

PHA **WA**



NEWSLETTER

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CONTENTS

President's Note:	2
2016/17 PHA (WA) AGM Report:.....	4
History Slam 2017:.....	8
2017 End of Year Function:.....	10
Congratulations to Member Dr Dorothy Erickson:.....	11
New Member Profile - Dr Michelle McKeough:.....	12
Member Profile - Dr Sue Graham-Taylor AM:.....	13
Emeritus Professor Kenneth Stanley Inglis AO (1929-2017) - A Personal Appreciation:	15
From the State Records Office - 2017 Geoffrey Bolton Lecture:.....	16
New Book - <i>Radical Perth Militant Perth</i> :	17
Book Note - <i>After the War: Returned Soldiers and the Mental and Physical Scars of World War I</i> :	18
Book Note - <i>Bill and Mary Mac - From the Kimberleys to Cocklebidy and places in between</i> :	19
Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the End of Transportation:	21
Items of Interest:	23
Next Newsletter:.....	23
PHA (WA) Management Committee 2017 - 2018:.....	24

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the PHA (WA).

President's Note:



Father Christmas arrives in WA for Foy & Gibson, November 1934. Photo courtesy: State Library of WA.

It's always a pleasure to reflect on so many past and upcoming events as well as put out a myriad of thank yous and appreciations in my President's Note. Since our last newsletter, we've slammed, we've taught, we've published, we've guided, we've reviewed, we've presented, we've gathered, we've lobbied, we've partnered and we've (re) joined! It is a heartening reminder that there is much that is happening in our sector – and much that still needs to happen – and many people who are committed to being historians, to contribute to the practice, learning and promotion of history, and to maintaining its value and place in the community, in academic circles, in our social networks and in the institutions and organisations we represent and who represent us.

I've had the fortune of representing PHA at a variety of events in this last half of 2017 including the annual Geoffrey Bolton lecture hosted by the State Records Office, which this year was given by Professor Stuart Macintyre from the University of Melbourne; the History Council WA Ideas Forum that brought



together representatives from many of the Not-for-Profit history and museum groups to brainstorm current and future issues, and the launch of Heritage Perth's Heritage Pub Trail App based on the tour devised and guided by our own member Eddie Marcus.

The relationship we've recently established with UWA Publishing has continued and is already showing signs of being an important and mutually beneficial one for our members. One of the most recent publications offered was Leigh Straw's *After the War: returned soldiers and the mental and physical scars of World War I*. Our member, Malcolm Traill, was quick to secure the free copy of the book and has provided a review of the book for the newsletter. As an exciting follow up, Leigh accepted the invitation to talk on her book at our recent End of Year gathering and Malcolm was delighted to have the opportunity to host Leigh's presentation and pick her brains in person about the book and her inspirations for writing it. Thanks in particular to Charlotte Guest at UWAP for being so obliging in fostering this relationship and putting me in touch with Leigh.

In keeping with our tradition of partnering a professional development opportunity with the annual AGM and to providing new experiences for our members, the Management Committee secured the Museum of Perth as the venue for this year's AGM. After the formalities, we were given a tour of the historic Atlas building and the museum set-up. For many of us, this was the first time we had visited the museum and we were impressed by the scale of the volunteer program, the robust philanthropic support they have secured, and the commitment of staff and board to making the museum a success. The generosity of Reece Harley, Executive Director, and Ryan Mossney, Secretary, in opening the museum especially for us and giving us a personalised tour is duly noted.

Some challenging issues for the sector have emerged this year, not least the sudden and poorly explained administrative placement of the State Records Office within the State Library and the seeming uncertainty or lack of information forthcoming around what impacts this will actually have. As well, there have been dark clouds hanging over the future of the National Archives here in WA, with the lease on its building expired, no confirmation of a new base and repository, and even more troubling the relocation of some archives to the eastern states. Members of the management committee including myself have been keeping in touch with both organisations and hope to secure a presentation for our members early next year by representatives of these institutions. Then there are our sad losses to the industry and we acknowledge the recent passing of eminent historian, Ken Inglis, with a personal tribute by our member Peter Gifford.

Looking ahead, next year marks the 150th anniversary of the end of convict transportation to Western Australia when the last of the convicts arrived on the *Hougoumont* on 9 January 1868. In this edition, we have included information on some of the many events that will be offered throughout the year as an opportunity for you to engage with this important aspect of our history. If you are involved in putting something together to commemorate this milestone in addition to those we've listed, we would love to hear from you and would be happy to circulate information to the rest of the membership on your behalf throughout the year.

After such a busy and often hectic year, it was a pleasure to be able to conclude 2017 with a very convivial and relaxed End of Year function. In keeping with the theme of Leigh's book presentation, it was fitting to have the function at the Army Museum WA. Thanks to Robert Mitchell for all his help and support and kindly (and freely!) opening doors of the Sergeants' Mess to our guests.

In conclusion, I would like to say a special thanks to Jenna Lynch, who stepped down from the Management Committee this year. Jenna's contributions to the association were much appreciated, especially in designing our new promotional flyer and also taking on the task of interim secretary and keeping our busy email network alive and well. On that note, a big



welcome to our newest Management Committee member, and secretary, Sinead Burt. Sinead has launched into her role with much gusto and made a great impression already. I have been fortunate to also welcome back to the Management Committee Robyn Taylor, Sue Graham Taylor, Prue Griffin and Dominic Walsh – a formidable team who together make my role so much more enjoyable and supported.

I urge you to dip into this edition of the newsletter for all the details of all these activities and more and the work of some of our members and peers.

Wishing you all a very safe and Merry Christmas and New Year.

*Helen Munt APHA
President*

Editors Note: A position paper by the Australian Society of Archivists Inc in relation to the State Records Office can be found at <https://www.change.org/p/11751598/u/22118991>.

2016/17 PHA (WA) AGM Report:

I would like to thank the State Library WA for their support of PHA WA by providing meeting rooms throughout the year free of charge for our management committee meetings. A special thanks to Reece Harley and Ryan Mossny at the Museum of Perth for so generously agreeing to host our AGM and showing us around the historic Atlas Building and their museum collection and operations.

Committee

The PHA (WA) Management Committee (MC) has met four times during 2016/17 as well as conducting other matters of Association business between committee meetings via email. After last year's AGM, the MC stood as follows: Helen Munt, President; Ian Duckham, Secretary; Prue Griffin, Treasurer; Robyn Taylor, Vice President; Sue Graham Taylor, Membership Secretary/PHA delegate; and Jenna Lynch as general MC member. Shortly after the AGM, new member of the PHA, Dominic Walsh, put himself forward to come onboard as a general committee member. Sadly midway through the year, our Secretary Ian Duckham had to resign owing to personal responsibilities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ian for being such a dedicated and reliable Secretary and member of the MC and for being such a delightful person to have around. We wish him all the very best. My thanks to Jenna Lynch and Dominic Walsh for stepping into the breach and sharing the role of secretary on an interim basis.

As always, the priority of the MC in addition to general business is to invest time and energy into bringing new members into the Association and to support and maintain our existing members. This is mainly achieved through providing professional development as well as social networking opportunities to members and by keeping our members informed of relevant events, activities and news within the sector as well as employment opportunities. The list of activities at the end of this report I think clearly demonstrates our endeavours.

There have been two e-newsletters produced this past year. It seems that the reduction to two issues per year has been acceptable, but as always we encourage your feedback on the newsletters, especially if it's to commend Kris and Lenore on



the fine work they do. We also encourage members to contribute articles, reviews and news items to the newsletter as that is the best way to ensure that the newsletter stays relevant and meaningful.

On the basis of the successful combined end-of-year function last year, the MC reached out again to the same peer associations, although this time it was only the History Council of WA who took up the offer. Our wind-up was held at the lovely surrounds of the Wireless Hill Museum and Park and was made possible by the generosity of our member Cathy Day and the City of Melville. I would like to put the call out now for anyone willing to step forward and offer to organise such functions next year – having one or two of our members to help out on a needs basis and be able to contribute to events such as this assists in the sustainability and engagement of the Association.

It is worth noting that the relationship with the History Council of WA has strengthened over the year. This has been mainly achieved through my membership on its committee (including taking on the role of Secretary). As a result, there has been ongoing and valuable liaison between PHA and the History Council and mutual beneficial endeavours on a variety of matters – from participation in joint professional development opportunities (such as the special screening of the film *The Destruction of Memory* at the UWA Club followed by a panel discussion) to advocacy issues (such as the merger of the State Library and the State Records Office under the new Labor Government).

A relationship with UWA Publishing has also been nurtured this year in which UWAP offered PHA free copies of relevant recent publications in exchange for a review in our newsletter. The first book to be offered was *Like Nothing on this Earth: A Literary History of the Wheatbelt* by Tony Hughes-d'Aeth. In addition, UWAP is assisting with organising presentations by authors for members and also donated a book as one of the prizes for the Quick and Quirky Quiz held during the WA State Heritage and History Conference.

Professional Development

A new initiative for professional development this year was the creation of the PHA History Slam. This was held during the Heritage Days Festival on Saturday 15 October 2016. The idea was inspired by the “slam poetry” concept in which poets have three minutes to win an audience vote with their spoken word poem. Using this format, the History Slam brought together a variety of presenters from all walks of life to tell a story and, like the poetry slam, they only had three minutes each. Their stories were to shine a light on the rich and varied work of not just historians but those from other disciplines who have undertaken historical research or investigation for a variety of purposes – such as for plays, books, guided walks, exhibitions, archaeology, building conservation, archives. The History Slam was about promoting history and research into our past as exciting, intriguing, emotive and relevant; to reflect on how important these discoveries can be and to encourage debate and discussion. Thanks to the support of Heritage Perth, we secured the Burt Memorial Hall as venue and also technical assistance to run the microphones and power points. The History Slam was a great success with 16 presenters and an audience of around 200 and was held again during the 2017 Heritage Days Festival on Sunday 15 October at Downstairs at the Maj.

Another significant PD commitment this year was to engage with the State Heritage Office in the organisation of the WA State Heritage and History Conference and to participate in this event as much as possible. The conference was held on 11-12 May at the Concert Hall. Sue Graham Taylor was our representative on the organising committee. The management committee agreed to support two of our members to attend the conference by paying for a day registration for each. Our successful delegates were Ann Hunter and Julia Wallis who both provided excellent articles for our June newsletter on their experience of the conference and some of the issues that were covered in the sessions they attended. The management committee also embraced an idea from Sue Graham Taylor to run a history based quiz at the conference as an additional



event. This became our Quick and Quirky Quiz and was a great success, with many delegates participating as well as generating awareness of PHA. Thanks to the generosity of the organisations we approached, we were able to offer fabulous prizes donated by Heritage Perth, Two Feet and a Heartbeat, City of Melville, Dome and UWA Publishing.

The final PD opportunity for the year was offering one of our members two tickets to the 2017 Perth International Arts Festival (PIAF) Writers Festival at UWA in February 2017. Prue Griffin was the lucky recipient and attended the “Ripped from the Headlines” session which features three authors all inspired by true crime in their books - local historian and writer Leigh Straw, UK novelist/historian Kate Summerscale and writer Amy Stewart from USA.

Membership

In 2016/17, our membership totalled 51 people with 24 Professional Members, 6 Associate, 11 Graduate and 2 Researcher, 8 Retired. We welcomed 2 new members to PHA (WA) – Cathy May (accredited at the level of Professional Historian) and Kim Lateef (accredited at the level of Graduate Historian).

Although our membership in final numbers has slightly reduced from last year, there has been movement within the membership which is important to note. Some members have not renewed but predominantly this is owing to retirement, new members have come into the association and also previous members have renewed their membership. This movement in and out therefore keeps the membership base at reasonably constant level, however, increasing our membership will always remain an important part of our remit.

Professional Historians Australia

Sue Graham Taylor has served as the WA delegate to the national body. In addition to the teleconferences, Sue attended the AGM in Adelaide in August. Jenna Lynch had taken on the role of second delegate but, as she will be leaving the management committee, we will need to find another member to support Sue in this role. Some of the issues on the agenda for the national committee will be to ensure the Association is aligned with the broader university degrees beyond history – including heritage and archaeology in which history is a major part of the academic learning. This will likely require a change to the preamble to the criteria for membership. Continuing to develop a national approach to professional development for members will also form a significant part of its business. The national conference will be hosted by NSW in 2018 and we will look to again funding up to two of our members to attend with payment of conference fees/registration.

Activities

In summary, in 2016/17 the MC's main activities have included:

- Contribution to the organising committee for the WA State Heritage and History Conference and funding of two PHA delegates (one day registration each) to attend the conference in May 2017
- The organisation of a competitive history quiz “The Quick and Quirky Quiz” held during the WASHH Conference – including securing donations of prizes from relevant organisations
- The organisation and hosting of an inaugural History Slam as part of the Perth Heritage Days Festival in October 2016, Burt Memorial Hall, Perth.
- The funding of one PHA member (+ partner) to attend a session at the PIAF Writers Festival in February 2017
- The organisation of a presentation and tour of the Museum of Perth to follow the 2017 AGM
- Attendance at the History Council WA Ideas Forum held at RWAHS in August 2017



- The organisation of a combined end of year function at Wireless Hill Museum with the History Council of WA and with the support to of the City of Melville
- Continued contribution/membership to other committees and affiliations such as:
 - National Archives Perth Consultative Forum (Prue Griffin as our representative)
 - History Council WA – including membership on the committee (Helen Munt)
 - State Heritage Office – State Heritage and History Conference working/stakeholder group (Sue as delegate)
- Liaison with both State Records Office and National Archives to provide a presentation to our members on the current issues of each organisation (2018)
- The publication of two E-newsletters (edited by Kris Bizzaca and Lenore Layman)
- The continued administration of the group policy for members for Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance by Jennie Carter
- The monitoring and distribution of issues, events and opportunities of interest to our members via the email network thanks to our secretaries Ian Duckham and Jenna Lynch

Looking Forward

The MC is also looking forward to other activities it has initiated for the following year including:

- Participation in the 2017 Perth Heritage Days Festival with the History Slam event at Downstairs at the Maj
- Supporting up to two members with registration costs for the PHA national conference in Sydney 2018
- Liaison with the State Heritage Office on plans for another State Heritage and History Conference being planned for 2018
- The combined end of year function for 2017 with History Council WA
- PD session on presentation skills in 2018
- Continued networking with UWAP for copies of books for review
- Support for a member to attend a session the 2018 PIAF Writers Festival
- Finalisation of the review of our constitution (PHA (WA) Rules of Association) to ensure it aligns with the changes to the *Associations Incorporation Act 2015 (WA)*.

Conclusion

On behalf of all Members of PHA (WA) I acknowledge the work of the 2016-17 Management Committee – Ian, Prue, Robyn, Sue, Jenna and Dominic. A special thank you to Ian and Jenna who have and will be leaving the MC.

Also thanks to our other members who assist with the roles and responsibilities of the MC - Kris Bizzaca for managing our website and newsletter, to Lenore Layman for assisting with editing the newsletter, Jennie Carter for organising the group insurance policy for members and Robin Chinnery for her support on the Credentials Sub-Committee.

*Helen Munt APHA
President 2016/2017*



History Slam 2017:

“History from New Perspectives”



The History Slammers. Photo courtesy: Helen Munt.

In the dark and ambient surrounds of Downstairs at the Maj, brave presenters and even braver audience members gathered once more for the annual PHA History Slam. Again we had a sell-out capacity crowd which was a result of the overwhelmingly favourable response from last year’s Slam and testament to the interest in the broader community in storytelling and to engage in history even if it is packaged a little differently.

It was terrific to welcome back Malcolm and Gerard who presented at last year’s Slam (clearly suckers for punishment) as well as welcome new presenters, most of whom I didn’t have to go too far overboard to coax, convince and grovel to give a Slam a go. Our line-up this year was:

- Malcolm Traill – Why Emu Point has nothing to do with emus!
- Joanna Sassoon – What you see but do not notice
- Andrew Turk – Giles in Ngurra (poem)
- Christine Choo - Civil War in Spanish Philippines and Filipinos in Broome and Northern Australia in late 19th century
- Bernard Carney - Turning WA history into song: Fremantle Harbour 1942 Z Force special operations
- Bobbie Oliver - The Riddle of George Ryce
- Stephen O’Brien – We are but a small local museum (poem)
- Aileen Marwung Walsh - Noongar names – what do they mean?
- Neville Green - Native Title history: the first 10 years
- Gerard Foley - I am the very model of a modern senior archivist (bashfully explained by Gerard as a rhyming verse in the style of Gilbert & Sullivan)

It was with great pleasure that I was also able to welcome back slammer Robyn Taylor from last year, but this year to offer her the task of bell-ringer. Robyn took great delight in exacting her revenge on the slammers by reminding them – sometimes more than once – that they had gone over their allocated three minutes just as happened to her (more than once, twice, three times...) in her slam last year.



Helen Munt presenting the awards to the winners - Stephen O'Brien (left) and Bernard Carney (right).
Photo courtesy: Helen Munt.

To make things just a little more interesting this time around, the Slam was competitive with the audience having the chance to vote for their favourite Slam. Leaping to the front of the voting was singer/songwriter Bernard Carney (who wooed the audience with his singing) and Stephen O'Brien (local history librarian and comedic poet). I had to give myself a pat on the back for having the thought that "maybe I should get two trophies in case there is a tie?" as indeed there was. So fortunately I had two high class tea mug "trophies" printed up with my less than subtle nod to Descartes *I Think Therefore I Slam* and purchased two packets of Tic Toc biscuits (in hindsight I could have just given out the biccies given the reaction of the winners).

It must have been something to do with the venue, but the Slam this year took on a very theatrical edge, with slammers soliciting a vast emotional response from the audience – there was chortling, tearing up, booing, cheering, interpolating, singing and even tapping of feet - but always "clapping". Possibly the fact that there was a bar at the venue too may have had something to do with it!

However, whatever the light-heartedness of the Slam and its entertainment value, what cannot be ignored is the incredible intensity that a three minute story can have: the important impact these seemingly small stories can deliver, how provocative they can be and what we can learn in such a brief moment. I think much lies in the onomatopoeic nature of the word slam in that intuitively that's what each presenter ends up bringing to the table – or more accurately, stage. Even with a comedic touch, these "SLAMS" so often contain lofty, confrontational and uncompromising undersides, reflecting back at us our attitudes, our institutions, our actions and our challenges – warts and all. Such was Stephen O'Brien's rather cheeky, tongue-in-cheek poem on a local government museum and yet amongst the chuckles from the audience were the clear sighs of recognition of how poorly supported these small museums are and the ludicrous expectations often placed upon their curators by an ill-informed even though well-meaning council. And then there was Aileen Walsh's gently spoken and deceptively sobering narrative on Noongar Names which gave all of us something to ponder on in relation to the first Australians and the history of discrimination they have been subjected to. So many snapshots, thoughts, propositions and ideas to take with us long after we poured out of the Majestic Maj.

Thanks again to the Heritage Perth team for having us back and providing such a great venue and event staff.

*Helen Munt APHA
Slam Organiser, Host and (MC) Minute Counter*

2017 End of Year Function:



Leigh Straw giving a talk about her recently published book. Photo courtesy: Sue Graham-Taylor.

This was one of the most enjoyable end of year PHA functions I have attended. We combined with the History Council, and had a great venue at the Army Museum in Fremantle, thanks to Colonel (Ret'd) Robert Mitchell who assisted in securing the facilities for us.

Guest speaker Dr Leigh Straw gave a fascinating talk about her recently published book, *After the War: Returned Soldiers and the Mental and Physical Scars of World War 1*, which was available for purchase at a special price to members. PHA member Malcolm Traill introduced Leigh and has written a book review included in this edition of the newsletter.

The talk prompted some of the members who couldn't attend the event to share articles they had published relating to World War 1.

Particularly apt was Peter Gifford's 'Christmas truce 1914', based on his research into the famous story of the truce between the Germans and Allied troops putting down their weapons and meeting in no-man's land to enjoy Christmas together. My contribution was a photocopy of a 1917 Christmas menu for the Technical Wing of the 1st Anzac Corps Schools, illustrated by soldier/artist Ted Kohler. After the talk, we got down to the serious business of having fun and catching up with colleagues.

Our President Helen did a fantastic job in organising the event and the catering, which was delicious and copious. Having BYO drinks worked well while we supplied iced water and juice. The tables looked especially festive with decorated Christmas trees with lights. Unfortunately, we forgot to take photos.

Many thanks to the committee members who assisted, and Helen for providing those special touches that made this a very enjoyable end of year celebration.

Dr Robyn Taylor MPHA

Congratulations to Member Dr Dorothy Erickson:



Dr Dorothy Erickson at the 2010 launch of *Gold and Silversmithing in Western Australia* at the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

Dr Dorothy Erickson of PHA (WA) recently won the 2017 Western Australian State Heritage Award for her Voluntary Individual Contribution.

The judges citation read: 'Over the past 40 years, Dr Dorothy Erickson's commitment and passion as an artist, curator, historian, author and lecturer has seen her make a significant contribution to the documentation of all aspects of Western Australian cultural heritage, including built and moveable heritage.'

Dorothy's passionate work as a curator, historian, author, critic and lecturer has seen 40 years of commitment to documenting Western Australia's portable cultural heritage. She volunteers her professional expertise to research, document, advise, and collect for public institutions, organizations and private individuals to preserve and promote Western Australia's moveable heritage. Dorothy's work has included advising institutions, writing books, and articles, giving lectures and organizing exhibitions.

Her most recent written work, *Inspired by Light and Land: Designers and Makers in Western Australia 1829-1969* was shortlisted for the Premier's Book Award in 2016. Her 2010 book *Gold and Silversmithing in Western Australia: a History* sold out in 18 months and is now a rare book which she is attempting to have reprinted.

Dorothy recently co-curated an exhibition of Western Australian jewellery; is completing a website and book on an expatriate Western Australian artist Miguel McKinlay (1895-1959) to be launched in London and is revising part 2 of *Inspired by Light and Land* taking the story up to 2000. In addition she is researching women artists in WA prior to 1914 and completing her dictionary of Artists, Artisans and Architects in Western Australia 1829-1950.



In May 2017 she gave a presentation "Hidden Treasures" on the art collection of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society to the first State Heritage and History Conference held in Perth and will give another on "Angels in the Studio: Western Australian Women Artists of the 1890s -1914" at the State Library of WA in conjunction with the exhibition *Botanical Wonderland*.

This article was previously published in Historia #21. It is reprinted here with permission from PHA.

New Member Profile - Dr Michelle McKeough:



Having moved from the mid-north coast of NSW to WA in order to study History at university, I graduated from Murdoch University with a BA in History in 1997. I immediately followed this with a diploma in Public History in 1998, also from Murdoch University.

After working as a professional historian combined with travelling and raising two children, I was awarded my doctorate in History in November 2016. The highlight of my career came in July 2016 when I was invited to present a paper on the subject of my doctoral research, specifically, the Depression Era in Fremantle, at a Round Table Symposium at Oxford University. That was an experience of unparalleled delight. Which brings me to the subject of my thesis.

My thesis was highly rewarding to research and write. It explored three times of crisis in Fremantle: the presence of Bubonic Plague 1900-1906, the Great War, and the Depression Era. My research on Fremantle enabled me to have the wonderful experience of working as the Historical Consultant for an SBS special history series titled 'Secrets of our Cities' which recently aired. Having been initially asked to work on the Fremantle episode, the production company, JoinedUp Films, invited me back to work on both the Fitzroy and Bondi episodes. I was grateful for the chance to work on this production, as the way the show presented the histories of each city, in such an accessible and engaging way, earned my admiration. For me as an historian, work that takes the 'stories' of history out of the academic realm and into the public sphere, has enormous appeal.

I am currently working on my post-doctoral research. As an Honorary Research Associate at Murdoch University, I am researching the presence of Bubonic Plague in Western Australia in the early twentieth century. As that research is nearing completion, I plan to move on to my research on the Depression Era in this State. In particular, I will be examining the 'civil movement' that evolved in the first years of the Depression, in the absence of sufficient State or Federal funding.

Dr Michelle McKeough MPHA



Member Profile - Dr Sue Graham-Taylor AM:



Why history? How did you come to history?

I wanted to study politics. However, I did not want to be taught by my father, head of the politics department, so I enrolled in history instead. And how could I not grow to love history, with Professor Geoff Bolton to inspire and encourage me. I have never lost my interest in the role of politics in decision making, and my career and my outside interests have reflected that interest.

What has been your career path?

Wanting to experience the world outside academia, I delayed a postgraduate path and started a career in the public service as a graduate before honing my research skills in the Parliamentary Library in Canberra. Marriage to a mining engineer meant that my career path in history took a while to emerge.

I completed my PhD on the Ord River Scheme, but then moved to the mining town of Newman for three years, the Netherlands for five years and Oman for three years. Unable to put my PhD to use, I trained as a teacher of English as a foreign language, taught English and became proficient in Dutch and Arabic. It was only on my return to Australia that I was able to get more closely involved in history.

I started by undertaking some commissioned historical and research assistant work before joining the WA Museum as an Assistant History Curator to work on an environmental history exhibition, *Land and People*. I had found my niche – I loved researching and writing for exhibition, and the link with the power of objects. I was lucky enough to obtain a permanent position at the Museum and stayed until 2007 when I was awarded the inaugural State Library of WA Battye Fellowship to research the history of the Swan River.

Since that time I have worked as a consultant. In that role I have been engaged as Curator on a range of exhibitions for regional and local museums, including the National Anzac Centre. I have undertaken commissioned histories and worked on exciting research projects that have shaped government policy in several areas. The results of my research over the years have taken many forms: exhibitions, books, government reports, websites, roadside interpretive signage, and even a walking trail app.

What are you working on now?

I am working on what seems to me a dream job. After many years of research and writing on Western Australia's environmental, social, economic and political history, I have joined the team working on one of the galleries for WA's New Museum. The Museum will open in 2020 and the Gallery will tell the story of environmental change in Western Australia. In this role I am able to combine my history and museum backgrounds, my research skills, and my outside interests as an environmentalist over many years.



What are the best and hardest things about the kind of work you do?

The best things about my work are the people I meet, the variety of subjects I cover and the places I go to as part of my work. When researching, I never tire of the hunt for something new and interesting. The hardest thing, apart from realizing I must learn to say 'No' more often is the need to estimate just how long a task will take – or to decide when to stop the hunt for that one last bit of information.

Another difficult thing is to discuss the future based on knowledge of the past. Several clients, including a coal mining company for whom I was writing a 50th anniversary history, have requested a final chapter on 'the future.' The Gallery I am working on for the New Museum includes a look at the future. Difficult as this is for a historian, in reality we are as well equipped to contribute to this discussion as anyone else.

What role has the PHA (both local and national) played in your career as an historian?

I have always valued my membership of PHA. My local group has been a forum for meeting historians with similar issues and an opportunity for professional development opportunities. After completing several years as President of the History Council and also as President of the Conservation Council of WA, I decided I would contribute to my professional body more actively. I sit on the local Management Committee, I am WA's Delegate to PHA and more recently PHA Secretary. I have enjoyed contact with historians in the Eastern States and grappling with the issues facing our profession nationally.

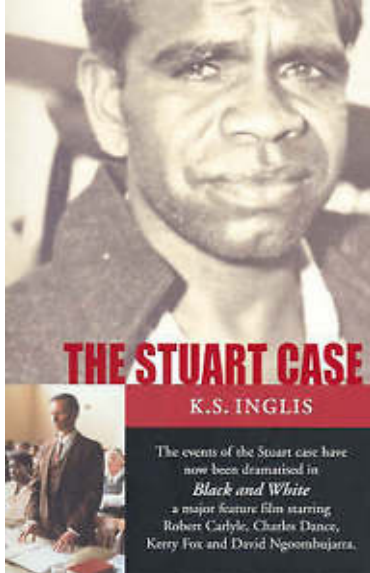
What do you do when you're not doing history?

My passion is the environment and I still find myself spending as much time as I can outside – either bush walking (this year I have walked in Tasmania and recently the Cape to Cape track in WA), or caring for local riverside reserves with the Swan Estuarine Reserves Action Group.

This article was previously published in Historia #22. It is reprinted here with permission from PHA.



Emeritus Professor Kenneth Stanley Inglis AO (1929-2017) - A Personal Appreciation:



When my friend and former teacher Bill Gammage informed me of the death early this month of Emeritus Professor Ken Inglis, my immediate reaction was to spread the news among other friends and colleagues, some of whom knew him personally and others only by reputation.

One in the latter category is a mate in Canberra, a Cambridge man with a military background whose comment was

... according to the latest census there are only 540 historians in Australia and that number is declining – the perceived relevance of the profession is not helped by the fact that many ‘historians’ are ideologues or single issue fanatics.

Ken worked across the discipline – his writing and thinking was the better for it.

I don’t think anyone who knew Ken would disagree; least of all my sister in law, whose PhD Ken supervised at the Australian National University (ANU) in the early 1960s and who now lives in Canada. When I first mentioned to her back in the early ‘90s that I was about to make contact with Ken regarding my own PhD work, her comment was: “You won’t regret it; he’s a lovely, lovely man.” And so it proved – he couldn’t have been more helpful.

Before I go any further, I should say that Ken’s life is already the subject of several well-rounded tributes, including the ANU’s own at <http://cass.anu.edu.au/news/news/20171204/vale-emeritus-professor-ken-inglis-ao> and another good one at <http://insidestory.org.au/historian-of-the-present/>.

Historian of the present in fact sums Ken up – he began to establish his reputation in Adelaide by his reports for the current affairs journal *Nation* in the late 1950s, a time when it was extremely unusual for historians to explore current social issues. Ken’s lifelong interest in journalism and journalists was one reason he later examined the life and times of the journalist-turned-historian, C.E.W. Bean, whose World War One volumes remain a benchmark in military history – partly at least because much of what he wrote about he had actually witnessed.

Ken’s *The Stuart Case*, worked up from his *Nation* articles and published originally in 1959, then re-issued in 2002, was something the same – he was actually part of what he was describing. It is no exaggeration to say as Craig Wilcox did in 1999 that Ken’s “writing helped save the life of Rupert Max Stuart, a man condemned to death on inadequate legal evidence.”

Stuart, an illiterate Arrernte man from central Australia, was sentenced to death in 1959 for the rape and murder of a little girl in Ceduna, on South Australia’s west coast, and would have gone to the gallows had it not been for an article by Ken, and a subsequent campaign by Adelaide’s afternoon newspaper, *The News*, and its editor Rohan Rivett, questioning the whole trial process.



Forensic techniques today would if applied correctly have established Stuart's guilt or otherwise; as it was, Sir Thomas Playford's government eventually relented and commuted Stuart's sentence to life imprisonment.

Ironically, as Ken relates in his 2002 epilogue, this was not only the making of Stuart, it actually prolonged his life. The plain food in Adelaide's Yatala Labour Prison, and lack of alcohol, meant that by the time Stuart was eventually released in 1987, almost all his initiated Arrernte contemporaries were dead. Stuart had learned to read and write in prison, and so impressed his Aboriginal contemporaries on his return to the Alice Springs area that he was invited to head the Central Land Council – and in that capacity became almost certainly the only convicted murderer ever to shake the Queen's hand.

Let Ken have the last word:

If he [Stuart] is innocent, his story is about a man who was the helpless victim of the legal system and the racist culture which it embodied, who endured a terrible injustice and then transcended the fate to which he had been condemned. If he is guilty, his rehabilitation, his psychic survival as an intact and apparently serene personality, is even more remarkable. Either way, he is fortunate that the process of convicting him was flawed.

Vale Ken Inglis, historian of the present.

Dr Peter Gifford MPHA

From the State Records Office - 2017 Geoffrey Bolton Lecture:



Professor Stuart Macintyre at the 2017 Geoffrey Bolton Lecture. Photo courtesy: State Records Office.

'From Bolshevism to Populism: Australia in a Century of Global Transformation'. This was the topic of the 2017 Geoffrey Bolton Lecture delivered by one of Australia's most eminent historians, Professor Stuart Macintyre, on Tuesday evening 14 November at the Government House Ballroom in Perth. Approximately 160 people, including many historians, attended the event, along with dignitaries including WA Governor Hon. Kerry Sanderson AC, and Culture and Arts Minister Hon. David Templeman MLA.

Professor Macintyre is Emeritus Laureate Professor of the University of Melbourne and is Professorial Fellow of its School of Historical and Philosophical Studies.

Professor Macintyre's speech described the history of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and the influence of Marxism and Communism in the decades to come, including in Western Australia; drawing on the life of Western Australian trade unionist Paddy Troy and delving into the reasons why someone would have been attracted to this movement in times past. He also spoke of the late Geoffrey Bolton as someone who took a middle path between Communism and conservatism, outlining some of the reasons for his middle way. In addition, Professor Macintyre discussed current so-called populist movements; outlining their rise since the fall of Communism in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s.

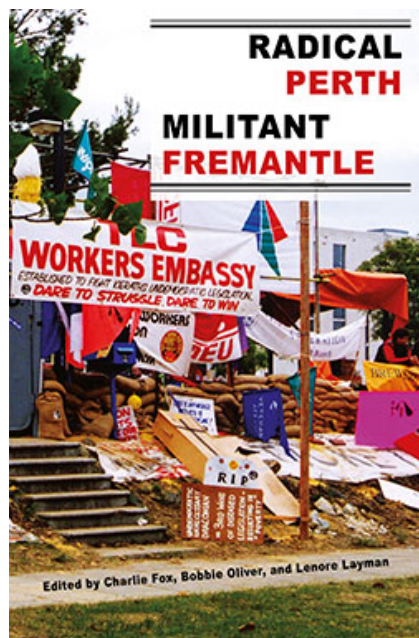
The text of Professor Macintyre's text can be found on the SRO's website at:

<http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/events/geoffrey-bolton-lecture>.

The lecture was recorded for broadcast and podcast by ABC Radio National's Big Ideas series, and will be the first program for 2018 – broadcast and podcast on 23 January. SRO will link the podcast to its Geoffrey Bolton Lecture webpage when the podcast becomes available.

Gerard Foley, Senior Archivist, State Records Office

New Book - *Radical Perth Militant Perth:*



***Radical Perth Militant Fremantle*, edited by Charlie Fox, Bobbie Oliver and Lenore Layman (Black Swan Press, 2017)**

*This new book consists of 31 short entries about places in Perth and Fremantle where radical actions have taken place across the 20th century. **Meredith Hammat, Secretary of Unions WA**, launched the book at the old Trades Hall on 11 December, saying how much she enjoyed reading it. Here is an excerpt from Meredith's speech.*

I couldn't help but start my reading of this book with the tales of union struggle, some of them well known to me like Solidarity Park and the Workers Embassy and the MUA dispute in 1998. I also enjoyed reading the history of May Day and the Bloody Sunday riots in Fremantle that resulted in the death of Tom Edwards. These are stories that we know well in the union movement but they are beautifully told in this book.

I found that, as I read these stories, I was transported back to the picket line in Fremantle during the height of the MUA dispute, and the collective sense of impending struggle as we waited for the police or convoys of farmer to arrive.

Or once again transported back to the Workers Embassy as the union movement built a lasting legacy to our struggle and defiance opposite Parliament House.

But this is a book that tells many tales of radicalism and defiance in our own backyard. And there are many stories here that I didn't know of.



I was inspired by the many tales of women.

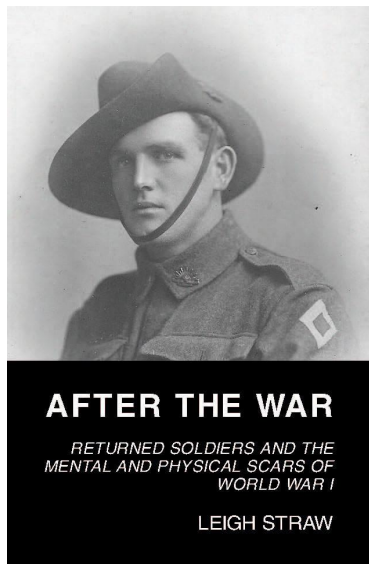
- Like Joan Davies, a member of Save our Sons (SOS), a group formed to protest the Vietnam War and conscription. She achieved notoriety and a front-page article in the *West Australian* for throwing her shoe at then Prime Minister Harold Holt. She was apparently enraged when Holt smiled at her and her fellow protesters during an action to protest the Vietnam War.
- And like 89-year-old Bessie Rischbieth who actively protested land filling of Mounts Bay on the Swan River. There is an excellent photo in the book of Bessie, properly dressed in hat, gloves and overcoat standing at the construction site. She is bare-footed however, and standing in the mud.
- Or the women who were part of the Apron Parades, housewives who were neatly and conservatively dressed but paraded with aprons bearing their protest signs to 'Stop Nuclear Tests' and 'Ban All Bombs'.

And, of course, this is a book which also tells the stories of environmental, peace and heritage movements, the struggle for Aboriginal self-determination, political movements like Communism, and movements for sexual liberation. It tells so many great stories about our city, our streets and our people – a treasure trove of stories of more than 100 years of struggle against power and conservatism. It is filled with tales of often every-day people who were moved to action because of what they saw happening to their community that they felt was unfair or unjust.

This book is not just a collection of great yarns and rollicking good stories. It tells the story of who we are. For all of us who contribute our time and efforts to building our community into something more tolerant and just, this book tells our collective story and our collective history.

If you wish to purchase a copy of the book, see <https://humanities.curtin.edu.au/research/black-swan-press/catalogue/>

Book Note - *After the War: Returned Soldiers and the Mental and Physical Scars of World War I*:



***After the War: Returned Soldiers and the Mental and Physical Scars of World War I* by Leigh Straw. UWA Publishing, 2017. Paperback, 229 pages, ISBN 9781742589497. RRP \$39.99.**

Review copy provided by UWA publishing.

Many Australians are understandably suffering from World War I fatigue right now, after three years of anniversaries, commemorations and tributes. The number of words published on the war must have now well passed a million; so when another book on the war appeared this year, I went slightly pale and wondered what else could be said. Luckily, Leigh Straw has found a way!



Not part of the heroic Anzac tradition (think Bean, Fitzsimmons and Carlyon), and unlike the more nuanced histories of Lake, Damousi or Brown, Dr Straw has carved out a slice of Australian military and social history that has been less discussed in any depth.

The sub-title of the book explains her thesis — that Australia ignored the mental and physical effects of World War I on so many of the returning troops. And she has focussed her research on Western Australian cases, by combing newspapers for reports of suicide and trauma among families in the inter-war period.

She has also taken this a step further by using war diaries and interviewing surviving family members of those who took their own lives or died prematurely from war-related effects. Some of these reports are heart-rending — and the stoical attitude of the wives and children who were left to struggle on is notable in an Australian society where social welfare was in its infancy, and male primacy still predominated.

The preface to the book is startling — a report of a murder-suicide in Collie in 1929 which involved a member of her husband's family. If ever the trauma of a century-old war could personally affect an author, this would be an example!

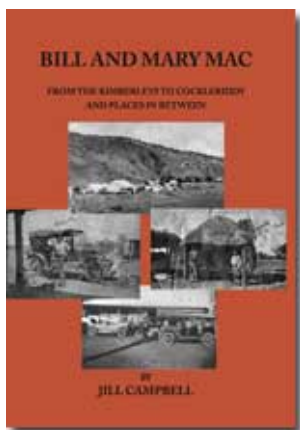
Leigh Straw also investigates government efforts to counter the effects of shellshock (now known as PTSD), disease (mainly tuberculosis), the effects of war wounds, alcoholism, unemployment and a myriad of other effects. The establishment of hospitals and rehabilitation centres in Perth and regional WA merely scratched the surface of the needs of those returning soldiers.

Coming from Albany as I do, I am surrounded by opinions on the Anzac legend and the influence it has had on much of the Australian and New Zealand population. Dr Straw manages to counteract this sometimes-misguided patriotism by showing us the other, less heroic, side of military life — compassionately, adeptly and free of hyperbole.

I recommend this book to historians seeking an alternative approach to currently dominant views of World War I.

Malcolm Traill Graduate Historian

Book Note - *Bill and Mary Mac - From the Kimberleys to Cocklebidy and places in between:*



***Bill and Mary Mac : From the Kimberleys to Cocklebidy and places in between* by Jill Campbell. [Hesperian Press](#), 2014. A4, 119 pages, illustrated, ISBN 978-0-85905-535-2. RRP \$35.00.**



In compiling this somewhat unusual book, the author has integrated the reminiscences of her parents, Bill and Mary McDonald, with photographs, letters, and extracts from other documents and books. The foreword, written by the author's husband, reads:

This is the story of my wife's parent's early life. To me it epitomizes the courage and the character of people who lived in the outback during these years.

It wasn't until the early 1960s that I met Bill and Mary ... but from the very first meeting I was impressed with their determination... [A]t this stage, Bill, in his late 50s, with his wife Mary and three young teenage children set out to create a sheep station from virgin ground on the Nullarbor. Public demand dragged them into providing service to East West travelers [sic] which was realized by the creation of the Cocklebidy Motel providing the first motel units along the Eyre Highway for the Empire Games held in Perth in 1962.

... I can't help feeling that the early days recounted here moulded these truly Australian people into the legend that they became.

The references to 'early life' and 'early days' should be taken literally. Despite the book's subtitle implying that it starts with their time in the Kimberley and ends with Cocklebidy, the latter place is mentioned only in the foreword. The reminiscences end when Bill and Mary marry in Wyndham. At that time they were, respectively, twenty-one and seventeen.

Starting with a brief family history, Bill's story moves quickly to his work in Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Kimberley. That section will appeal to readers who like outback yarns. In telling of various capers, pranks and tragedies that interrupted the monotony of stock work and droving, Bill cheerfully acknowledges that, in some instances, fair play or the law were ignored. In a large segment devoted to killings in the Sturt Creek locality in 1922, transcripts of police journals and letters augment his comments. Counting that material, Bill's story takes up less than one quarter of the book.

Mary's story starts with a longer family history. Her mother Alice was born in Victoria in 1865 and, eighteen years later, married 28-year-old John Darcy in Queensland. They had nine children in the Thargomindah area where John worked on pastoral stations. Mary was a late addition, born in Victoria in 1906. After her father and three of her older brothers left there to work in the Kimberley, the rest of the family moved to Perth.

Born so much later than her better-known brothers, Mary had little to do with most of them. She relates the oft-told story of Mr Tuckett's 1917 surgery on Jimmy at the Halls Creek post office. She also comments on Tommy's career as a Perth jockey, and on his work at places that include Ruby Plains Station (owned by Walter Darcy and David Oliver). Charlie Darcy, who worked on Newry Station, married Gertie Hyland, and that gave Mary interesting stories about the Hyland family and their circus. Gertie features in several of the book's photographs, which are presented in two clusters to portray family, friends, stations, and much more.

Mary was twelve when the family moved to Wyndham. It was at this point (page 64) that frustration started to erode my interest in the book. The next 36 pages offer letters and anecdotes from the years from 1918 to 1923, with very few dates. Much of the material is trivial, and some of it petty, but it does provide cameos of life in a remote town and at two city boarding schools (Cowandilla and Perth College). Mary acknowledges that her recall of some of the incidents she discusses is patchy. That, combined with her occasional return to Wyndham for the holidays and a sometimes random positioning of her mother's letters, makes it difficult to tell when various incidents occurred. Most of the letters are



undated, some are incomplete, and others have incorrectly sequenced pages. They do, however, provide firsthand information about East Kimberley people and events.

While the information in the letters is probably accurate, Mary's anecdotes contain errors of the sort common to reminiscences. For instance, on page 70, one of three schoolboys bound for Perth is identified as Jack Kilfoyle. In reality, Kilfoyle was elsewhere, aged twenty-five. That error might seem minor but, coupled with a story about how Jack's father 'hated the blacks' and supposedly sliced the heads off piccaninnies, it shows why anyone wanting to use information from this book should be very careful. A less worrying error is the use of the name *Bambarah* for the *Bambra*, which ran regularly between Wyndham and Fremantle. The *Barambah*, mentioned in connection with a Model T Ford, is correctly named.

Notes written by Maggie Lilly contain partial corrections for a few of the more obvious errors, e.g., on pages 97–8, where Mary says that people thought a crocodile took Millie Caudwell's brother. In other instances, e.g., where she muddles three generations of the Bridge family on page 96, only a reader familiar with the subject matter will notice the errors. Maggie and Mary met as children in Wyndham, and Maggie stayed on after Mary left.

A welcome and unexpected aspect of *Bill and Mary Mac* is the insight it offers into the strong links between the Kimberley's residents and ex-residents. Mary tells, for example, of boarding in South Perth with the Kelly family who had owned and run Texas Downs Station (out of Halls Creek). When the Kellys went to Adelaide for a holiday, Mrs Neal Durack, whose husband had drowned when they lived in the Kimberley, moved in to keep an eye on Mary, another young female lodger and the Kelly boys.

Whether other historians and researchers will find the potentially useful parts of this book interesting enough to warrant wading through the more mundane parts remains to be seen. It does, however, have comprehensive indexes for people and places. It ends with coverage of Mary and Bill's honeymoon, and has the notation "To be continued..." So, for anyone interested in the Nullarbor or Cocklebidy, there may be more to come.

Cathie Clement OAM MPHA

Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the End of Transportation:

On 9 January 1868, the *Hougoumont* arrived into Gage Roads, Fremantle. With 279 convicts on board (including many Fenians), and a number of Pensioner Guards and families, her arrival marked the end of the transportation era both in Australia and worldwide.

Here is a list of some of the early events being organised to mark this anniversary.

10 January 2018-March 2019 Fremantle Prison exhibition — *Transportation: exploring the legacy of Australia's last convicts*. This examines the forced migration of convicts from Britain to Australia. It presents the stories of men, women and children sent to convict sites around Australia, exploring the social tragedy of the convict system as a whole as well as individual stories of personal achievement. Exhibiting convict material from the Mitchell Library (State Library of New South Wales), Western Australian Museum and the Prison's own collection, *Transportation* demonstrates the impact forced migration had on individual transportees and their families, and on the shaping of modern Australian society. The exhibition displays key historic artefacts such as the 1881 Ticket of Leave of *Hougoumont* convict William



Bartlett, on display to the public for the first time.

5-14 January Fenians Fremantle & Freedom Festival. Located at Kidago Arthouse, the Festival highlights include music gigs and concerts, family day, literature festival, art, story telling and walking tours, history, film, commemorative walk with descendants of these Irish Fenians. See <https://www.kidogo.com.au/fenians-festival/>

10 February The Digital Panopticon Project - Western Australian launch and workshop, & the Great Convict Debate Fremantle Prison

The History Council WA, UWA and the Fremantle Prison will be hosting the WA launch of the Digital Panopticon Project and hands-on workshop facilitated by Professor Barry Godfrey, Liverpool University, Professor Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, University Tasmania, and David Barrie, UWA. The Digital Panopticon project has been a process of digitising and transcribing all convict registers, conduct records, and medical registers, including all the records relating to WA convicts, to be uploaded to a public site for all to access. Following the workshop, will be a tour of the *Transportation* exhibition and then the “Great Convict Debate” in which special invited guests will thrash out the notion of convictism in WA – was it gain or pain? Time and further details to be announced shortly.

July The Carceral Colony – A Symposium - UWA

In July, UWA is running a 2-day symposium. Papers and sessions will be presented on a variety of aspects and themes relating to convicts and convictism in WA. Dates and details to follow.

The Western Australian Genealogical Society (WAGS) and the Royal WA Historical Society (RWAHS) will hold a series of joint presentations and displays of artefacts and photographs of the men who came to the Swan River Colony – both in chains and in uniforms. See the timetable of events below and check the activities pages on the WAGS and RWAHS websites for updates.

14 January (1pm, starts 1.30pm, afternoon tea provided) WAGS, Unit 4/48 May Street Bayswater
The *Hougoumont* Convict Men Speaker - Bevan Carter

20 January (10am, starts 10.30am, morning tea provided) WAGS Unit 4/48 May Street Bayswater
The *Hougoumont* Enrolled Pensioner Guard Men Speaker TBA

24 January (5.30pm drinks and nibbles, starts 6pm) RWAHS, Broadway Nedlands
Enrolled Pensioner Forces and Local Forces Speaker Robert Mitchell

4 February (10am, starts 10.30am, morning tea included) RWAHS, Broadway Nedlands
Convictism in WA Speaker Dr Pamela Statham Drew

15 February (9.30 am) State Library of WA

Where did they come from? Presentations and research day. Bevan Carter (British convict records), Gillian O’Mara (Guards records), Mike Murray (UK records for tracing ancestors and relatives).



Items of Interest:

Copyright Amendment Bill: good news for all researchers!

The Parliament of Australia has passed the *Copyright Amendment (Disability Access and Other Measures) Bill 2017*. From 1 January 2019, unpublished materials will be out of copyright 70 years after the death of the creator.

The changes enabled by the Copyright Amendment (Disability Access & Other Measures) Bill 2017:

- Simplify the statutory licences for education and make it easier for students to access material and extend the exception for exams to online exams.
- Simplify and update provisions that enable libraries and other collecting institutions to make 'preservation copies' of material in their collections such as manuscripts.
- Introduce a fixed term of protection for unpublished works (that are currently covered by copyright indefinitely) making it easier for libraries to exhibit material to the Australian public.
- Simplify and update the provisions that allow accessible format versions for people with disabilities.

National Library of Australia Survey: Assessing the needs of Australian researchers

The Library is seeking your feedback on the extent to which our digitised material and online collections meet your research or study needs. We would like to know the following:

- how you hear about online versions of our collections
- how you search Trove to find them, and
- what you use them for.

The survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and will be open from 5 December 2017 to 31 January 2018.

Follow this link to the Survey: [Take the Survey](#)

Your responses will help us to develop our collections and services to best meet your research needs. Our apologies for cross-posting. Survey updates will be posted in the [Trove Help Centre](#).

Next Newsletter:

We encourage members to submit articles about their current projects or reviews of recent histories for inclusion in the PHA (WA) Newsletter. Copy for the next newsletter is due in **May 2018** and can be sent to [Lenore Layman](#) or [Kris Bizzaca](#). Calls for submissions will be emailed closer to the date of publication.



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Secretary	Sinead Burt
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Membership Secretary	Sue Graham-Taylor Dominic Walsh

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Credentials	Sue Graham-Taylor, Robin Chinnery (co-opted)
Commissioned History	Prue Griffin, Robyn Taylor, Sinead Burt
Newsletter & Website	Lenore Layman, Kris Bizzaca

Annual Membership Fees as from 1 July 2014:

Professional Historian	\$85
Professional Historian (Retired)	\$50
Professional Historian (Associate)	\$65
Graduate Historian	\$40
Historical Researcher	\$40
Joining fee	\$30

Further information:

Membership applications, the Rules of the Association, the Register of Consultants, and advice regarding consultancy fees are available on request via info@professionalhistorianswa.org.au.

Members of PHA (WA) adhere to the Code of Ethics and Professional Standards endorsed by the Professional Historians Australia in August 2001.

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OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

To promote the concept of professional history and the status of Members of the Association in the community.
To set and maintain standards of professional practice.
To act in the interest of Members.
To maintain a register of all Members.
To advise Members and prospective clients on desirable terms of employment.
To collect and disseminate information of professional and general interest to Members.
To encourage further professional development by such means as seminars, workshops and publications.
To maintain links with similar organisations.

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