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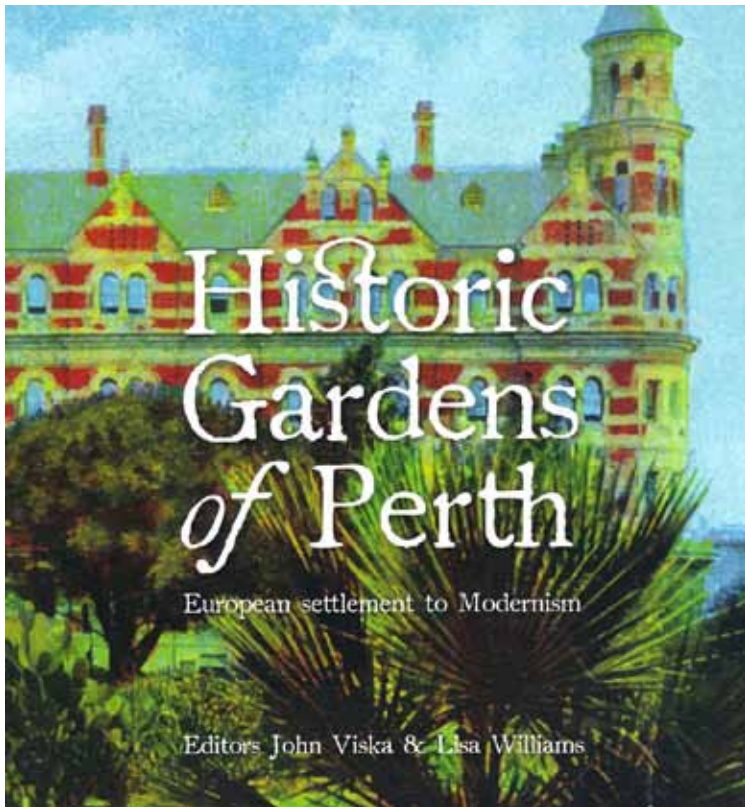
FRIENDS OF BATTYE LIBRARY (Inc.)  
**NEWSLETTER**

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*Our March 2024 meeting*

**John Viska**

*Historic gardens of Perth*



Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 5.00pm for 5.30pm. See details on page 3.

## Objectives

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

**Patron** Miss Margaret Medcalf OAM

## Committee (2023-2024)

President	Richard Offen
Immediate Past President	Pamela Statham Drew
Vice President	Jennie Carter,
Secretary	Pamela Statham Drew
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Membership Coordinator	Cherie Strickland
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Committee members Lorraine Clarke, Steve Errington, Raymond Marks (co-opted), Michael Nind (co-opted). .

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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 March meeting.

Tuesday 12 March 2024  
Great Southern Room, fourth floor  
State Library of Western Australia  
at 5pm for 5.30pm

## Our speaker will be John Viska

### *Historic gardens of Perth*

John, President of the Garden History Society, will give a presentation on the society's recent publication *Historic gardens of Perth, European settlement to modernism*.

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

### **Problem with the stairs?**

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

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## Meeting dates for 2024

- 14 May** SRO staff: *Project news from the collections.*
- 9 July** *125 years of the Perth Mint*
- 10 September** (AGM) Batty Historian, Kate Gregory  
(topic TBA)
- 19 November** (3rd Tuesday) - End of year function  
Shane Burke (topic TBA)



### About our speaker - John Viska

John is the current Chairman of the WA Branch of the Australian Garden History Society. His presentation will be based on the society's recent publication - *Historic gardens of Perth, European settlement to modernism.*



The presentation will discuss the genesis, scope and purpose of the book including a selection of images. The publication will be available for purchase at \$50.

The founding Chairman of the West Australian Branch of the Australian Garden History Society, John is also the author of *A Guide to Conserving and Interpreting Gardens in Western Australia* and has contributed entries to *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, the

*Historical Encyclopaedia of WA*, and has researched and curated the society's two exhibitions on *Historic Gardens of Perth* and co-edited *Historic Gardens of Perth, European Settlement to Modernism.*

He lectured in Horticulture in the TAFE system for twenty-five years and prepared conservation plans for the National Trust of Australia (WA), Heritage Council, and the City of Vincent.

In 2008 John was the recipient of an award from the Heritage Council of Western Australia for *Outstanding contribution to Heritage in Western*

*Australia by an Individual* and is actively involved with promoting the garden history of Western Australia through delivering public lectures to community groups and societies as well as published articles.



## **President's Piece**

### **Ruth Reid (1921-2024)**

Sadly, we have lost six members of the Friends of the Battye Library in the last few months, Carol Bolton, Ena Willemsen, Graham Bown, Mardi Quinn, Ruth Reid and Yvonne Doncaster.

Others will be paying tribute to these people, but I particularly wanted to write about our former Patron, Ruth Reid AM, CIT WA.

Ruth Amelia Reid (nee Fish) was born in London in 1921. Whilst working as a bank clerk, she met Gordon Reid, a Royal Australian Air Force navigator who flew in Lancaster bombers during operations over Europe in 1944-45. Their romance flourished and the couple married at Earlsfield Congregational Church, Wandsworth in June, 1945. After Gordon's demobilisation, they moved to Australia, initially living in Canberra where Gordon was appointed a clerk in the House of Representatives. After several more moves, the couple finally settled in Western Australia when Gordon was appointed Professor of Politics (for the second time!).



Ruth Reid AM  
(Battye Library, SLWA 303061PD)

It was here that Ruth began to dedicate her life as volunteer to many not-for-profit organisations across Western Australia. These organisations including Save The Children, St John Ambulance, Autism Association of WA, and the Royal Western Australian Historical Society. Her volunteer

work came to the fore during her time at Government House from 1984 to 1989, when her husband served as Western Australia's 26th Governor.

Ruth Reid was made a member of the Order of Australia in 2013 and in the same year announced winner of the Lifetime contribution to Volunteering Award presented at the WA Volunteer of the Year Awards. Three years later Ruth was awarded the City of Nedlands Freeman of the City Award in recognition of outstanding achievements and dedicated service to the community. She was also a Freeman of the City of Wanneroo, as well as of the City of London - this honour gave her the right to drive sheep and cattle over London Bridge and to carry a naked sword in public!

Ruth became a member of Friends of Battye Library in 1994 and was appointed the organisation's Patron a year later. After 28 years distinguished service, she decided to step down as the Patron in 2022 and was warmly thanks for her generous support.

For Ruth's 100th birthday in February 2021, a celebratory high tea was organised at the UWA Club. This was attended by her family and friends, some of whom had travelled from other states and parts of Western Australia. She was also honoured by Governor Kim Beazley who came to her party to present her with a bouquet of flowers and a card from Government House. Members of the Friends of Battye Library were also present to add their congratulations to Ruth on such an important occasion and to pay tribute to her long years of public service.

Ruth died peacefully on 3rd January, 2024, aged 102 years. We extend our deepest sympathies to her children Sue, Alan, Mary, Robert and their partners; her 9 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

May she rest in peace.

Richard Offen



## Obituaries

### **Carol Bolton (5 October 1935 - 27 November 2023)**

Carol was a long term supporter of the Friends of Battye Library, wife and close partner of Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton, President of the Friends, who died in 2015. After his death Carol continued to receive

a complimentary copy of our newsletter.

I am indebted to Julia Strawinska who wrote an article about Carol for Oxford University in 2021 for some of the details of Carol's career.

Born in Japan, where her parents were missionaries, Carol Bolton (nee Grattan) was later educated in England. She was a remarkable woman. The first in her family to attend university, she studied English Literature at Oxford University from 1954 to 1957. After marrying Geoffrey and moving to Australia, she took up a position at Monash University in 1962 and then at the University of Western Australia, where she taught literature and also broadcast radio features on the novel and poetry for the ABC.



Carol Bolton (University of Oxford)

It was in Australia that she began to pursue an interest in psychology, enrolling in a full-time psychology degree followed by postgraduate studies, to qualify as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist. Returning to England in the 1980s, Carol worked in hospitals and also as a student counsellor. Back in Australia she set up her own private psychotherapy practice and became a foundation member of the Association of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy of WA (APPWA); and a Fellow of the Association. She was also a sometime editor of the Australasian Journal of Psychotherapy and a valued and much loved mentor to a younger generation of psychotherapists.

Carol was also inspired by classical music, notably the music of Bach and Mozart and saw their work as enriching and healing the human spirit.

Carol Bolton was witty, warm, and clever and will be much missed by her many friends and admirers. Our sincere condolences to Patrick and Matthew and Carol's and Geoff's five grandchildren.

Jennie Carter  
Bill and Jenny Bunbury

## Ena Czeladka Willemsen (1932 - 2023)



Ena Willemsen 2018 (Midland Gate)

Ena Czeladka Willemsen (nee Ilich) was born in the Swan Valley in 1932, the daughter of Paul and Sima Ilich and grew up on a vineyard at Herne Hill. She developed a passion for family heritage and a special interest in local history. She was a member of the Friends from 1990-2015. She died aged 91.

Ena became aware that the vineyards in the Swan District were disappearing and that many of the original Croation settlers had died. Realising that their stories, and the history of

grape-growing leading to the establishment of the vineyards would be lost, in 1987 Ena began collecting photographs and oral histories from many older Croations who had settled on the Swan. She co-ordinated these into a photographic exhibition sponsored by the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission and presented in conjunction with the State Planning Commission. The exhibition was on put on display at Midland Gate, the Alexander Library in Perth, and in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Ena also wrote a booklet to complement the exhibition and in 1988 expanded the booklet into a book titled, *To Make a Better Life*, which she co-authored. In 1989 as part of a group under the direction of artist Jo Darbyshire, Ena took part in the painting of a banner of the Rainbow Serpent, which depicted the history of women in the Swan Shire. This hung above the swimming pool at the Midvale Aquatic Centre for several years.

Ena was a prolific writer. In 1991, her paper 'Yugoslavs in the Swan Valley and their involvement in Viticulture' was included in a special issue of *Studies in Western Australian History* (No 12, April 1991). This publication focussed on 'Aspects of Ethnicity in Western Australia'. In 2005, she self-published *St Michaels in the Valley: a history of St Michael's Catholic Church in the Swan Valley, Herne Hill, WA*.

In 2018 her work as an historian was recognised with her inclusion in the inaugural list of Local Legends, sponsored by Midland Gate. These



Local Legends were honoured with a brick in their name in the Cale Street Precinct Walk in Midland. Ena also demonstrated her versatility as a writer by receiving recognition for poetry and short story fiction through competitions and in-house awards; she often had letters published in the *West Australian* newspaper.

A life well lived.

Heather Campbell



### **Mardi Quinn OAM (1926 - 2023)**

Mardi joined the Friends in 1991, with her husband Jim, and was still a member at the time of her death on 3 November 2023. She was very active in the Melville Historical Society which she joined in 1987, becoming a member of the management committee in 1995; Mardi served as Vice-President (2001-2007), and remained a valuable member until she retired from that role in 2018. She was also Meeting Room Manager for almost 30 years.

A prolific writer, Mardi was also a member of the University of the Third Age (U3A) Melville and of the Melville and Districts *Writing Life Stories 1*. With her daughter Joanne, she collated and published her memoirs *Snapshots*, a collection of 'whimsical writings' and was an inspiration to many aspiring writers.

Marjorie Anne Quinn (Mardi) was awarded an OAM in the general division in the 2020 Australia Day Honours list, for service to the community through a range of roles. A listing of these demonstrates the depth of her dedication and the breadth of her interests. She was not only a member of the Melville Historical Society, but also as a former Volunteer Guide with Miller Bakehouse. As a parishioner of St Christopher's Anglican Church, Bicton, from 1960, Mardi served



as a committee member of the Ladies' Guild and was in the church choir for over 30 years. Her voluntary work also included assisting Meals on Wheels for the City of Fremantle through the 1980s-1990s. It is not surprising therefore, that in addition to her OAM, Mardi was also awarded the Mayor's Valued Citizen Award, for the City of Melville in 2014.

An exceptional lady, who will be missed by many. Our condolences to her family.

Heather Campbell



### **Yvonne Doncaster (1933-1923)**

Sad News – Yvonne, wife of our very dear member Father Ted, died recently. We hope to have a tribute to this special lady in our next issue.



## **Members' News**

### **Our Gem of Time for 2023 was awarded to Bill Bunbury AO**

At our End of Year meeting, Bill was presented with our Gem of Time certificate and citation. He said he was surprised and 'very moved' to receive such an award and thanked the Friends, the State Library and the State Records Office for their help and support over the years.

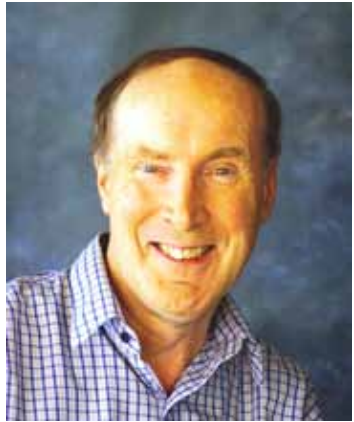
#### **William (Bill) Hedley Richardson Bunbury**

Bill Bunbury has been a familiar face and voice in Australian broadcasting for decades. He is a renowned oral historian whose collection of interviews in the Batty Library has been described as 'a priceless archive of the State's rich oral history'. He has also published widely on Western Australian History with his book, *Many Maps: Charting Two Cultures*, written in collaboration with his wife Jenny, winning the RWAHS Williams Lee Steere Prize 2021 and the Oral History Australia 2021 Book Award

Born in Somerset, England of a Busselton-born father and English mother, Bill was curious to explore his father's homeland and contact his paternal relations. After completing an honours degree at the University of Durham in 1963, he came to WA, completed a DipEd., and eventually taught at Guildford Grammar School. Assisting with an ABC television

broadcast at the school sent Bill into a whole new career. In 1969 he joined the ABC's education section and some years later took on a leading role in the newly established Social History Unit and hosting popular programs like *Hindsight*.

Bill's interest in people's stories, his empathy and his abiding curiosity infuses all his interviews and is clear from his broadcasts and written works ranging from the aftermath of Cyclone Tracy, Group Settlers in Denmark, Vietnam War veterans, the memories of residents of Meckering after the 1968 earthquake, to the many discussions he has had with First Nations people about their experiences of life in WA, that he has helped make us think more critically about our recent past. He describes 'the experience of broadcasting' as being 'a widening experience' in a process of 'life-long learning'.



As well as being one of our leading historians, Bill is a generous mentor and community worker, with an inspiring enthusiasm for history. He and Jenny are members of the Friends and have presented talks on some fascinating topics at our general meetings over the years.

Amongst other awards and public tributes, in 2017 Bill was awarded the Order of Australia (AO) for his services to the broadcast media and the Indigenous people of Australia. Working closely with Professor Geoffrey Bolton, he received an Honorary Doctorate of Literature for work with students at Murdoch University in 2008, and was appointed as Adjunct Professor of Media and Communications in 2019.

The Friends of the Battye Library (Inc.) would like show our appreciation of Bill's commitment and support by listing him as a ***Gem of Time*** – a list that will last to acknowledge the contribution of outstanding men and women to the recording, collection, and preservation of Western Australia's history.



### **Prestigious Margaret Feilman Award to Vince Taylor and Ron Bodycoat**

Last November at the AGM of the National Trust of WA (NTWA), the prestigious Margaret Feilman Award was presented to two of our members by previous Governor Ken Michael and CEO of the NTWA

Julian Donaldson. Both citations made mention of their membership of the Friends of the Battye Library.

The following information is taken from the NTWA website.

### **Mr Vince Taylor**



From left: National Trust of WA CEO Julian Donaldson, Mr Vince Taylor, and National Trust of WA President Hon Dr Ken Michael AC. (Image: National Trust of WA President)

Vince has been a dedicated member of the National Trust of Western Australia for over two decades, during which he has exhibited unwavering commitment, tireless effort, and made an exceptional contribution to the conservation and interpretation of our heritage.

Vince's journey with the National Trust began as a volunteer at Woodbridge and Peninsula Farm, where he displayed a passion for heritage

conservation that was nothing short of remarkable. In 2009, he took on the role of Honorary Warden at Old Blythewood in Pinjarra, a position he had held with grace and distinction for over 14 years.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the conservation of Western Australia's unique heritage and his unwavering commitment to the National Trust of Western Australia, he is a worthy recipient of the Margaret Feilman Award. His contributions have not only enriched our organisation but have also left an indelible mark on the heritage landscape of Western Australia.

### **Mr Ron Bodycoat AM**

Ron Bodycoat is rightly honoured as a Fellow of the National Trust of Western Australia in recognition of a lifetime career specialising in conservation and heritage assessment of the built environment.

Ron has practiced as a professional architect since registration in

1964. His work throughout Perth City remains visible to this day. His professional leadership has been widely acknowledged. He is a former state and national president of his professional institute culminating as a Life Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. He became a Member of the Order of Australia in 1992 in recognition of his services to architecture, conservation, and heritage. For many years Ron was a member of council and vice president of the



From left: National Trust of WA CEO Julian Donaldson, Mr Ron Bodycoat, AM and National Trust of WA President Hon Dr Ken Michael AC. (Image:National Trust of WA President.

National Trust, chaired the Classification Standing Committee and was conservation architect for the East Perth Cemeteries. In these roles he mentored several generations of heritage professionals and volunteers. He provided professional input to heritage policy and architectural practice at state and national levels. Ron was recognised as an Honorary Life Member of the National Trust in 2007.

The National Trust of Western Australia celebrates Ron's service and career to architecture and heritage through its highest honour, the Margaret Feilman Award.

Heather Campbell



### **A Note from our Treasurer**

This is a friendly reminder to advise that the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) is endorsed as deductible gift recipient (DGR) organisation by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

This means that when a member makes a donation to the Friends , they maybe able to claim a tax deduction.

By making a donation this assists the State Library and / or the State

Records Office in their mission to acquire, preserve and make available for research Western Australian material.

If you have any queries please contact me at [nickdrew@bigpond.com](mailto:nickdrew@bigpond.com)



## **Our Gems of Time (a retrospective and a farewell)**

### **Graham Bown (1945 - 1923)**

Our Gem of Time retrospective for this issue pays tribute to Graham Charles Bown our much respected former committee member and long-time supporter, who died on 5 January. Graham was the recipient of our Gem of Time Award in 2013 and part of his citation reads:



Graham Bown as a member of Friends of Battye Library joined our Committee contributing with his wide knowledge and even filled in as minute Secretary on many occasions. He has also contributed to our General Meetings, greeting members and visitors alike.

Graham became a member of the West Australian Genealogical Society over 30 years ago and served president from 2011 to 2013. He was awarded Life Membership of that organisation in 2017.

He contributed to many publications held by the Battye Library and indexed and wrote several of the sources of early WA information which researchers regularly refer to. These include:

- AGCI (Australian Genealogical Computer Index) with his contribution of the WA information held on this CD.
- The WA Cemeteries Index on microfiche for which he was responsible for much of the original transcriptions of gravestones in cemeteries and burial registers held by local authorities around Western Australia.
- Not least of which the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) publication of the Colonial Secretary's Office, Western Australia CSO 1829-1830

for which he painstakingly transcribed the microfilm held in the State Records Office of Western Australia.

The catalogues of SLWA and NLA are a testament to his work, with searches of both featuring sources that are there because of his industry.

After retiring as Principal of Lakeland High School Graham continued to support many Western Australian organisations and societies, including working voluntarily at the Perth Zoo and Swan River Pioneers Group.

Graham will be remembered with admiration and fondness by members of FoBL and will be very much missed by his friends and colleagues. We send our deepest sympathy to Lois and their family.

Heather Campbell and Jennie Carter



## Voices That Should Be Heard

*[This article is the 24th in Ronda Jamieson's popular series based on the oral history collections of the Battye Library.]*

### Ralph Doig (1910-1994) OH514

Ralph Herbert Doig was interviewed for the Battye Library Oral History program over 45 hours of tape. He served seven Premiers, and an outstanding tribute was given by one of them, Frank Wise, who knew Ralph from 1933 to 1971. Wise considered Doig 'the most outstanding public servant' he knew and went on to say:

I know of no man who has had the complete confidence of seven Premiers of different politics in turn and many ministers, and served them all with their absolute trust as has Ralph Doig. His record is unsurpassed, certainly in Australia, maybe in all the British Commonwealth.

In my many years of interviewing, I never heard such praise passed on about a public servant – or anyone else, for that matter.



Ralph Doig, c1960. Lafayette Dease Studios (Ralph Doig collection, Battye Library, SLWA 069521PD)

Born in 1909 in Middle Swan, Ralph Doig was educated at Guildford Grammar School and the University of Western Australia where he completed a BA and a Diploma of Commerce. He joined the Premiers Department in 1926 as a junior clerk and became private secretary to the then Premier, Philip Collier, in 1929. He served James Mitchell and John Willcock in that capacity until 1942 when he at first acted and was then appointed Under Secretary of the Premiers Department and Clerk of the Executive Council. In 1965 Ralph was appointed Public Service Commissioner and in 1971 the Chairman of the newly created Public Service Board. He retired in 1974 at which time he was appointed chairman of the committee responsible for the planning of WA's Sesquicentennial celebrations in 1979. He was also the chairman on the State Heritage Commission.

During Ralph Doig's distinguished public service career, he served in many other capacities including Chairman of the WA Tourist Development Authority from 1959 until 1974, and as State Director of several Royal visits to WA, including those of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in 1954 and 1963. He was honoured with the conferring of the CMG and the CVO for his outstanding contributions to the public service. Another honour was to have the Ralph Doig Executive Development Centre named after him, which still exists today.

In the years of his service in the Premier's Department, Ralph served under seven Premiers: Philip Collier, James Mitchell, John Willcock,



Ralph Doig (left) and the Premier Ross McLarty following his reelection, April 1950. ((Ralph Doig collection, Battye Library, SLWA 069513PD)

Frank Wise, Ross McLarty, Bert Hawke and David Brand. (It is clear from this record that none of the Premiers considered he favoured any particular party.) In the interviews, he commented on these men and their style of working, together with those who served as Cabinet ministers. He discussed such things as the marches of the unemployed during the Depression, government activity throughout World War II, and governors, lieutenant governors and senior public servants. Premiers Conferences,



the Empire Games held in Perth in 1962, Government House, and the conferring of Honours, were just a few of the other topics included. As the States senior public servant heading the Public Service Commission and later the Public Service Board, Ralph Doig was able to comment on the organisation of the public service and its role.

Ralph married Barbara Crock in 1937 and they had six children. A man of careful judgment, he prepared well for interview sessions and separated what he knew as fact and as hearsay. Whilst imbued with a deep sense of loyalty to the Premiers he served, he nevertheless strived for objectivity in his comments because of the responsibility he felt as the only person alive who worked closely with so many Premiers. His knowledge and evaluation of L E Shapcott, who was Ralph Doig's predecessor as head of the Premiers Department, was particularly valuable.

Ralph worked for seven successive Western Australian Premiers during a forty-eight year career. He was also State director for six royal visits and rose to the role of Under-Secretary and Chairman of the Public Service Board and Tourist Development Authority. He was also a member of the Council of the National Trust, the Asthma Foundation, the Heritage Commission and the Western Australian 150th Anniversary Celebration Committee in 1979.

I am sure readers will understand that with a man of that length of service and knowledge, it is impossible to do his story justice in a newsletter article. Fortunately a copy of the transcript of the 45 hours of interview are available online.

I will finish with some of Ralph's comments from the interview which could be of interest. At its end, I asked him if he was happy to have worked until he was 65. He replied:

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole of my working life. I had no desire to retire before I was 65, but I was quite happy to go at 65, and I had made my plans in advance to retire at that time. There wasn't any approach from the government for me to continue.

I then went on to ask:

As Under Secretary of the Premier's Department, you were in a position of power and of influence, and I wondered to what extent you enjoyed power for its own sake.

Ralph replied:

I never really looked upon myself as occupying a position of power as

Under Secretary of the Premier's Department; I looked upon myself as occupying a position of considerable responsibility. I was privileged to be able to serve the head of the government of the State, and that carried with it considerable obligations. One of those obligations was to give the best advice I could to the Premier on matters where he consulted me. It was my responsibility, as I saw it, to prepare reports, to prepare information for him and give him my recommendation, and then to give the reasons for that recommendation and argue in favour of it, but if the Premier saw fit not to accept that recommendation, that so far as I was concerned was the end of it. There was nothing personal about it at all. He would have very good reasons, no doubt, for taking the other point of view.

A Premier after all is head of a Cabinet and sometimes there are views in Cabinet which could have more influence than those of a public servant, so I never looked upon myself as occupying in that job a position of power. I know they used to talk about the power behind the throne and things like that, and I think my illustrious predecessor, Shapcott, used to rather enjoy being called the power behind the throne, but I must say that I never really looked upon my position in that concept. After all my position there was mainly advisory, and mainly giving service to the head of the government and not one of taking final decisions. That to me is the essence of power, where you do make the decision yourself, one way or the other. That is power. So all in all I didn't consider I was in any way a power behind the throne. I did consider that I occupied a position of some influence. I thoroughly had no wish to continue, so I was quite happy to end at the statutory time.

Ronda Jamieson



**Treasures from Trove**

**Treasures from the British Newspaper Archive  
(a treasure trove in the Northern Hemisphere)**

*[This is the twelfth article in the series by Heather Campbell delving into the wonders of online newspapers; this time the British Newspaper Archive.]*

The British Newspaper Archive is an online newspaper archive, similar to the Australian National Library's Trove newspapers. It was created by a partnership between Findmypast and the British Library. For more than ten years these organisations have been working to digitise a vast newspaper collection making it available for online search.

The British Newspaper Archives website at Home | Search the archive | British Newspaper Archive invites you to 'explore millions of digitised newspaper pages', in fact currently '73,262,912 pages, dating from the 1700s'. New pages are being added constantly and at the time of writing



the site lists 129,505 pages added in the last seven days from a tempting selection of sources – Thetford and Watton Times, Market Harborough Advertiser and Midland Mail, Cumbernauld News and Eastbourne Herald.

Thanks to technology, we here in WA can search these archives for a modest fee. If any of your antecedents hailed from the British Isles, it can be quite surprising and enlightening to key in a relative's name and see what comes up (or what they were up to)!

One of the very earliest references to Western Australia appears in the *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser*, London, England, 22 December 1828, p.2.



Masthead of the *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser* for Wednesday December 24th, 1828.

## **PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF THE WESTERN COAST OF NEW HOLLAND**

Many of our Readers, no doubt, are aware that, for some time past, extensive arrangements have been in progress for the formation of Settlement at the Swan River, the Western Coast of New Holland, and that directions have been given by the English Government for taking formal possession of that almost unknown country. Public curiosity is naturally excited on this subject, and but little has transpired which can satisfy the craving. We therefore feel peculiar satisfaction in having it our power to communicate some important details, the general accuracy of which may be depended upon.

In the early part of the past year, Capt. Stirling, of his Majesty's ship

*Success*, was directed to examine the Western Coast of New Holland, from Cape Leeuwin northwards. As the geography of this region not very familiar, we venture to state that Cape Leeuwin, or Lion's Land, the south west point of New Holland, and was so called from the Dutch ship which first discovered it in 1660. Here it was that the late Capt. Flinders commenced his survey, on the 7th of December, 1801, which was confined entirely to the south and east coasts, while about the same time an examination of the west and south coasts took place by Capt Baudin, a French navigator. Until the visit of Capt. Stirling, in February 1827, we were entirely indebted to Baudin for our knowledge of the Swan River. Capt. King, who in June, 1822, anchored on Rottnest Island, at the entrance of this river, was prevented the weather from exploring it, at which circumstance that scientific Officer expresses little regret, the Swan River having been "very minutely examined MM. Heirisson and Baily - the former an Enseigne de Vaisseau, and the latter a Mineralogist"—and so fully described in De Freycinct's and Peron's accounts of that voyage.

The object of Captain Stirling's expedition was to ascertain an eligible situation for the establishment of a colony; and the report made by him, after the careful examination of 500 miles of coast has led to the selection of the Swan River, situated in 82 deg. 4 min., and deriving its name from the numerous black swans by which it is frequented. It was surveyed by the French to a distance of about 60 miles. Captain Stirling penetrated to its source, and some way beyond, through exceedingly picturesque and fertile country, until arrived at an extensive range of mountains, the view from which presented only vast and boundless plain.

Although Captain Stirling's first interview with the natives in his progress up the river assumed rather a hostile character, it terminated in perfect amity, which continued uninterrupted. The inhabitants were found in the most deplorable state of savage ignorance, clothed merely with mantle of kangaroo or opossum skins, and armed with spears pointed by the bones of animals or flint. A stone adze and mother-of-pearl fishing-hook appeared to their only implements, with fishing-lines manufactured from the bark of trees. In summer (which, be it observed, is our winter) they frequent the coast in considerable numbers, and live chiefly upon fish taken by spearing, they are unacquainted with the mode of making nets, as well the construction of the canoe, or even rafts of the rudest kind. They however form in shallow places kind of weir with considerable ingenuity. In the winter the natives retire to the hills, where their food is the opossum, the kangaroo, the land tortoise, and birds, of which the country affords a great variety and abundance, with roots and vegetables. Their appearance is forbidding, and their manner ferocious; but if managed with skill, the natives may be attached, although great care must be taken not to give offence—for the slightest provocation they are inclined to resort to hostile measures, and are capricious and revengeful. Their heads are large, and their limbs disproportionably slender; but, notwithstanding, they are peculiarly active, and possess an astonishing quickness of sight.

The climate of Swan River described as perfectly salubrious. Although the heat is very great during the middle of the day, yet frequent showers and cool breezes from the mountains deprive it of any injurious effect. The mornings and the evenings allow ample time for labour, and the night are clear and beautiful. The heat is probably greater upon the sea-shore than inland, owing to the power of the sun on the sandy soil; lint it should stated, that no case of sickness occurred to Captain Stirling's crew, though they were necessarily much exposed.

The soil is described as most inviting to the agriculturist. Springs are abundant, and rich in vegetation, that thistles and ferns were observed which had attained the enormous growth of 12 feet. The trees, too, assumed the most luxurious green possible. Several specimens of minerals were collected by Captain Stirling, which have been deposited the Geological Society. Of the birds, the most common are the emu or cassowary—the swan, and several species of the duck tribe, which are particularly numerous —cockatoos, both white and black—quails, pigeons, parroquets, king-fishers, falcons, and many singing birds. On the coast, seals, but of the least valuable kind, abound ; and both whales and sharks are frequently seen. Fish, of variety excellent kinds, is plentiful; and there appears little room to doubt but that a valuable fishery will result from establishment the projected Colony.

Two ships of war have been appointed to take out the settlers, and Captain Stirling has been nominated Governor of the new Settlement - Lieut. Roe, the Navy, who was employed in the survey of New Holland, under Capt. King, goes out as Surveyor-General to the Colony; and some other Officers, selected for their scientific acquirements, have received subordinate appointments.

Makes it all sound pretty enticing doesn't it, especially for those living in the slums of London, with no prospect of anything better.

Heather Campbell



### **Recollections of an Accidental Librarian:**

*[Julie Martin was one of two student librarians to begin their 'apprenticeships' at the State Library. Previous articles have been about Francis Aubie Sharr followed up with details of Julie's early working life as a librarian, some of the personalities of the time, working in Northbridge and working in Hacket Hall. Now on to Part 5 ...]*

## Bib Centre, 1962

I was devastated to be told back in July 1962 that my placement in Battye Library had ended. And it appeared that insult was being added to injury when I found I was being transferred to the State Bibliographical Centre.

As I understood it, my days were to be spent checking data and filing cards. Riveting stuff! In addition, I was to join the ranks of the 9-5.30, Monday to Friday workers. No weekday mornings off to go the beach with my nursing friends, no extra in the pay packet for after-hours shifts, little contact with the public.

Located on the Ground Floor of the old State Library Building, just beyond the Reception Desk, I'd passed the State Bibliographical Centre many times on my way in and out of the Battye Library but had little idea what went on there. It was a small, unimposing area, enclosed by shelves bending under the weight of the enormous multi-volumed catalogues of the major libraries around the world, as well as tomes such as the Cumulative Book Index, British Books in Print, Publishers Weekly, etc. Standing independently between these shelves were the Tasmanian Oak cabinets containing the State Library's card catalogue.

At that time, the State Bibliographical Centre was the first of its kind in Australia. Not only did it house the State Library's own catalogue and a reasonable selection of subject bibliographies, its overarching purpose



Bib Centre (Battye Library, SLWA 231986PD).

was to provide the public with access to all WA libraries and encourage and enable their co-operation. The establishment of an Outlier Union Catalogue of Books as well as an Outlier Catalogue of Periodicals, both unique in Australian libraries, made it possible for an enquirer to undertake a complete survey of the significant book

and periodical resources of the entire state of Western Australia in one place. It also had other benefits. It drew attention to books that may have escaped the notice of the Library Board's Acquisitions staff and, conversely, saved the Board from unnecessary duplication of expensive or little-used books. Bib Centre was to be the major player in Ali Sharr's dream of bringing information in all its forms within the reach of every

West Australian - removing the 'tyranny of distance.'

With little enthusiasm, I began my placement.

I suspect I'm now among an exceedingly small group who can claim to have filed printed 5"x3" cards into all the Bib Centre catalogues. Each cabinet drawer had a rod inserted from front to back to prevent the cards from spilling out should the drawer be dropped or upended. As a new chum, I wasn't permitted to file entries directly into the catalogue drawers. I had to 'sit' the new entries on the rods and have my work checked until it was deemed that I had a reasonable grasp of ALA filing rules (the official rules governing the arrangement of catalogue cards and other bibliographic records)

I can also claim the distinction of being one of the few who has burrowed into the former Victoria Public Library card catalogue, housed in deep brown antique wooden cabinets that had swollen and splintered over time. Bibliographical details in copperplate handwriting covered the lined cards filed in wide rectangular drawers that needed to be tugged and jostled to open. When these items were discarded or re-catalogued for Library Board stock, the relevant entries were withdrawn.

In addition to maintaining these catalogues, we in Bib Centre were responsible for the Request and Information Service.

Each working day, I checked the details of seventy or so requests to borrow or purchase items, some emanating from the subject libraries in the State Library, some from metropolitan and country public libraries or special libraries within WA and occasionally, from interstate institutions. It was my job to confirm the details of what was requested, locate the items within the State where possible and pass them on to the relevant divisions for action. This work was time-consuming. Sometimes, twenty to thirty volumes were consulted before the correct details were found. Like a bloodhound, I enjoyed 'the thrill of the chase.'

Requests to borrow items were submitted on the Board's LB2 forms, or 'greens' as we called them; stock requests were submitted on LB45 forms or 'golds'. Of late, I've wondered if those colours were chosen because of their Australian significance. Probably not. I suspect there were underlying practical reasons.

Bib Centre work came with additional distractions to relieve its repetitive nature. We covered the lunch and tea breaks of the Information Centre's



Felicity Howitt at work in the Bibliographical Centre, July 1961. Julie replaced Felicity in the Bib Centre the year after this photo was taken by FA Sharr. (Battye Library, SLWA 319404PD)

staff and, during those, I was introduced to the shelves of 'quick' information sources and the stockpiles of West Australian, interstate, and overseas newspapers. Hands smothered in black newspaper ink were an integral part of the job.

Another regular and enjoyable diversion was relieving the ground floor reception desk. The phone switchboard at that time was a series of jacks and sockets that connected staff to one another or the outside

world. As I recall, some staff members found themselves in conversation with unlikely fellow work colleagues during my shifts!

I also remember after a while, feeling surprisingly settled, comfortable and useful. Then the word came through that my time in Bib Centre was up. I was on the move again.

Although it was a short stint, what I took from that placement served me well over the years. It enabled me to see libraries and their users in a broader context than that which Battye afforded me. And this was precisely the outcome Ali Sharr had envisaged when moving his student librarians around. It also reinforced what I'd learned in Battye – that accuracy, persistence, lateral thinking, and instinct were crucial to library work.

Some sixty years on, the Bib Centre and the Information Centre are no more. The hundreds of volumes comprising the British National Bibliography, the catalogues of the Library of Congress and *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, the *British Books in Print*, the Cumulative Book Index, etc., have all been discarded.

The standard quick reference works, the Debretts, the Whitaker's and Wisden's Almanacks, The Stateman's Yearbooks, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the like, have ceased publication.

The wooden catalogue cabinets are gone, possibly recycled, and the



cards they contained, pulped. As for jack and socket switchboards? They've been relegated to Museums. Printed newspapers are in their death throes, and the patrons who made regular Library visits to access them are now viewing them online.

Out with the old. In with the new.

The information contained in all these items is now immediately available on a device that also doubles as a phone and is only slightly bigger than a catalogue card. Technology has triumphed, rendering what was Bib Centre and the access it provided to the people of Western Australia, redundant. The public can now sift through the catalogues of most of the major libraries in the world with only a few keystrokes and a couple of keywords!

Until there's a cyber-attack, that is.

Just ask the British Library.

It didn't rate a mention in the Australian mainstream media, but on the last weekend in October of 2023, in the lead-up to Halloween, the British Library was the victim of a major ransomware attack. All online systems and services were massively disrupted, the website went down and access to even basic communications tools was lost. Patrons could not check, request, retrieve or use materials from the Library's vast collections and it has taken two and half months to restore the major dataset, the British Library catalogue.

Yes, what technology has achieved is impressive, especially to those of us worked with library systems of the past. But it is not without its vulnerabilities.

Julie Martin



## Have you a story to tell?

*[Bevan Carter is a long term member of the Friends and an occasional contributor to these pages. His research interests are early WA first contact and Aboriginal Land Tenure, as well as the stories of individual WA convicts. please note the language referring to Noongar people is reproduced from original documents.]*



We were in fact on one side of the gorge through which the Swan issues from the range and after the dreary walk experienced during the day we were well prepared to enjoy the scene which now so suddenly burst upon us, heightened by a brilliant sun and fine afternoon.

Further down the valley on the banks of the river several fires sent up their small wreaths of smoke which we knew to be those of the natives. We were not aware until afterwards that a serious affray had taken place on this very day between them and the settlers.

Henty wrote a letter to JS Roe, dated 10 November 1830, together with notes and a map of his journey, and indicated the date of the 'affray' occurred a week earlier - 3 November. The incident is also described by FC Irwin in his despatch of 8 January 1831, which is recorded in the SRO's Swan River Papers:

Lieutenant Governor Stirling called on me to afford military protection... in consequence I despatched, November 1, the party of 1 corporal and 4 privates to the district of the Upper Swan. On arrival they were joined by the neighbouring settlers armed, and in two parties went in pursuit of the natives who had stolen sheep and poultry and speared some goats, and had also plundered a house. At a short distance from the plundered house the natives were found in the bush in the act of cooking the rice, and other provisions which they had stolen.<sup>3</sup>

Clint's map indicates that the only house in the Upper Swan in November 1830 was nearly a mile south of where the 'conflict' took place, on the west side of the river. The building was owned by Edward Pomeroy Barrett-Lennard, a 30 year old bachelor with six servants, who had arrived on the *Marquis of Anglesea* on 9 August 1829.

It appears that the sheep, poultry, goats and house plundered were the reason for sending troops to the area on 1 November. Is it possible that when the miscreants were found some days later nothing happened to them?

Captain Charles Fremantle's diary suggests that would be highly unlikely. On a short visit in September 1832 he called on Barrett-Lennard and had this to say of his house:

His own house is a miserable place, but he is wise enough to live a little in the rough at first, & employs his means on the improvement of his land.'<sup>4</sup>

There is no mention of where his six servants lived, presumably in the other dwellings visible on the map, nor any mention of his house being robbed.



Barrett-Lennard's buildings and paddocks on St Leonards brook are shown at the bottom centre left of the map. (SROWA AU WA S234- cons3844-008)

had stolen some sheep & coming upon them unawares the Natives were nearly all bayoneted.<sup>5</sup>

Irwin in his despatch of 8 January 1831, continues:

Another party of natives when fallen in with, drew up to oppose the passage of the settlers, one of whom shot dead the native leader while in the act of throwing his spear, on which the natives instantly fled. A party of seven or eight were subsequently discovered concealing themselves in the river under a steep bank, and made prisoners, one of them making resistance with his spear was wounded.

From the records, there was clearly two incidents; a retaliatory raid with no recorded outcome and across the river another Indigenous group opposing the passage of the soldiers and colonists was fired upon and prisoners taken.

As the Swan River was the boundary between two Aboriginal properties,

Fremantle then describes his visits to Irwin, Moore and Bull's properties, and continues:

I was sorry to find that there was a very bad understanding with the natives, who were most troublesome & did much damage, spearing the sheep, pigs, &c. in great abundance. Many deaths have also been occasioned by them & in return many of them have been killed. I am induced to believe that amongst the lower classes it has almost amounted to a war of extermination & they are shot whenever they are fallen in with.

This entry very probably refers to 3 November:

I believe one tribe was nearly exterminated by two or three soldiers who followed them after they

Irwin's 'another party of natives' suggests they were from the east side of the river, and the second event occurred because the Noongar owners of the land between the river and the hills objected to the trespass of soldiers and colonists. It is most probable that this second group confronting the armed troupe is the 'conflict' to which the map refers.

Certainly this is the same incident described by George Fletcher Moore who had just arrived on the *Cleopatra* on 30 October. He, however, treats these two separate incidents as if they were one:

I have been at the head of the Swan River, and in a conflict with a tribe of natives; accompanied a party which chased them for miles through the woods, where they had been making merry with plunder; and after seeing one native shot, and three wounded, assisting in bringing seven prisoners to Perth.<sup>6</sup>

Some sources suggest the *Cleopatra* arrived on 29 October, but it still seems odd that Moore, the day, or even two days after he arrived, would have, on 1 November, travelled north with Colonial Secretary Peter Brown (Broun). Moore confirmed in a later entry that he did indeed travel to the Upper Swan in company with Peter Brown and some soldiers:

Mr Brown proceeded thither, accompanied by a few soldiers, and I took the advantage of going with him to that part of the country.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, it is extraordinary Moore appears to have abandoned his luggage and servants at Fremantle to become involved in local issues so soon after his arrival in the colony.

Jennie Carter on page 24 of *Bassendean: a social history 1829-1979* referred to Moore's diary entry noting, '[Broun] in November 1830 led one of the first recorded organised military raids against these people. [Noongar landowners]'. After revisiting *Nyungah Land*, published nearly twenty years ago, I revisited some passages, especially Irwin's



Modern tourist map of the Swan Valley showing the site of the 'conflict with the natives' statement shown on the SROWA Clint survey map (marked with a dot top centre).

recollections and determined that there were almost certainly two separate Noongar family groups who were confronted and fired upon by armed colonists on 3 November 1830 and one group may have been practically wiped out.

It was clear even to the first settlers that Noongar people only crossed over to neighbouring properties under exceptional circumstances; to do so ordinarily was a death sentence. Rivers were also known boundaries between Noongar lands. The 'conflict with the natives' notation marked on the east bank of the Swan River must have referred to a Noongar group's opposition to trespassing settlers and soldiers resulting in them being shot at and prisoners taken. As they lived on the other side of the river, this particular group could not have been the ones to steal from Barrett-Lennard's house.

The people who looted Barrett-Lennard's house would have had to have been from the west side of the river and it is inconceivable that they escaped retribution from the soldiers and colonists who had formed an armed troop bent on revenge. The 'tribe nearly exterminated comment', therefore, could only refer to the people from the Noongar property on the west side of the river almost all of whom, as Fremantle notes, apparently did not survive the November 1830 encounter.

The colonists' brutal retaliations bore fruit. After these incidents comments along the lines of it not being safe to occupy grants so distant from the settlement, no longer seemed to apply. It is worth noting that in 1831, Bull, Moore, and Irwin all built large houses on the Upper Swan further north than Barrett-Lennard's dwelling.

Bevan Carter

**Endnotes:**

1. *Nyungah Land*. Lockridge, Swan Valley Nyungah Community, 2005.
2. Marnie Bassett *The Hentys: an Australian colonial tapestry* Melbourne, MUP, 1962 p.153.
3. Swan River Papers Vol 7, SROWA p.98.
4. Diary & letters of Admiral Sir CH Fremantle Fremantle, FACPress, 1979 p.89.
5. *Ibid.* p.29. Also quoted in *Nyungah Land* p.81
6. *Diary of Ten Years by an Early Settler in Western Australia*. Facsimile reprint UWA Press, Nedlands, 1978. Entry for November 9 1830, p.21.
7. *Ibid.* Entry for 12 November 1830.



## News from the State Library

### **.Australian Legacies of Slavery Conference**

The State Library of Western Australian was very pleased to be able to host this very important conference in the Theatre, in partnership with the University of Western Australia on Friday 1 December and Saturday 2 December 2023.

The conference investigated the legacies of British slavery within the colonisation of Australia and asks why this history has been overlooked. After August 1833, when British Parliament abolished slavery in the British Caribbean, Mauritius and the Cape, the former slave-owners were paid compensation for the loss of their 'property'. New research has begun to show that many beneficiaries had ties to other parts of the British Empire, including the settler colonies of Australia, Canada and South Africa. Participants in this conference traced the movement of people, goods, capital, and practices from the Caribbean to the new Australasian settler colonies.

Speakers included Dr Malcolm Allbrook, Australian National University; Professor Jane Lydon, UWA; Dr Keith McClelland, University College London; Dr Trevor Burnard, University of Hull, England and Professor Zoe Laidlaw, University of Melbourne.

### **Perth Writers Weekend**

In another exciting development the State Library is pleased to be hosting, in partnership with Writing WA and the Perth Festival, Perth Writers Weekend from Friday 23 February to Sunday 25 February 2024.

As you can imagine there are a host of amazing writers to engage with from Deborah Conway talking about her new memoir *Book of Life* to Pulitzer Prize winning author Deborah Smiley. Local writers like Natasha Lester, Rachel Johns and Sasha Wasley will also feature. Ex-WA Premier Peter Dowding has written a fascinating book about his late uncle who remarkably fought for the French Resistance in the Second World War and will also be in attendance talking about the book – *Secret Agent, Unsung Hero: The Valour of Bruce Dowding*. See the online festival program for more details at Writing WA.

### **Liquid Gold: A Taste of WA Brewing History**

In Liquid Gold: A Taste of WA Brewing History, Western Australia's relationship with beer will be explored through a look at the people who

have made it and the fascinating objects, recipes, photographs and treasures they've left behind. From pre-colonial fermentation and the earliest homebrews to the mighty Swan Brewery taking on the world, *Liquid Gold* examines WA's rough and tumble relationship with beer. In addition to showcasing treasures from the State's Collection, this exhibition will also feature newly recorded oral histories which chart the emergence of craft brewing in Western Australia from the '80s to today. Charting entrepreneurialism, activism, bitter rivalries and social change, this immersive exhibition invites you to pull up to the bar and consider what goes into your pint.

The exhibition is open on the ground floor of State Library from the 13 February to 5 June with an opening event on Saturday 17 February.

### **Sheiks, Fakes and Cameleers Exhibition**



Vice-Regal Exploring Party, Hamilton Plains, ACC1082A

This exhibition delves into the origins of South Asian migration to Australia in the late nineteenth century, and draws on work from historians, researchers and descendants who will question the homogenous 'Afghan' label attributed to all

cameleers and present instead, a more accurate account of how many of these adventurous men made homes and built a life and legacy here in WA against all the odds. This exhibition 25 March to 9 June in The Nook at the front of the State Library and will also feature in a wrap-around the outside of the building.

### **WA Reflections**

The WA Reflections season finished on a high on Thursday 7 December with *Sound Twitcher*, a short film created by Olivia Davies on the life and work of ornithologist John Hutchison. The State Library has a large collection of his recordings of bird sounds and the film showcased this collection in a hugely evocative way.

### **Percy Manners**

Librarian Peter Edwards has been doing extensive research into the life and times of Percy Manners (1886-1963). The State Library bought



some of his letters at auction in 2014 and a set of photographs were donated in 2015. Percy came to Western Australia from Durham, in the north country of England and fought bravely in World War One in the 16th Battalion, Royal Western Australia Regiment. He was wounded at the Battle of the Somme and fought on being awarded the Military Medal for 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty' during operations against Vaire Wood and Hamel Wood on the morning of 4 July 1918. He was presented his medal by the Prince of Wales [later King Edward VIII] and we have a photograph of that presentation in our collection.



Presentation of Military Medal by Edward, Prince of Wales at Florennes Belgium, December 31 1918 BA2680/7

Percy came home to live in Victoria Park with his wife Sally and children. Pete has been liaising with the Manners family in Melbourne giving them access to Percy's letters and photographs. He has also been in contact with relatives in Western Australia regarding future acquisitions. Pete has been interviewed on *ABC Afternoons* segment *History Repeated* where a state-wide audience got to know a little bit about Percy's life.

## Selecting Memories

As a result of the *Collecting the West* project in partnership with UWA, the British Museum and other cultural institutions the State Library has commissioned the report *Selecting Memories: Histories of the Aboriginal Collections at the State Library of Western Australia: 1890-2000s* by Tiffany Shellam, Denise Cook and Andrea Witcomb. The report provides a fascinating history of Aboriginal collections at State Library from the library's origins in the 1890s to the early 2000s. The report will help guide further engagement with Aboriginal people around these collections.

## New Acquisitions

### The Hole Story

A collection of original artwork and draft material from the Kelly Canby picture book, *The Hole Story* which won the 2018 Western Australian Premier's Book Award for Writing for Children and in 2019 was listed as

a Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Notable Picture book of the year.

### **Charles Dirk Wittenoom Sketch**

The library acquired a Charles Dirk Wittenoom sketch entitled a Sketch in the Town of Perth, Western Australia, which was published in the book, The Colony of Western Australia: a manual for emigrants by Nathaniel Ogle (1839). This artwork depicts an early view of Perth from St George's Terrace.

### **Music posters**

A selection of music posters from the personal collection of Ian Bell, a curator and collector of popular music memorabilia and a leading music communicator and photographer in Adelaide. A number of posters in this offer are original, hand-drawn artwork by the collector. The posters advertise performances outside of WA, which demonstrates the broad reach of WA music as well as tracing the careers of long-standing, notable musicians including Kim Salmon, Dave Faulkner and James Baker.

### **Maps**

Two new maps were added to the collection, of the Bunbury and Onslow regions, which were produced at the end of the Second World War by the WA Land and Survey's department. These are first edition of maps showing major roads, homesteads, stations boundaries.

### **Bob Lloyd photographs of Strelley, Western Australia**

A collection of negatives, mostly portraits of residents of Strelley where the photographer Bob Lloyd worked as a volunteer for nine months between 1973 -1974 performing various jobs for the community. Lloyd took these photographs on a Mamiyaflex 2.25 square camera, developing a few photographs onsite using a car headlamp as illumination for an enlarger.



## **State Records Office - News from the Archives**

### **Margaret Medcalf Award**

The winning entry for the 2023 Margaret Medcalf Award was announced at a special event on 17 November 2023 attended by shortlisted nominees and invited guests. Authors Ann Curthoys, Shino Konishi and Alexandra Ludewig were awarded the 2023 Award for their book

*The Lives and Legacies of a Carceral Island: a Biographical History of Wadjemup/Rottnest Island.*



From left: Catherine Fletcher (Information Commissioner and Chair of the State Records Commission), Shino Konishi and Margaret Medcalf OAM.

Ms Margaret Medcalf OAM attended the special event to hand the Award to Shino Konishi on behalf of her fellow authors.

Ann Curthoys is an honorary professor at the University of Western Australia and the University of Sydney and is Professor Emerita at the Australian National University.

Shino Konishi is an Aboriginal historian and descends from the Yawuru people of

Broome. She is an associate professor in the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Australian Catholic University.

Alexandra Ludewig is Professor of German Studies and the Head of the School of Humanities at the University of Western Australia, and a Rottnest Volunteer Guide.

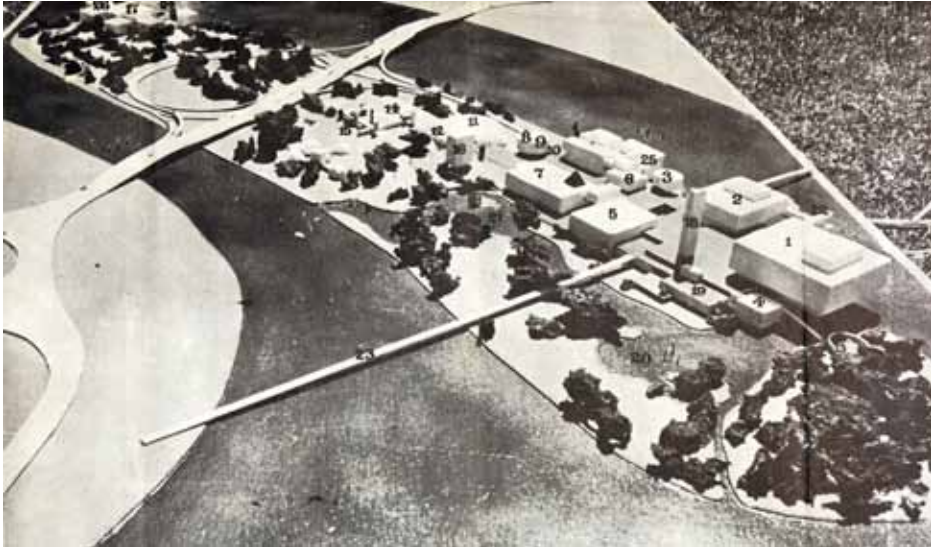
The Margaret Medcalf Award recognises excellence in referencing and research in the use of State Archives held by the State Records Office of WA. The Award honours Ms Medcalf, Western Australia's second State Archivist, for her valuable contribution to the development of archives in Western Australia.

### **SRO on Radio**

The SRO continues to explore different facets of WA history and the State Archives Collection through regular radio segments. In recent months, the SRO's radio commitments have included:

#### **ABC Radio (720 AM) – History Repeated with Michael Tetlow**

- A Look Back at Heirisson Island (which included a 1966 proposal to situate the Perth Cultural Centre onto Heirisson Island)
- All Aboard the Reso Train: weekend getaways on the WAGR Reso Tour service which operated on a regular schedule from 1933 through to the 1970s.



Proposed design showing the Perth Cultural Centre situated on Heirisson Island, 1966 (SROWA).

## 6PR Radio – Remember When with Harvey Deegan

- The Great Emu War
- Holiday Road Trips in the Archives
- A Whale of a Tale (whaling in WA)

## Did you know?

SRO often provides assistance to journalist Malcolm Quekett for his weekly series in the *West Australian* (weekend edition) 'The Untold History of WA'. Recently, we assisted Malcolm with a story he was preparing about the different buildings that formed Government House during the 1800s.

In reviewing Public Works Dept plans held at SRO, we were surprised to come across an alternative design to the current building. This alternative design was prepared by Captain Wray of the Royal Engineers in 1857. We include an image of Wray's proposed design next page.

### KEY TO PROPOSED FACILITIES:

Space is allotted in the scheme for the eventual construction, if required, of the following:-

1. Festival Hall (concert hall with stage).
2. Theatre.
3. Experimental Theatre.
4. Restaurant.
5. Art Gallery (with Sculpture Gardens).
6. Art Cinema.
7. Museum.
8. Information Centre and Tourist Bureau (with permanent West Australian exhibition).
9. Old People's Centre.
10. Adult Education Centre and Conference Rooms.
11. Amphitheatre.
12. Children's Centre.
13. Sunken Garden.
14. Children's Traffic School.
15. Fantasy Land Playground.
16. Residential Block (to house students, visitors, etc.).
17. Exhibition Centre (unit construction by demand).
18. Observation tower and transmitter.
19. Non-denominational chapel at base of tower.
20. Lake for model yachts.
21. Inland waterways.
22. Boating facilities.
23. Footbridge from mainland.
24. Entertainment centre.
25. National School of Communication Arts (Schools of Music, Ballet, Drama, Art Film and Television).
26. Showrooms for Industrial Design Centre.



### **Additions to the State Archives Collection / Catalogue**

An old collection that is now fully listed in the SRO online catalogue is Consignment 3651: Return of prisoners committed for trial at Supreme Court (Criminal Sittings). Previously just catalogued as *Returns of prisoners committed for trial 1860-87*, there are 35 items now listed including item 31 *Supreme Court sittings 17/8/1885* when in Perth Gaol were, Abraham Krakoner (free), John Gould (6305), Daniel Johnson (8613 / 10175), Horace Coe (9690). Item 07 *Convict details - Robert Morrison, no. 7797* gives discipline details 1864–66. Check out Cons3651 to see the full set. Our thanks to SRO's volunteer Adam O'Neill in listing these records.

We've been mentioning some ongoing projects in a few newsletters now. But we'd like to take an interesting slant on Consignment 3393, the WA Government Railways staff record cards. The Railways was always considered as an employer of men but, of course, there were women in various roles in the past although certainly not in locomotive driving and other fields that would have been closed to them, but in which they now participate. The record cards usually name women as Mrs or Miss, although of course the male cards never recorded Mr. But this enables us to search by Cons3393 AND Mrs (or Cons3393 AND miss) and study the roles that women played in the Government Railways of WA. Some of these were seamstress, office cleaner, cook, attendant, typist, Refreshment Services attendant, female clerk, and the rather nondescript title *Female worker*. Of interest is that during the 1940s war years, there are some female tram conductors and in the 1960s a touch of modernism was in place for the woman who was a *Trainee key punch operator*. Two prominent roles for women even from the early 1900s

were Siding Caretaker and Barracks Caretaker. The latter could be considered to fit the role of women in society at the time as they would keep the barracks clean and perhaps undertake some kitchen and other duties. The barracks were where train crew slept overnight while on a long working away from their home-town or depot. Siding Caretaker, however, was a more substantial role with the caretaker responsible for incoming parcels and other small consignments. Caretakers were found in larger towns, often being replaced by a station master when business grew. But they could also be found at stations where the station master had been withdrawn as business lessened, such as Murrin Murrin and Morgans on the Laverton branch. There were also caretakers at many small sidings where there may just have been a general store, hall, and school, if that. The wheatbelt sidings of Benjaberring, Bungulla and Mandiga being three examples. Men were also siding caretakers and sometimes two or more family members undertook the position. At Mandiga, Fritz Leuba was caretaker 1924-29 then the job was taken on by CC Leuba until June 1930. Unfortunately, many of the caretaker staff were only noted by initials and not full names; some were Honorary Caretakers whereas the others would receive an income. We are now well into surnames beginning with 'W' for importing Consignment 3393 names into the online catalogue.

We've also previously mentioned Consignment 3580, Supreme Court plaint files 1881–1940s, which is another ongoing project with regular additions to the catalogue. 1940s are being input and there's an interesting theme developing. In the 1920s we began to find many motor vehicle accidents in the case files. In the 1940s we're seeing a lot of accidents involving various defence force personnel and not only Australian, but many United States forces men were being summoned in relation to accidents. We could speculate that it was getting used to driving on the left side of the road. File 1944/E011 involved the death of Thomas Enright from injuries in motor car accident, driven by Charles Edward Bartram, of United States Navy. 1945/W014 was even more specific - Jean Daphne Willis (formerly Wilson) vs The Commonwealth of Australia in relation to No. 3061288 John William Spanton of Naval Forces of the United States of America, and the death of Cuthbert James Gray John Wilson on 18 August 1945.

Another previously mentioned project is the processing of a collection of cancelled public plan townsite cadastral maps that are on aperture card. There are presently over 9,200 items of consignment 7561 in the online

catalogue, and we are now almost at the end of towns beginning with 'W'. Two examples of recent inputs are Wialki and Wongan Hills, both former home towns of this contributor (David W). By the next newsletter, this listing project should be finished. Would you know, or can you guess, what the final townsite in the alphabetical sequence is? Answer in next issue.

Finally, we've long held considerable records of the government owned Wyndham Meatworks and a major processing job was undertaken by SRO Archivist Helen Hopper prior to her departure for England in January 2024. Among the series processed are alphabetical files, cattle statistics and results, plans, salaries registers, and various financial and miscellaneous records. The salaries registers, covering 1920–59 include head office salary and wage sheets, while the alphabetical files include union matters and correspondence with the Main Roads and Public Works Departments (the latter controlling the Wyndham Jetty through which the meatworks sent much of its production). Many thanks Helen, who we wish well as she takes up a new position as Archives Manager at the University of Warwick where the climate is noticeably cooler.

Damien Hassan & David Whiteford, State Records Office of WA

### **State Records Office Newsletter and Socials**

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

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

Damian Shepherd



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



## Afterwords

### Emu versus Swan

Europeans and Americans are fond of using the ancient expression 'a black swan moment' when something till then thought to be impossible, happens. Until Willem de Vlamingh sailed up our Swan River in 1697 and saw some black swans, every swan they had ever seen had been white.

What a scoop for Instagram that would have been!

We are very fond of our black swans. William Nairne Clark put one on the masthead of the *Swan River Guardian* in 1836. We put them on our first penny black stamps in 1854 and posted them off to show the rest of the world. In 1875 a black swan in a yellow circle was inserted in the middle of the Union Jack to create our Colonial flag.

Recent arrival Frederick Sherwood would have seen plenty of swans when his family was ferried up to Perth late in 1845. He had leased from George Leake, Lot 4 in St Georges Terrace, and later bought it after fulfilling the condition of making a fenced laneway down to Leake's waterfront store.

In 1857 Sherwood started a brewery behind the family house. A key ingredient in beer making is good quality water, and in the early days of Perth there were springs of excellent water that flowed from the slope below Hay Street. Sherwood had such a spring on his block. He named his brewery the Swan Brewery and put up a painted signpost on the laneway showing a black swan on a red oval.

There was already another brewery in Perth, one that eventually became the Emu Brewery. It had started in 1837 as the **Albion** Brewery by James Stokes and was on Spring Street, the name providing a clue to why Stokes chose the site. He re-launched his brewery in 1848 as the Stanley Brewery. I don't know why he chose that name. The site, Lot 27, was also on the waterfront, being on the corner of Mounts Bay Road.

In about 1871, ten years after the death of Stokes, the Stanley Brewery was leased by sea captain John Ferguson (son of Dr John and Isabella Ferguson of Houghton), and in 1872 he took in German brewer William Mumme as a partner. Mumme thought their spring had become contaminated so, after Sherwood died in 1874, Ferguson and Mumme abandoned Spring Street and took over the lease of the Swan Brewery where the water was better.

The Stanley Brewery continued in other hands and became a public company in 1887. They started making Emu Ale in 1906, choosing the name because emus are bigger than swans. In 1908 they changed the name of the brewery to the Emu (Co-operative) Brewery Ltd and in 1923 they had a roaring success with Emu Bitter.

In 1879 Ferguson and Mumme also moved to Mounts Bay Road. They bought the White House, home of the de Burgh family, under Mount Eliza where the water was better still. The site had once been the Native Institution and then home to a steam-powered mill. In 1934 all buildings back on Lot 4 were demolished and Sherwood Court was created.

The Swan Brewery took over the Emu Brewery in 1928 but kept it going as a separate company. In 1937, one hundred years after James Stokes had put up his first sheds, they built a giant art deco brewhouse and offices on Lot 27.

In March 1979, all brewing was transferred to a big new brewery in Canning Vale, and the red brick building on Mounts Bay Road became 'The Old Swan Brewery'.

For more on beer visit the Battye Library's new exhibition 'Liquid Gold' which opens on 17 February.

Steve Errington



The bearded figure is Ken Arrowsmith, the Swan Brewery's head brewer, one of my best chemistry students at WAIT in 1977.

**Membership Subscription** (Annually from 1 July to 30 June - GST inclusive). Please see subscription form on page 32 for more details.

### **Contact details**

To join Friends of Battye Library please submit the form available on the website:

Friends of Battye Library website:  
<http://www.friendsofbattye.org.au>

For membership information, subscription, change of address etc email Cherie Strickland at [membership@friendsofbattye.org.au](mailto:membership@friendsofbattye.org.au)

### **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.

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

Heather at [hgmessina@bigpond.com](mailto:hgmessina@bigpond.com)

or write to:

The Editor  
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](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au)

Email: [info@slwa.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@slwa.wa.gov.au)

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

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

### **State Records Office**

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

#### **Retrievals**

As per usual times for SRO retrievals.

Telephone (08)9427 3600, website [www.sro.wa.gov.au](http://www.sro.wa.gov.au)

email: [sro@sro.wa.gov.au](mailto: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](mailto:info@slwa.wa.gov.au).