Librarians and Program Director for the Advancing Open Scholarship Program; Chair of the Aurora Foundation, an international organisation committed to providing development opportunities for emerging leaders in Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums sectors; Member of the Curtin

University Council, the University's governing authority; and Chair of the Libraries of the ATN Universities Executive Group.

In 2017, I was honoured to be recognised with the Excellence in Leadership Award from the Australian and New Zealand Association for Tertiary Education Management.

I consider myself very fortunate to now be leading the team at the State Library of Western Australia as CEO and State Librarian, and look forward to working with the Friends of Battye Library as I discover the many gems in our collection.

Catherine Clark



Gems of Time

A distinguished list.

The Friends of Battye Library resolved in 2001 to establish a society award to acknowledge the contribution of outstanding individuals with connections to the Friends and the Battye Library to the recording, collection, and preservation of Western Australia's history.

The inaugural award was presented to Rica Erickson in 2002 and the list of those honoured are on the Friends website at <http://www.>

friendsofbattylibrary.org.au/gems-of-time.html. For some of the years no award was presented and for others there may have been up to three Gems acknowledged.

Following a suggestion from Robert O'Connor QC, last year's Gem of Time, we will be featuring in forthcoming Newsletters some of the remarkable people whose names appear on our Honour Board near the lifts outside the Battye Library on the third floor of the State Library building.

Unfortunately the citations for some of our earliest Gems were not recorded, including that for Rica. But she needs no introduction, her body of work has been remarkable, as is the fact that at her death at the age of 101 in September 2009, she was working on a couple of major projects and publications. The Friends' obituary at the time, which is reproduced below, paid tribute to her as an outstanding historian, researcher, botanist, artist, and conservationist.

Dr Frederica Lucy 'Rica' Erickson AM, Hon DIitt, Cit WA.FRWAHS

Rica was born Frederica Lucy Sandilands on 10 August 1908 in Boulder and was the eldest of the eight children of Christopher and Phoebe Sandilands. In 1921 the family moved to Kendenup, but Rica, who had won an entrance to the Eastern Goldfields High School, remained in Boulder to live with her much loved grandmother.

Always a curious and energetic child, Rica's childhood interests revolved around sports and outdoor games, music, photography, reading and exploring the countryside. Rica became a teacher and to gain further qualifications she chose to research native orchids and at the same time honed her skills as a botanical artist.

In 1934 she took up a position at the Bolgart School where she met and in 1936 married, Sydney Erickson (1908-1987). Rica retired from teaching and the young couple farmed 'Fairlea' and raised four children, Dorothy, John, Bethel and Robin. 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*, the first of her many books, was published.

Rica and Syd retired from farming and moved to Nedlands in 1965 where she found more time to research and write her historical works, with *The Drummonds of Hawthornden* appearing in 1969 followed in quick succession by *The Victoria Plains*, *Old Toodyay and Newcastle*, and *The Dempsters*. Arguably, 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 resource for early Western Australian family history.

Over the years she donated large collections of materials, including hundreds of her botanical art works to the Battye Library.

A report of Rica's 100th birthday celebration, together with a short biography, appeared in the September 2008 edition of our Newsletter.

Rica received countless awards, honours and accolades, including an Honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of WA, 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. She was a wise mentor, an inspiring community leader, and a remarkable human being. For many of us involved with the Battye Library and the State Records Office, it has been a true privilege and a delight to have known her.

You can read more about Rica at the State Library's website <https://slwa.wa.gov.au/stories/wa-history/meet-rica-erickson> and at the archived website <https://webarchive.slwa.wa.gov.au/erickson/index.html>.



Have you a story to tell?

[John Dowson is a well-known author and publisher of works on WA history, some of them through his company - Aussiana Books. A former Deputy Mayor of Fremantle, John is President of the Fremantle Society. His particular interest is in early photographs and images and among his many publications are Old Fremantle: photographs 1850-1950 (UWA Press), Old Albany: photographs 1850-1950 (National Trust WA), and Swan River postcards (Aussiana Books). The following article is an extract from a longer essay that John researched and published in 2020.]

The Wooden Streets of Fremantle

During the Gold Rush of the 1890s the streets of Fremantle may not have been paved with gold, but some were paved with valuable timbers like jarrah and karri. By 1897 Fremantle Council, deciding they could get no help from the State Government paving their roads the way they wanted them, took out a loan themselves to buy 300,000 wooden blocks to pave High Street from the Town Hall to Cliff Street. A substantial section of these Western Australian wooden paving blocks has been unearthed in Mouat Street during the 2020 Water Corporation Pipes for Fremantle renewal project.



Mouat Street looking north from High Street, showing one of the sections of wooden street found during the pipes replacement program (courtesy Archae-Aus).

Many streets around the world were paved with valuable WA timber. An astonishing amount of jarrah and karri was used. Very little of the streets of wood remain, in Australia or overseas, but talk of wooden streets in Australia goes back before Western Australia was even settled.

The Back Story - Wooden Streets from 1826

The 1500BC Amber routes of Europe used wooden logs in parts, but when were wooden roads first discussed in Australia? The very day, 2 December 1826, that the *Hobart Town Gazette* reported Major Lockyer visiting for a supply of water on his way to form a settlement in Albany, the newspaper discussed the use of timber on roads in Europe:

We should remark here the practice in Vienna, and other cities of the Continent of Europe, where open courts and blind alleys are usually paved with blocks of hard wood.

On 9 February 1839, Sydney's *The Colonist* recommended wooden streets for Sydney, reporting that merchants in the world's most famous shopping street, Oxford Street in London, were so keen to have wood paving, they offered to pay for a section themselves. They turned up at a council meeting with a New Yorker who attested to the success of wood paving on Broadway, 'the greatest thoroughfare in America'. But six years later, articles attributed to Edgar Allan Poe were published in New York's *Evening Mirror* decrying America's lack of progress with wooden streets and quoting the New York Mayor's call for Broadway to 'be repaired with granite upon a bed of concrete'. Poe noted that 'during the last two thousand years, the world has been able to make no essential improvements in road-making'. Poe was all for wooden blocks, but only when laid to avoid 'the two evils of swagging, or (blocks) floating in wet weather, and of decay'.

Even Charles Dickens entered the debate in 1856, noting the problems:

... that the knavish contractors supply blocks so rotten as to be worthless a few days after they are put down, and that the horses are continually slipping and frequently falling on the perilous highway. It is unpleasant, also, to be semi-asphyxiated each time you take your walks abroad, by the fumes of the infernal pitch-cauldrons, round which the moujik workmen gather, like witches. (*A Journey Due North*, 1856).

Western Australian hardwoods arrived in the late 1880s to solve these street paving problems.

1862: Governor Hampton Arrives in WA

It took John Hampton, (Governor of WA 1862-1868), to get wooden roads in WA. He had seen them in Canada, and ordered three miles of Stirling Highway to be paved as a test. Convicts cut down 300 year old jarrah trees and made 30cm thick discs, later to be known as 'Hampton's

Cheeses'. These probably continued after his 1868 departure, as a Main Roads worker in 1948 found a London Mint 1870 British sovereign under one 'Cheese' near Belmont.

Hampton paved parts of the road to Guildford, which followed a well-worn Aboriginal track, and the Albany Road, with wood. A half-mile section of the Guildford Road (now Great Eastern Highway) timbers in Redcliffe, near Belmont, was dug up in 1933 by Main Roads. The blocks, up to a metre in diameter, were probably cut from the jarrah forests formerly found close to the Swan River near Guildford. Clay had been used as a filling between the logs. Most were in excellent condition, and so heavy they required three men to load one onto a vehicle. Hundreds of truckloads were taken to South Guildford where, ironically, the wooden Helena River Bridge was being built, and used as fuel for the steam rollers there. More were discovered in 2012. The Belmont mayor proudly announced that his council was 'committed to preserving its history', so just six of Hampton's Cheeses have been moved, and will one day be displayed (but heritage should be revealed and interpreted where it is, and not moved, if possible).

Worldwide Use of Jarrah and Karri

After Hampton's departure, it took a while for smaller wood blocks to be trialled. In 1881 karri blocks were laid in Flinders Street, Melbourne, but the first street in Australia to have wooden blocks (redgum) was probably Pakenham, not in Fremantle, but Echuca on the Victorian border with NSW, in 1867. In 1888 Chelsea in London trialled jarrah blocks, though shopkeepers complained the hardwood gave a metallic ring under traffic (Chelsea was still using wood blocks in 1937 on their new bridge). The use of Western Australia's precious 'Swan River Mahogany' for mundane purposes like wooden block streets, exploded, and 90% of our great forests went to the ends of the earth. By 1893 Western Australian hardwoods were king, heavily used in streets until the 1930s around the world, and often not replaced until the 1950s. Huge amounts were also utilised for railway sleepers, docks, bridge construction, mining, and general building purposes.

Fremantle's Wooden Streets

WA hardwoods built much of Fremantle - the wharves, jetties, bridges, buildings and some streets. When eight companies combined to form Millars' Karri & Jarrah Company (1902) Limited, with 350 miles of



Pioneer Park Fremantle. Cleaning jarrah street blocks for re-use in September 1905, just months after tramlines began to be laid throughout Fremantle. (From John Dowson's *Old Fremantle*.)

railway, 40 locomotives, 1000 horses, and 3,500 men, (largest hardwood company in the world), the great forests of WA did not stand a chance.

The *Daily News* of 5 Feb 1898 noted that:

The Fremantle Municipal Council has been the first body in the colony to use wood-paving in public thoroughfares to any extent... jarrah has very strong claims from both hygienic and economical points of view.

The wood paving for High Street was swiftly completed in 1898, gangs of men working 24 hours a day on three shifts. The wooden water channels flanking the street were replaced with jarrah kerbing. But wooden streets caused their own problems. While laying the High Street blocks, a fire broke out in Parry Street where council workers were preparing the blocks by dipping them in boiling tar. The tar leaked into the fire and 'huge volumes of black smoke rolled up from the fire... it appeared as if half the town was burning' (*Inquirer* 29 April, 1898). The Fire Brigade were no use and the town supervisor EH Gliddon arrived to direct sand

being thrown on the fire. 'The block drying shed close by was on fire and a pile of 30,000 tarred paving blocks ... were also ignited'.

In Fremantle, it seems only High (1898), Mouat, and half of Cliff Streets (1903) were paved with wood, though the cab stand opposite the town hall was wood blocked in 1899 for £15, and the new train station in 1907 had wood paving for the cab rank and outside the parcels office. Messrs Davis, Hankinson and Co. of Perth, who helped lay a mile of blocks in Hay Street Perth, in 1899, did the job in Fremantle in 1903 for the council with around 250,000 blocks.

Also, there was extensive wood blocking inside the port, which had opened in 1897, itself built of Western Australian hardwoods. Over a dozen railway lines ran through the area and along the wooden wharves, causing up to 22 fires a day there. Solution: put wood on the wood. On 28 February 1903 the *Western Mail* reported:

It is also proposed to lay down, wood blocking between the sheds and the kerb of the wharf, on the same level as the top of the railway rails. This will facilitate the removal of goods to the sheds, and minimise the small fires which are frequently caused on the wharves by locomotives... At a meeting of the Board on Tuesday, the secretary was instructed to draw the attention of the Commissioner of Railways to the fact that the Fremantle Wharves were constantly being set on fire by live coals dropping from the locomotives while working on the wharves. The fires, it was stated, were almost of hourly occurrence, and one day last week no fewer than twenty-two outbreaks were reported. Scarcely a day passed without about a dozen small fires occurring from this source, and in consequence, the wharves were being considerably damaged.

Fremantle's hard working three time mayor Elias Solomon, in 1908, the year before he died, advocated wood blocking of all the principal streets of Fremantle. The 5 December *Truth* agreed:

This is an idea our councillors should catch on to instead of inflicting their white-crowned blinding thoroughfares on the populace.

The intersection of Mouat and High was regarded as the busiest in Fremantle, and indeed one of the State's busiest. That is why in 1910 Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company (1902) Limited asked council for specimens of the 9" x 6" x 3" wood blocks laid there in 1898, in connection with tenders the company was lodging for orders outside the State. The wooden blocks were found to be 'practically as good as new'. Millars took samples to the eastern states, lobbying councils there to use their WA timber.

In 1912 wood blocking was extended from Cliff Street across Phillimore to the Harbour Trust boundary. The previous year the *Western Mail* noted on 22 July:

Not the least important improvement effected this year (at the port) has been the wood-blocking of the road from Cliff-street down the delivery side of the harbour sheds. This item meant the expense of roughly £9,000.

This was the same amount spent putting 486,000 blocks along one mile of Hay St.

Market Street from the 1907 railway station to the South Terrace corner was going to be wood blocked, but the *Truth* reported on 7 January 1911 that:

The Municipal Mugwumps are at it again...a battalion of horny-handed sons of toil are tearing up the street with great enthusiasm, preparatory to slagging it... it looks as if the Council is making a reckless attempt to excuse its humorous purchase of twenty thousand tons of slag from the Fremantle Trading Company at a price of several thousand sovereigns belonging to the ratepayers, by dumping it down in Market Street.

In 1920, Council, still interested, intended laying one million blocks along 'the principal arteries leading from the town' (*Fremantle Times*, 2 February), but that idea seemed to disappear into thin air. And thus the Mugwumps denied Fremantle any more wooden streets.

The rediscovery of a substantial number of wooden blocks in Mouat Street is a highly significant scientific find in a world-class heritage town. It vividly tells the story of what has gone before. Fremantle Council needs to act NOW to get these blocks conserved and presented to the public where they are, through a covering of appropriate glass and with detailed interpretation. Given the grief caused to local businesses for many months by the necessary but intrusive Pipes project, an archaeological discovery like this made visible to the public would be a great, and a positive outcome after so much disruption. The project should begin now, not in the future, when people have forgotten where the blocks are.

John Dowson



[The President of the Friends, Richard Offen, has had a varied career in broadcasting, public speaking, and publishing about Western Australian History since arriving in Perth from England, with a background of work with the UK National Trust, almost twenty years ago. He spent thirteen years as Director of Heritage Perth, retiring in 2017 and is the author of works of WA history, including Lost Perth and Perth Then and Now.]

Perth's Oldest Buildings

When I first came to Perth people told me Western Australia had very little history or heritage. This was a strange statement to make given that at Marble Bar some fossilised stromatolites are the oldest evidence of life on the planet. As if that wasn't enough for one Australian state, some years ago two stone axe heads were found in the Kimberley, which, through scientific dating, are now reckoned to be the oldest known man-made tools on the planet. Add to that the archaeological discovery in 2017 on Barrow Island, just off the Pilbara, of the earliest evidence of coastal living in Australia. But wait, it gets even better: on West Wallabi Island in the Abrolhos are the remains of Australia's oldest known European style structure, Wiebbe Hayes Stone Fort, dating from 1629. Now tell me we have nothing significantly old in Western Australia!

Following those revelations, let us now turn our attention to the antiquity of central Perth, not forgetting of course that the area the city now stands on has been inhabited by the Wadjuk Noongar people for well over 40,000 years.

Following the arrival of the British in the winter of 1829, most people lived in tents for many months before they were finally allocated plots of land on which to build more permanent residences. Initially most buildings in Perth were constructed of timber, but as sources of sandstone and clay, with which to make bricks, were found, the temporary buildings were replaced with more substantial and durable structures. As a result, slowly, Perth began to take on the air of a small, sleepy country town in rural England.

Although Perth has undergone huge growth and change since the first gold rush of the 1890s, there is still a good deal of evidence to be found of the original British settlement:

The oldest remaining piece of brickwork in the city is behind the Barrack Street section of the old Central Government Offices, known to many as the 'Old Treasury Building', but now named the 'State Buildings'. The

site was originally the barracks for the 63rd Regiment (sent here to protect the new colony), who, in 1833, built a guard house facing Barrack Street. When the first section of the Central Government Offices was built in 1875, it incorporated this guard house, which was initially used as the Police Court. During the recent adaptation of the Central Government Offices, a small section of brickwork from the original guard house was revealed in the back wall at ground floor level.



Original brickwork. (Richard Offen)

Perth's oldest complete standing building, the Old Court House, is situated in Stirling Gardens. In the early days of the Swan River Colony, judicial hearings took place in the 'Rush Church', a temporary church

set up on the corner of Hay and Irwin Streets, but in 1836, a courthouse was built to a design by Henry Reveley. Described by Reveley as 'chaste and appropriate', the building cost £698 and the first Court of General Quarter Sessions was held there on 2 January 1837. For the first few years of its life, the building not only served as a court room, but also the Colony's theatre, concert hall, school and church. Today, the building houses the Old Court House Law Museum.

In 1843, Father John Brady was sent to minister to the Catholic settlers in the Swan River Colony. At the time, the Roman Catholic population of Perth was very small, with no funds to construct a church. However, Brady was determined and before his first year here was out, sufficient money had been raised to support the construction of a church, with the foundation stone being laid on 16 January 1844.

Later that year, Brady left for Rome to advocate for the establishment of a new diocese for the Swan River Colony and left instructions for the



Old Court
House
(Richard Offen)

completion of the church building. He returned to Perth in January 1846 as the new Catholic Bishop of Perth to find the building had still not been completed – it's clearly not a modern problem that builders seem to have difficulty sticking to schedules! Upon this discovery, Bishop Brady must have cracked the whip very hard because three days later the walls had been plastered, doors hung and the windows glazed, in time for a Mass the following Sunday.

We have one other pre-convict era building left standing within the boundaries of the City of Perth, namely Shenton House, the homestead for Crawley Park, now part of the University of Western Australia.

The house was built by Henry Sutherland, who had arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1829 and held the office of Assistant Surveyor until 1830, eventually becoming Colonial Treasurer and Collector of Inland Revenue. Sutherland constructed a two-storey brick homestead on his land facing Matilda Bay in about 1846 and named Crawley Park in memory of his mother, Ann Crawley. The house remained in the Sutherland family until it was sold in 1876 to George Shenton (later Sir) for £1,800. Shenton, who was born in Perth and became its first Mayor, occupied the homestead until his death in 1909, when the Government, to protect access to the river foreshore, resumed the Crawley estate to be used for public purposes and eventually designating it as the site for the newly formed University of Western Australia. The building currently houses the School of Indigenous Studies.

In 1849, Western Australia was declared a penal colony and convicts arrived from Britain in June, 1850. Their arrival was principally to help the colony build much need infrastructure such as roads, bridges and public buildings, of which many survive to this day ... but that's a story for another time.

Richard Offen



Voices that Should be Heard

[The following article is the twentieth in Ronda Jamieson's popular series based on the oral history collections of the Battye Library.]

Rose Bradshaw (1898-1986) OH469

Rose Sherman Bradshaw was born in Fremantle in 1898 and attended the Princess May School before the death of her father, Samuel Sherman Thompson, when she was eight. He was an American who worked on engineering projects and married her mother, Rose Taylor, from Victoria. Her parents moved to Western Australia in 1896 because Samuel thought there were more prospects to make money.

Rosie, as she was called, remembered a very happy family life and having a wonderful brother (Harry born in 1894) and a 'dear little sister' (Anne, 1902). When her father died, the family moved to Wagin. She recalled her mother's 'wonderful spirit' throughout. Her memories of school were very happy ones, although she missed school for a year after an outbreak of diphtheria. Rosie and her teacher were found to be carriers even though neither developed it. Later that year Rosie contracted rheumatic fever. It was later proved that rheumatic fever, diphtheria and other diseases were caused by septic tonsils:

I had very bad septic tonsils, but the doctors here would not let me have my tonsils out after I had rheumatic fever because a valve in my heart, apparently, was left weak, and they said I would die on the table.

At the Wagin School, Rosie won a scholarship to attend Perth Modern School. Local doctors did not want her to go to Perth because they

felt with her 'delicate health' the food would not be good for her. Her mother's response was: 'She might as well die doing what she wants to.' Rosie became a prefect at Modern School and in her final exams, got distinctions in English, Maths and Physics. She went on to university and completed an Arts Degree ending up with Honours in English and French. A short period was spent teaching at the Perth Technical College, and she stood in for her brother briefly as a lecturer in English at UWA. There continued to be periods when Rosie needed to attend one doctor after another before it was agreed that her tonsils could be removed and she travelled east for the operation which changed her life completely.

The precise date is not known but it was thought that in 1921 Rosie's mother opened a frock shop in Hay Street, West Perth which later became known as 'Thompson's frock shop' by her customers. At her mother's suggestion, Rosie travelled east twice a year to buy frocks to sell in the shop. The business was a great success. Rosie's sister had left school and studied accountancy and became the financial adviser. When Rosie first went East and sent telegrams back, she remembered her sister telling her:

"I'm going to show you how many words you could have saved, how much money you could've saved in sending telegrams. You don't need to write an essay." I've never wasted a word in a telegram since. And the same with the bookkeeping. She had to go away for her holidays and she left us her books, and Mother and I thought that we understood them. Fifty pounds had gone astray, so I sort of fitted it in somewhere and thought that I'd disguised the fact that we didn't know where it was, and the first thing she discovered was the fifty pounds. And ever after that, she said to me, "You might be able to do University maths, but you 'd be no good as a bookkeeper."

After Rosie married, her mother continued to run the shop, but found it very difficult and was not good at following up with people who had not paid for their goods. The shop was closed in 1931.

In August 1928 Rose married Francis George Bradshaw (Brad) and she stopped working in the shop. He had served overseas during the First World War, won a military medal and was due for promotion to sergeant when the war ended. On his return to Perth, he taught at Perth Modern School and the Teachers Training College and, when their courses were reduced in 1931, transferred to Kalgoorlie where he became the First Master at the High School. Their son, and only child, Donald, was born in 1932 but tragically died in a car accident in 1946.



Claremont Teachers Training College in 1928. (Battye Library, SLWA 2951B/3/72)

Rose recalled: 'We had five very happy years in Kalgoorlie. There was a wonderful spirit amongst the people and they were very welcoming and very kind.' In speaking about Brad's attitude to teaching, she recalled how after he retired she said to him:

"If you had returned from the war and were wealthy what profession would you have gone in for?" I thought he would have made an excellent engineer. He said, "I would do exactly the same over again; I would still go in for teaching."

At the end of 1935 the Bradshaws returned to Perth where Brad again lectured at the Teachers Training College and taught at Perth Modern School before being appointed Headmaster of the Bunbury High School in 1944. Four years later he was appointed Inspector of Secondary Education in the Education Department, becoming Director of Secondary Education in 1955, a position held until his retirement in 1963.

In 1954 Brad won a Carnegie Grant, the first West Australian to do so, and an English scholarship which enabled him to study secondary education in the USA, Canada, the UK, Holland, France and Norway over a thirteenth-month period. Rose accompanied him.

Brad was awarded an MBE for his service to education. Other qualifications were a BA, BSc, BEd, and Fellow of the Australian College of Education.

Brad believed in the importance of women having a fair share in holding positions of authority and appointed Nancy Richards as the first woman superintendent.

Quite a lot of people were absolutely shocked. There had been women in charge of home science but not in the academic subjects and science. Quite a few people were opposed to it, including the Director who wondered if it was the right thing to do. They thought he'd made a mistake. By the end of the year, both the Director General and members of Brad's staff had come to tell him it was the best thing he'd ever done.

Rose was also proud of Brad for

teaching the schools that the people with manual skills were just as outstanding as those with academic skills. He believed in equality. He would never have supported women's lib., and I would never be a women's libber, but he believed in the mental equality of men and women. That's why the women teachers could always discuss things with him.

He was very keen new high schools were built while he was Director, and staff were enlarged.

When Mr Hawke was the Premier, it was announced by the Treasurer that all the married teachers would be dismissed. So Brad came home and I said, "You must be in a dreadful state," and he said: "No, I'm not, because we couldn't staff the schools without them." He said, "They'll all be back again. Just tell the teachers not to worry, that I can't run the secondary service without them and they'll be back". They were back within a fortnight.

After Brad's retirement he served on various boards, including that of Fairbridge. Rose recalled:

I never lost touch with the University and was always interested here in our University Women's Association. I was on the committee and President, of the WA Branch in 1939, and we formed the first country branch of the University Women's Association in 1947. The Association was concerned with the advancement of education everywhere, a combination of women who had the same ideals and the same outlook, and we were responsible for starting the University Women's College.

Fund raising by the College led to a state grant and a federal grant resulting in the building of St Catherine's College.

After Brad's death in 1971, Rose considered her life was 'very empty. My exterior still functions, but inside, I'm really quite dead. I just exist and live on happy memories of the past'.



Treasures from Trove

[Heather Campbell is currently our Society's Secretary, but she is also a skilled researcher, historian, and author. This article is the eighth in her series delving into the wonders of the NLA's 'Trove' database of Western Australian newspapers.]

The first State Librarian, Francis Aubie (Ali) Sharr and the free public library network

Mr Sharr described the public library as 'an oasis of tolerance and a sanctuary of freedom' since in a library, the ordinary man had the best known reliable source to learn anything he cared to. [*West Australian*, 16 January 1954, p.10]

J S Battye became Chief Librarian of the Victoria Public Library – later known as the Public Library of Western Australia - in 1894 and held that position until his death in 1954.

The Library Board of Western Australia was established under the *Library Board of Western Australia Act* in 1951 with the aim of establishing a free public library network in Western Australia. It Board also became responsible for the Public Library, and with an amendment to the *Act* in 1955, included the management of the State Library of Western Australia.

The first State Librarian, Francis Aubie (Ali) Sharr, appointed in 1953, soon reorganised the State Library into subject divisions. His enthusiasm and commitment to a free public library network made him an ideal choice, as illustrated in newspaper reports of his first months in office:

New Library Expert Is Welcomed

West Australians would use a library service if it were provided, the new executive officer of the State Library Board (Mr F Sharr) said at a welcome given him yesterday by the Lord Mayor (Sir Joseph Totterdell). Mr Sharr



Dr Francis Aubie 'Ali' Sharr OBE,
1914-2002

From the cover of *Knowit*, official newsletter of SLWA, Nov-Dec 2002, No. 262.

said this after saying it had been whispered to him that the people of WA were not interested in books or in a library service. Experience abroad showed that when people had access to libraries they used them, he said. The only way he could advise the board on a library service was to go into the towns and country and see what was needed. [*West Australian*, 2 April 1953, p.13]

A Librarian Talks Of 'Pipe-Dream'

Country people appreciated good books more than the city-dwellers, the secretary-librarian of the WA Library Board (Mr F A Sharr) told members of the Perth Legacy Club yesterday. He had a 'pipe-dream' concerning the expansion of public libraries in Western Australia, [which]... included the creation by the board of a mobile book shop to allow various country centres to exchange books... [*West Australian*, 27 May 1953, p.8]

Library Not Only For 'Old Fogies'

"Many people think that a library is a place where old fogies can go to pore over musty volumes," said the executive officer of the Library Board of Western Australia (Mr Sharr) at a reception given by the Mayor of Fremantle (Mr W F Samson) yesterday. Mr Sharr said that a library should appeal to all sections of the community, and should profit by its mistakes, made known by its patrons. [*West Australian*, 26 June 1953, p.16]



Issues desk in the Fremantle Public Library photographed by FA Sharr in 1953 - This was the first public library in the Perth metropolitan area and was established in 1949 predating the formation of the Library Board of WA. (Battye Library, SLWA 010747D)

Mr F A Sharr, executive officer and secretary of the Library Board of WA, has gone to the Eastern States to study free lending library systems operating there. He will visit all States and expects to return to Perth by air on October 26. [*West Australian* 1 October 1953, p.2]

Free Library Scheme Is Explained By Mr F A Sharr

Library Board of Western Australia was recently set up by the State Government to promote, in co-operation with local authorities, a free public library system throughout Western Australia. Already there is public interest and enthusiasm for the provision of public libraries and Plantagenet Rd Board has interested itself in the project so much that the board has constituted itself a Library Board under the newly proclaimed Libraries Board Act. State Library Board's executive officer and secretary, Mr F A Sharr, explains the free library scheme for the benefit of Mt. Barker and district residents.

Mr. Sharr said that when he first arrived in Western Australia ... he had visited country centres in order to ascertain what country libraries were like and to find out their difficulties. He had found that generally speaking country people did not have access to knowledge of what books were available, owing to the comparatively small number of books in the library they were read out before they were worn out; that the small population could not justify the purchase of other than the more popular books.

The Library Board considered that it should subsidise up to ... 50 per cent of the cost of providing a free library. It was thought that if the local authority provided the premises, all appurtenances for the library and the librarian and the Board supplied the books it would work out on about the 50/50 basis.

By the Board doing the selecting of books, libraries would have the widest selection possible to choose from. ... The books could be exchanged every few months. This would give a much larger choice at no extra cost. It would also mean that if some special book was required it could be secured by a request to the central library. If it was not in stock then efforts could be made to secure it.

It was the desire of the Library Board to serve all sections of the people and they did not want ... any one area not under the scheme because of lack of co-operation. The library once established ... was entirely free to all members of the public and it could, and he hoped it would, include all children. [*Southern Sentinel*, 8 October 1953, p.5]

Ali Sharr retired in 1976. He died in 2002, his wife Florence (Flo), predeceasing him by a few days. Those of us who worked in the old building in earlier times, remember Flo, who was also a librarian, cataloguing busily out in the crammed back stack area. A special couple.

Heather Campbell

News from the State Library

Events, exhibitions, projects, acquisitions

Disrupted

After a difficult 2021 the Disrupted Festival resumed its normal weekend slot in 2022. The Festival ran across the weekend of 18-19 June at the State Library and showcased a fascinating array of speakers and discussion panels. Tom Tilley who has been featured on the ABC spoke about growing up in a cult and coming out the other side, whilst closer to home Len Collard talked about Noongar language and culture.

Katharine Susannah Prichard

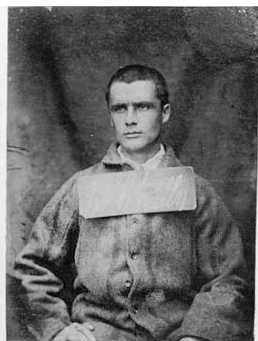
SLWA was very pleased to welcome former staff member Dr Nathan Hobby to the State Library Theatre on Wednesday 25 March for an in conversation session with Dr Kate Gregory, the Battye Historian. Nathan has recently published *The Red Witch: A Biography of Katharine Susannah Prichard*. There was a really fascinating discussion of Katharine's life, writing and political activities across the early part of the twentieth century. Boffins also attended to sell some copies of Nathan's book.

Storylines

Outreach from the Storylines (Indigenous online archive) team continues with a recent visit to Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women. Denien and Andy visited to tell the Aboriginal women about Storylines and the Aboriginal History Research Unit and how learning about their family history can help them with making positive changes in their lives as they transition back into society from prison.

Dr Kate

Dr Kate discussed Randolph Stow on ABC Radio Perth History Repeated slot on Friday 10 June. The Randolph Stow material we do have is part of the Hallie Stow family archive and is a fascinating insight into this remarkably original, but reclusive writer, who won the Miles Franklin Award Literary Award at 23 years of age for his book *To the Islands*. Other recent shows have featured Nathan Hobby and Dr Kate discussing Katharine Susannah Prichard and the life of Irish Fenian and poet John Boyle O'Reilly.



John O'Reilly, 10th Hussard

WA Reflections

The Friends will recall the SLWA - Screenwest partnership that produced some memorable five-minute films last year including Murder on the Dancefloor and Generation Hifi. This resulted in some memorable screenings and discussion panels in the State Library, including a visit by Kim Beazley AC, the Governor of Western Australia. We are pleased to say that we will be running this program again next year and will shortly be advertising this opportunity for emerging and mid-career filmmakers.

New Acquisitions, June 2022

The Greens WA

The Greens (WA) turned 30 on 1 January 2020. As part of the 'celebrations' a small group of volunteers undertook interviews of some of their long-standing members and all their politicians. The collection consists of 62 interviews consisting of audio files and digital transcripts and provides a comprehensive history of this Western Australian political party. It covers discussion of a wide range of issues including the environment, nuclear waste, fracking, sharks, disability, marriage equality and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

John Mills photographs of WA rock'n'roll bands

John Mills' collection of photographs of Western Australian rock'n'roll bands from the 1950s onwards, provides an important record of the WA music scene and music industry personnel, particularly bands associated with the Hi-Fi Club. It also documents John's career as guitarist with several notable early WA rock'n'roll bands including Johnny and The Strangers, The Statesman, and The Pranksters. The collection also includes a few photographs relating to John Mills' early career at the Bank of New South Wales (later Westpac).

Hale School film

A film of the opening day of Hale School's Wembley Downs Campus taken by Old Boy Alfred Atkins in 1961. The opening ceremony was presided over by Chairman Leslie Craig, with ribbon cutting by Sir Charles Gairdner at the stairs leading to the then Administration Block. At the conclusion of the ceremony students rush into the new building.

Patêt: Australians of King George's Sound

A lithograph print of Aboriginal Australians at King George's Sound by engraver J Bull, printed and coloured by Brooker & Harrison.



Lady of the Spiders

A David Attenborough documentary made in 1981 by the BBC and ABC about the work of Barbara York Main. Main was an Australian arachnologist and adjunct professor at the University of Western Australia, author of four books and over 90 research papers. This film complements the library's extensive collection of Barbara York Main material.

Barbara York Main in 1955.
(Courtesy ABC)

Gary Peters collection of photographs

A collection of images added to the Gary Peters collection of photographs of the Metronet project at Bayswater Station on the Midland Line, and Claremont Station on the Fremantle Line. The Bayswater images were taken from Coode Street, Whatley Crescent, and the Bayswater Railway Station platform, capturing major construction works involved in the station precinct upgrade. The Claremont images were taken from various viewpoints along Gugerri Street and show the new bus facilities, bike path, and new rail infrastructure. These photographs provide an important documentary record of the single largest investment in public transport that Perth has seen.

Aviation material

MacRobertson Miller Airlines (MMA) was a Western Australian airline that operated between 1927 and 1993. After being purchased by Ansett

Transport Industries in 1968, it was rebranded Ansett WA. This collection of material includes pilot's operation and engineering manuals, baggage labels, postcards and other aviation related pictures related to the airline.



Premier's Book Awards for 2021

The winners of the 2021 Western Australian Premier's Book Awards were announced at the State Library of Western Australia on Friday 17 June 2022.

Also featured was the induction of Doris Pilkington Garimara AM (1937-2014) into the Western Australian Writers Hall of Fame.

Premier's Book Awards prize winners

Emerging Writer (\$15,000) – Elfie Shiosaki (Magabala Books) for *Homecoming*.

Writing for Children (\$15,000) – Shirley Marr (Penguin Random House Australia) for *A Glasshouse of Stars*.

The Daisy Utemorrah Award for Unpublished Indigenous Junior and YA Fiction (\$15,000 and a publishing contract with Magabala Books) – Mariah Sweetman for *Robert Runs*.

The Western Australian Writer's Fellowship (\$60,000) – Nandi Chinna for a proposal for a collaborative, participatory and community-based poetry project.

The judges of the 2021 Premier's Book Awards were Rashida Murphy, Jay Lauchlan Anderson, Liana Joy Christensen, Michelle Michau-Crawford, Ian Reid and Josephine Wilson.

Congratulations from the Friends of Batty Library (Inc.) to all short-listed authors and winners of prizes.



State Records Office - News from the Archives

Police Gazettes

The WA Police (WAPOL) holds the master set of Gazettes which are sentenced to be transferred to SRO as State archives. These cover the period 1891-2008. WAPOL has generously funded the cost of having the Gazettes digitised. When finished, WAPOL will provide the SRO with a digital copy and transfer the hardcopy volumes at the same time (this small emergency transfer can be accommodated by the SRO) – expected this week. Staff will then need to do some follow-up work to make the digitised set available as appropriate.

80-Chain plans

Unfortunately a set-back to report as testing with a key supplier has revealed reflection off the mylar housing of the plans (which cannot be removed) is interfering with the digitisation process. We are looking at an alternative approach with another external supplier.



Item 0062 - 10/80 Chain Plan [Tally No. 507361] - number 10 in the series of 80chains cancelled public plans from the SROWA website.

Margaret Medcalf Award 2022

Nominations for the 2022 Margaret Medcalf Award for Excellence in Archival Research closed on Friday 17 June. A panel of judges will now review and shortlist the nominations which we are planning to announce

shortly thereafter. We hope to provide opportunities for authors of nominated works to showcase their works ahead of the Award event in late 2022.

Geoffrey Bolton Lecture 2022

The State Records Office is assisting this year's speaker, past Margaret Medcalf Award winner, Dr Julian Bolleter from UWA's School of Design and Co-Director of the Australian Urban Design Research Centre (AUDRC).

As in recent years, a podcast production is being developed that will explore our changing relationship with the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) – looking both 'downstream' (to the past two hundred years) and 'upstream' (to the next century). The SRO and Dr Bolleter are also exploring interesting visual approaches to bring the production to life.

State Records Office Newsletter and Socials

The State Records Office's online newsletter is published every quarter. You can subscribe to the newsletter via the SRO's new web site.

We've also been continuing to tell our stories on Facebook and Twitter and we encourage readers to follow the SRO for interesting stories every week. The link to the facebook (now renamed Meta) is <https://www.facebook.com/StateRecordsOfficeWA>. It is certainly worth browsing the site to discover interesting stories revealed by the records held in the State Archives collection which are regular features.

State Records Office on the airwaves

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



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

LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$500

Annual Membership

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

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

I wish to apply for / renew membership:

Name _____

Organisation _____

Address _____

_____ post code _____

Tel: _____ mobile _____

Email _____

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

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

BSB Number – 016-185

Account Name – Friends of Battye Library (Inc)

Account Number – 4220 58413

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

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

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

Afterwords

My Perth time capsule

Every time I attend a Friends of Battye committee or general meeting or just visit the Battye Library or the SRO, I need to walk past my old school. Every school day for the three years 1953-55 I would arrive in Perth from Wembley by trolley bus on my way to Perth Boys School. Kids had free passes so I didn't need to buy one of the colour-coded tickets that the conductor dispensed with a dimpled rubber thimble, but if I did, it would have been the one with the black band, price one penny.

The conductor had other roles – he got out to hang prams on pairs of hooks at the rear of the bus. And on the journey home to Wembley, he had to get out at Gregory Street and use a long pole to move the two overhead connectors across to the power lines that continued down Cambridge Street.

On my way home I always had time to pause on the horseshoe bridge and watch the suburban steam trains coming and going, breathing in damp smoke with its wonderful smell of burning coal.

The headmaster for my three years was Cyril Glew ('sticky', obviously). What he would make of having a popular bar (Picabar) taking up two classrooms on the ground floor I know not. But I have a fair idea what his attitude would have been to a third year (not in 3 Chemistry) who was the resident starting price bookie. What is eight shillings worth with 67 years of compound interest? I bet a shilling at eight to one on Toparora to win the 1955 Melbourne Cup and it won. The bookie didn't come to school the next day, or ever again.

Luckily, I could afford to lose a shilling, being on ten shillings a week pocket money. This meant I was able to afford an occasional vanilla slice at the James Street tuck shop opposite the school and buy my weekly issues of the English *Film Fun* and *Radio Fun* then, from October 1953, the wonderful Australian *Silver Jacket*.

The present Blue Room Theatre was our science block where I started my chemistry career by sketching a pipette. The block had a handy top floor balcony from which we could drop water bombs made from folded paper. I can't remember how to make them now, but it's probably on *You Tube*. In the main building I started my history career at the hands of the unlucky gym teacher who was rostered to teach history. He read the

textbook to us, pausing when there was a date that apparently needed to be underlined, in red.

On days when my grandmother didn't have time to make my cucumber sandwiches, she would give me a shilling which meant a dash out of the back gate at lunchtime to enjoy a pie and gravy at Boans' wonderful cafeteria.

Mind you, those of us in 1A whose form room (with its open fire) was right next to the headmaster's office, were often sent across the railway line on official business. Mr Glew had a bell on his desk which rang in 1A where we were rostered to answer the summons. One of my missions was to collect the mail for Perth Boys and Girdlestone from the Treasury building in Barrack Street. The girls' school was separated from us by a very high brick wall, so having to actually enter Girdlestone was a rare treat.

What a street the schools were in – the Art Gallery (*Down on his Luck*), the Museum (the blue whale) and the State Library (spiral staircases to any book you wanted). Of course the back gate opened on to Roe Street, home of the brothels. We walked past the 'houses of ill repute' on our way to woodwork lessons at Modern School. The women would be sunning themselves in the garden, 'How much for a shilling? one of my more worldly friends called out one morning. 'Wouldn't get your flies undone' came the sharp rejoinder.

I left the school in November 1955 to sit my Junior exams in Winthrop Hall at UWA, but not before I followed the time-honoured practice of scratching my initials in a brick on the porch.

Steve Errington



Perth Boys School, where I made my mark. (S Errington)

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

Life membership \$500

Annual membership

Ordinary \$25

Joint \$35

Pensioner / student / junior \$15

Corporate \$50

Meetings

General meetings are held each year in March, May, July, September (the Annual General Meeting), and November (also the end of year function). They are held at the State Library of Western Australia and usually begin at 5.00 pm for 5.30 pm and conclude before 7.00 pm, except for the November function which finishes around 8.00pm.

Newsletter

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

Contact details

Friends of Battye Library website:

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

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

The editor, Jennie Carter at *bevnjen@gmail.com*

or write to:

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

J S Battye Library of West Australian History

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

Retrievals Every half hour during opening hours.

Telephone enquiries (08) 9427 3291 Website www.slwa.wa.gov.au
Email: info@slwa.wa.gov.au

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

State Records Office

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

Retrievals

As per usual times for SRO retrievals.

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

The Genealogy Centre

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

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

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