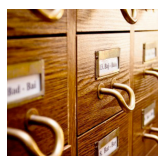


PHA **WA**



NEWSLETTER

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CONTENTS

President's note:.....	2
Management Committee update:	4
PHA (WA) AGM 2016 - Advance notice:.....	4
For Members - Competition to attend the 2016 PHA Conference in Melbourne:.....	4
New Member profile - Sinead Burt:	5
Book launch - Crienda Fitzgerald's <i>Turning Men into Stone</i> :.....	5
Robert Tindale - Perth's amazing architectural modeller:	6
<i>And tell Mum</i> - Why history and theatre make such good partners:	8
Writing Albany's History - Reflections on a historic town:.....	10
Touched by Gold - 'Bounty Lass' Phoebe Morgan and her legacy:.....	13
Keeping the Past Present - Collecting WA material at the State Library:	17
From the State Library of WA:	19
From the National Trust (WA):.....	21
From WAGS:.....	22
From Museums Australia WA:.....	23
From the Centre for Western Australian History:	24
From the Royal WA Historical Society:	25
Book Note - <i>Martin Griver - Unearthed</i> :	26
Book Note - <i>Turning Men into Stone - A Social and Medical History of Silicosis in Western Australia 1890 - 1970</i> :.....	28
Book Note - <i>Cologne to the Kimberley - Studies of Aboriginal Life in Northwest Australia by Five German Scholars in the First Half of the 20th Century</i> :	30
Book Note - <i>The Australian Medicine Man</i> :	31
Book Note - <i>They even paid me - Raw reflections of a third generation Kimberley cattleman</i> :.....	34
Exhibition review - <i>Bling - 19th Century Goldfields Jewellery</i> :	35
Next Newsletter:.....	37
PHA (WA) Management Committee 2015 - 2016:	38

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

President's note:

Greetings to all our members. We hope you enjoy your latest newsletter. As I mentioned in the previous edition, we are now producing the newsletter only twice a year and it was decided that June and December would be the best months. However, the Management Committee is also keen to maintain and initiate other available avenues to keep our members up to date with the latest issues and to promote events and activities. We are committed to ensuring that our website is kept as current as possible (which requires all committee members to help Kris Bizzaca who is still managing our website) and our Secretary Ian is kept busy with his email circulars to all members with bulletins, updates and opportunities not just from PHA, but also other organisations and individuals. The Management Committee is looking at starting a Facebook page and possibly a Twitter account very soon, so watch this space. Some PHAs have already gone down this road and while we here in WA remain devoted to history we also need to ensure that we are not at risk of lagging behind the times!



It's been a busy 6 months since our last newsletter. There has certainly been lots of activity, and I wish it were my task to be the bearer of only good news. However, as I am sure many of you are aware, there have been highs and lows in the first part of 2016, for our organisation as well as for the broader sector. Sadly, we have seen the Tasmania PHA wind up owing to declining membership, although remaining members will transfer to PHA (Vic) and hopefully stay active and connected to the national body. There are also worrying changes in the pipeline in the school curriculum for history, in which the study of Australian history is not being as well supported and encouraged as it should be.

There have been significant repercussions from the latest announcement of national funding - or lack thereof - to culture and the arts. Some of you may have kept abreast of this from the bulletins we circulate from the Chamber of Arts and Culture WA, which is actively lobbying in the lead up to the Federal election. Although there were technically no cuts this year, the Federal budget for culture and the arts has not recovered or been readjusted from the cuts in 2014 and 2015. This has resulted in a still extremely under-resourced sector. Some relief will hopefully come from continued funding being distributed through the Australia Council and Royalties for Regions. While PHA as an organisation is not directly affected, we will certainly feel the impacts on our peer and associated agencies and bodies. For example, there is the extremely disappointing news that financial constraints have seen the reduction of WA Museum's Development Services area. This is an agency that plays such a vital role working with regional and other communities in making available important knowledge, tools and advice and in promoting and supporting best practice and skills. We cannot afford to lose it completely but how long can it realistically be expected to continue in its current state?

In more positive news, PHA (WA) has initiated an exciting professional development opportunity, with some financial support for 2 of our members to attend the Professional Historians Australia's upcoming conference in Melbourne. In addition, we are looking to have a presence and participate in this year's Heritage Days festival in October facilitated by Heritage Perth, and have been engaged in conversations with State Heritage Office about a proposed State Heritage and History Conference for 2017. Some other good news is that the History Council of WA has rejuvenated and is already back on track under the very capable leadership of Jenny Gregory. It is comforting to know that here in WA we have a body prepared to take responsibility for liaising with and lobbying key agencies and government to promote and support the history profession and Western Australian history, in the academic domain as well as in the general community.

However, organisations such as the History Council are only as strong as we are all prepared to make them. PHA (WA) has maintained its membership and recently been invited to be represented again on the History Council committee which we have embraced. I would therefore encourage all of you who may have lapsed their membership either with the History Council or indeed other professional affiliated organisations, to continue and/or to reinitiate your memberships and also to think, too, about how you might be able to give some of your time and help to an organisation or committee, even just for the short term or for a particular event. We must continue to support each other, to maintain standards, to keep the mutual dialogue ongoing and to ensure the links between us remain strongly connected.

Thanks to Kris for once again pulling together a terrific newsletter. I am sure there is something of interest and intrigue for everyone. We hope it inspires you all to reflect on what you would like to contribute to our next issue or perhaps provide feedback on what you would like to see included.

Happy end of financial year to all. I hope the new financial year brings all our hardworking historians prosperity. Catch you again in December.

*Helen Munt APHA
President*



Management Committee update:

Our Treasurer, Jennifer Weir, has sadly left the fold of the Management Committee. I am very grateful for the time Jennifer put into her role until her resignation and the huge task of helping with the transition. Prue Griffin, who is already a member of the Management Committee, has kindly volunteered to take the reins at least until our AGM. I am sure you all join me in wishing Jennifer all the very best - especially with her new 'grandmother' duties which I am certain she is relishing.

*Helen Munt APHA
President*

PHA (WA) AGM 2016 - Advance notice:

Advance notice is given for the 2016 AGM of PHA (WA), which has been scheduled for Sunday 9 October 2016. More details to come in due course.

In the meantime, we welcome any input from our Members regarding guest speakers for the day and would love to hear from any of you who are keen to join the Management Committee and support our Association!

*Helen Munt APHA
President*

For Members - Competition to attend the 2016 PHA Conference in Melbourne:

PHA (WA) is offering two Members the opportunity for professional development in Melbourne by attending the 2016 Professional Historians Association Conference.

While we are unable to pay your airfares, we will pay your registration fees (including the dinner) for the Working History Conference, 19 - 20 August 2016.

All you have to do to enter is to tell us in 250 words:

1. How you can contribute to the conference?
2. How you will benefit from the Conference? And,
3. Commit to writing an article about the conference for our December eNewsletter.

Please send your entries to Ian Duckham at iduckham@iprimus.com.au by **30 June 2016**.

For more information about the conference go to <http://www.phavic.org.au/working-history/>



New Member profile - Sinead Burt:



I am endlessly inspired by the social element of history; the story contained within the archives. This interest led me to leave my former career as a Buyer and Director in fashion retail to pursue a new career as an Historian.

I received my BA (English and Medieval and Early Modern Studies) from UWA in 2012, and went on to complete my Honours in MEMS in 2014. My dissertation focused on the historical significance of material culture in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. Completing my thesis taught me many things, but most importantly it solidified my interest in historical researching and writing.

Since graduating from university I've been exploring my interests in local history. I had the pleasure of working as a research assistant for Wilma Mann for the period of six months, providing assistance to her projects related to the whaling industry in Western Australia. In addition to this, I have worked voluntarily with Kinship Connections WA, assisting them with their research into institutions involved in the Stolen Generations.

I am, at present, working as a consultant historian under the business name 'Collected Histories.' I have a particular interest in built heritage, and specialise in house histories. With a view to broaden my experience, I am currently enrolled in a Graduate Certificate in Heritage Studies at UWA.

Sinead Burt, Graduate Historian

Book launch - Crienda Fitzgerald's *Turning Men into Stone*:



Helen Munt and Crienda Fitzgerald at the launch of *Turning Men into Stone*. Photo courtesy: Helen Munt.

Last month, I had the pleasure of attending the launch of the latest history by PHA (WA) Member, Dr Crienda Fitzgerald, *Turning Men into Stone: a social and medical history of silicosis in Western Australia 1890-1970*. The launch took place in the attractive ambiance of the Cullity Gallery at UWA School of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts where Crienda is an Honorary Research fellow.

This new and important publication traces a largely untold story that is intrinsically tied up with the birth of the state's mineral wealth. *Turning Men into Stone* flips the table by showing us how our mining boom and the wealth derived from it almost insidiously overshadowed what was literally going on 'underneath' the surface and what has now also irrevocably become part of our history.



Silicosis was a major epidemic in the goldmining industry in WA in the twentieth century and the book highlights the misunderstandings about this terrible and tragic disease. Often obscured by tuberculosis (TB), silicosis was until relatively recently, like the dust that caused it, 'swept under the carpet'. Although miners were susceptible to TB, it was only when it became evident miners were twice as likely as the general public to suffer from respiratory illness, that inklings of the true cause of what was a completely different disease emerged. A shocking disease, the name of the book alludes to the way in which these men's lungs would eventually become like tombstones in their own bodies. However, for many miners, to stop work seemed no less a death sentence and it was usually years after they stopped working in the mines that the disease would take its real hold:

Everyone who has lived on the old goldfields is familiar with the gallant faced, gaunt cheeked, hollow-chested, short asthmatic-breathed men who day in and day out "go below" or see themselves and their wives and children starve.

As well as providing the historical context to silicosis, through rigorous and tireless research, analysis and countless interviews, Criend's book also presents a comprehensive examination of the physicians' and miners' understandings of the disease and the response (or lack thereof) of government, unions and public health officials to the rise of morbidity and mortality in the mining workforce.

Not surprisingly, the launch was tinged with some very emotional moments in the speeches. I was particularly moved and honoured to have met some of the people who were interviewed for the book or whose sons, husbands, brothers and friends had been interviewed, but since lost their battle with silicosis. The battle for meaningful compensation for many still continues today. As Tim Hammond, barrister and ALP candidate, quite rightly pointed out in his speech on the night, it is an issue that does and needs to transcend party politics. *Turning Men into Stone* is therefore not just an important addition to our history catalogue but also to the political arena.

Criend is currently working with recent mining industry award winner, Moya Sharp, on the Virtual Dusted Miners' Memorial, which aims to identify and memorialise every deceased miner in the state.

Helen Munt APHA

Editor's note: *Lenore Layman's review of Turning Men into Stone: a social and medical history of silicosis in Western Australia 1890 - 1970 can also be found in this edition of the eNewsletter.*

Robert Tindale - Perth's amazing architectural modeller:

Many years ago when researching the history of sculpture in Western Australia, I came across the name of Robert Tindale (1869 - 1950). He was the creator of the lions on top of His Majesty's Theatre and many other architectural features around the state. Many of his works are now lost, including the ceremonial arches constructed for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in 1901.

There is a wonderful photo illustrating a story about Tindale's work in the *Western Mail* (Christmas Number, 25 December 1903), which shows Tindale and a full scale model of one of the lions, both looking rather dourly at each other. I recommend Members involved in research on heritage buildings to look up this article. You may find Tindale's work represented in projects you undertake in the future - churches, major buildings, etc, but his name may not always appear in



documents or plan drawings. Skilled artisans, or otherwise, aren't always acknowledged for their work which can make research tough going.



Lexbourne House (1911) in West Perth, 2016. Photo courtesy: Robyn Taylor.

I am currently updating the history of the rather magnificent Lexbourne House (1911) in 18 Colin Street, West Perth. Lexbourne was designed by the architectural firm Cavanagh & Cavanagh as a family residence for master builder and entrepreneur, Robert Oswald Law. Tindale did the architectural modelling, and the house is a showcase of his work - and that of an unnamed stained glass artist, although I have some ideas about the identity. You can easily see his exterior work from the street. Tindale undertook much work with Cavanagh & Cavanagh and other leading architects during the early decades of the 20th century.



Tindale's architectural detailing at Lexbourne House, 2016. Photo courtesy: Robyn Taylor.



I hope to write a more detailed account of Tindale's work, but in the meantime I would like to mention a collection of Tindale family papers that have been lodged with the Battye Library - Battye Stack: 9173A. These include John F Davenport's 'Robert Tindale. Architectural Modeller & Business Proprietor'. Davenport was a friend of the family and compiled his essay to accompany the family papers that were lodged by Tindale's daughter, Edith Treloar.

The Battye collection also contains some of Tindale's travel diaries, however, there is hardly anything about his business. What will be of interest to historians of education are exercise books and papers belonging to Tindale's wife Edith. Before her marriage in 1910, Edith Martin was a pupil teacher at the Port Adelaide Model School. I seem to recall her father was a school inspector, which may have had a bearing on the quality of her note taking. Her handwritten exercise books, such as 'Principles of Teaching' (1896), are fascinating to read. She eventually taught at the Cottesloe Primary School.

The daughter, Edith Treloar, is responsible for the Robert Tindale scholarship to assist students in the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts at the University of Western Australia. It is good to know the memory of this worthy artist and architectural modeller won't be forgotten. I just hope the students will also come to know and appreciate his legacy.

Dr Robyn Taylor MPHA

And tell Mum - Why history and theatre make such good partners:

For the three nights leading up to ANZAC Day 2016, Kulin's outdoor war memorial came alive as over 260 people from across WA met the men and women living in the community of Kulin at the outbreak of WW1.



And tell Mum performance at Kulin war memorial. Photo courtesy: Helen Munt.

And tell Mum was an original theatre production written, produced and directed by Scooplight Theatre, in partnership with the Shire of Kulin. It was a reflection, through performance, on the stories and experiences of the people from this small country town who found themselves having to come to terms with the outbreak of war. What was important for us was



that *And tell Mum* would not just be a story of war, but a story of the importance of home and community. It was an event like nothing ever experienced before and, for many, never experienced again.

Every story and person presented in *And tell Mum* was drawn from real people, from both official and private historical records, personal recollections and music as well as postcards, photographs and other mementos of the people who were living in and around Kulin before, during and immediately after the war. The production was part of our vision, in association with the Shire, to produce a unique and quality experience which would contribute meaningfully to the centenary commemorations of WW1 that began in 2014 and will continue until 2019. *And tell Mum* was also an opportunity for a regional community to participate in a creative process, to tell their story, to share their experiences, to showcase their town and to remember and acknowledge those who served and fought as well as those left behind to 'keep the home fires burning'. Although this was Kulin's story, the themes and characters resonate across regional Australia, and many people from the other surrounding towns came to see the performances.

This is the third time Scooplight Theatre has partnered with the Shire of Kulin. In 2013 and 2014, we delivered the highly successful *Kulin Open Doors* and *Kulin by Night* heritage theatre experiences, which were named Winner of the 2014 WA Heritage Award for Outstanding Heritage Tourism Product. It was during the development of that project that the idea for *And tell Mum* came about. In the *Kulin by Night* performance (also based on authentic stories and people) there was a touching scene where local boy, Stan Bull, and postman, Fred Johnson, crossed paths in Kulin's mainstreet. Stan only realised as this scene unfolded that he, in fact, did not physically make it back from the war, and that Fred was on his way to deliver the dreaded telegram to his family.

So many other stories that had a connection to WW1 Kulin were revealed during the development of *Kulin by Night* which we had to put aside. However, it wasn't long before we started the conversation with the Shire about these stories knowing that the centenary of WW1 was not far away. After 18 months of research, consultation, writing and rehearsing, *And tell Mum* was born. Fortunately, the production was given much needed funding and support from key bodies including Lotterywest and the Western Australian History Foundation, as well as locally by Kulin Bush Races, Kulin RSL, Kulin Community Bank and WA film company Black Cyclone Film and Production. The production was also promoted as part of the 2016 National Trust Heritage Festival Discovery and Rediscoveries.

New information, stories and objects that emerged during the development process, as well as the identification of gaps and even, in some cases, errors in the public and private record became incredibly important outcomes. It is greatly satisfying that out of the *And tell Mum* project, the Shire now has stewardship of an amazing and diverse historical archive of these early years of Kulin – not least Stan Bull's original diaries. As a result, a small exhibition of memorabilia was able to be installed in the Shire's brand new offices to coincide with and complement the performances. The exhibition featured the many artefacts, images and other personal items that were collected and offered by members of the local community as well as past residents and other families who had a connection to the story of the war years in Kulin.

The production was greatly enhanced by professional musicians Anthony Rossiter and Andrew Metaxas, who developed the score based on authentic music from the time and also music and songs mentioned in letters and diaries. Having them perform live, playing on violas crafted by Andrew, added such a special element to the performances.

But the biggest thrill of all was having at the performances so many of the descendants of the characters presented and referred to in *And tell Mum*. There were many tears shed, laughter shared and even more intimate stories revealed between the actors, musicians and the audience that left a lasting imprint on so many of us. And most poignant of all was



at the end of our final performance, on 24 April, when our actor who portrayed Stan Bull announced to the audience that it was the 98th anniversary to the day of Stan's death in France.

I hope and trust I have answered duty's call. For how could I - strong, young and able - stand by to see my comrades fall and not wish to do my little. God will be with them, shield and reward them, for those years of labour spent 'neath the skies of Western Australia. [Stan Bull's diary, November 1917]

And tell Mum was filmed by Black Cyclone and DVD copies of the performance will soon be available for purchase from the Shire of Kulin.

Helen Munt APHA

Writing Albany's History - Reflections on a historic town:



I have been recently reflecting on the recording of Albany's history, from two points of view. Firstly, I have been tutoring a unit called 'Thinking History' at the UWA campus in Albany, where we have been looking at the development of the writing of history (historiography) over the years since history was recognized as a discipline in its own right.

Secondly, I recently did two talks on this topic in Albany, mainly to acknowledge the contributions made by writers in Albany over the years, and also to examine the evolution of local history literature.

Looking at the initial point, the development of historiography from a point in the mid 19th century has been progressive. From an insistence on the 'facts' and a search for the 'real truth', to the contemporary styles of historiography like cultural, ethnographic, feminist and Marxist interpretations – all are valid ways of presenting the past. The post-modernists even deny the possibility of finding the 'real truth' and write accordingly!

So how do these different methods translate into the writing of Albany's history? Of all WA towns, Albany has claim to a rich and diverse European history, being founded 2½ years before Perth. Indeed, many of the sources for early Albany (or King George's Sound) history are stored at the Mitchell Library at the State Library of NSW, for the simple reason that the settlement began its life as part of NSW.

Subsequently, most of the official sources are now of course stored at the J S Battye Library of West Australian History or at the State Records Office of WA, although we are all aware that improved digitisation allows researchers to access increasing amounts of this material from anywhere in the world.

Albany's historiography revolves around two key figures, from slightly different eras. The acknowledged father of Albany historians was Robert Stephens (1886 - 1974). History was his passion, although by profession, he was an accountant, who originally worked in Katanning and moved to Albany with his family of eight children in the 1930s.



He quickly became entranced by Albany's history and built up a huge collection of documents and papers relating to the early years of Albany. Of course, this was all done by mail, and recorded by typewriter or carbon-copied handwriting. He developed a close working relationship with Malcolm Uren, who was the editor of the *Western Mail*, and the two collaborated on many projects. They used the penname of MURS – a combination of their two sets of initials!

Stephens became a regular contributor to *Early Days*, the journal of the Western Australian Historical Society, and was published there 13 times, on subjects as diverse as early Aboriginal contact, local pioneers like Thomas Sherratt and George Cheyne, and the origin of Albany street names. He also had an interest in early WA farming and one of his two books was a history of the wheatbelt town of Mingenew.

His major work (co-edited with Uren) was a full biography of the explorer and later Governor of Jamaica, Edward John Eyre. This book, *Waterless Horizons*, was published in 1942, and the local link was that Eyre had completed his epic trans-Australian journey in Albany 101 years earlier.

Fortunately, most of Stephens' notes and correspondence have survived and are housed in the Albany History Collection of the Albany Public Library. His youngest son, Matt, who still lives in Albany, was a member of the WA Parliament in the 1970s and 1980s.

Stephens was from the old school of historiography. The facts were all-important, and he generally left it to the reader to interpret the history from these facts. His research was meticulous, his writing would now be considered quite old-fashioned, but his legacy lives on in Albany local history.

His successor, who published the 'official' history of Albany almost 40 years ago, is still very active in the profession, although he only ever wrote two books about Albany. His name is Donald Garden and his history, *Albany: a Panorama of the Sound from 1827* was published in 1977 to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the town.

Don Garden has recently retired from the History Department of the University of Melbourne. He is currently President of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and the author of ten histories on varying topics. Born in 1947, Garden's history of Albany was his second major work. He won the commission on the basis of his history of the Melbourne suburb of Heidelberg.

In my opinion, Garden's history of Albany is one of the better local histories of WA towns, and stands up very well against more recent publications. His research, mostly conducted at the Battye Library in front of an ancient microfilm reader and typed in duplicate by his mother in Melbourne, was very thorough, and was chiefly based around newspapers of the day.

He told me recently that, given his time again and with more modern research tools like Trove, he would have read the Fremantle newspapers as well as the *West Australian*, as one of the key themes of his work was the continued rivalry between the port towns of Albany and Fremantle.

His other regret (although that may be too strong a word) is that he did not include very much on the Aboriginal populations of the area. But in the 1970s, Aboriginal research was very peripheral, so it is not surprising that a commission like this did not focus on the original inhabitants. Perhaps implied is the thought also that the Town Council, which sponsored the book, may not have taken as kindly to a detailed exploration of Aboriginal history and all that encompassed.



It is a regret that the local authority in Albany has not seen fit to update this history. Garden himself admitted that he underestimated the time that it would take him to complete the project, so he was forced to restrict it to chiefly the 19th and early 20th centuries. So the years from 1927 - 1977 are covered in all of fifteen pages!

Obviously the market for local histories is limited, but, with the current second-hand price for *Albany: a Panorama of the Sound from 1827* hovering around \$80, there is still a demand for a book such as this. Interest, one would think, would only increase if some time (and money) were spent updating this work.

However, all is not lost, as many more specialized works have been published about Albany and its surroundings since 1977.

Les Johnson, a former ABC journalist, turned his writing hand to several projects and he became the go-to historian for many organisations in Albany in the 1990s and early 2000s. His bibliography of eighteen works of different lengths is substantial. Johnson was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to local history in 2001.

One of the trends in recent times has been to concentrate on areas or themes – specialist histories are often the result. Two works which are the result of PhD studies focus on Aboriginal history. Tiffany Shellam (ANU) wrote *Shaking Hands on the Fringe* (2009) and Murray Arnold (UWA) produced *A Journey Travelled* (2015). Both highlight gaps in the historiography of Albany and emphasise the important role of far-sighted leaders like Collett Barker and the Menang man, Mokare. The interpretation that both authors bring to their work, using the evidence that they have gathered, is impressive, and lifts the standard of what we class as 'local history'.

Gwen Chessell, who lives in Dorset in the UK, is an author who became fascinated by some of the European personalities who influenced the early development of the Albany settlement. I find it incredible that she can produce three substantial biographies (on Richard Spencer, Alexander Collie and George Grey) from such a distance, but it just proves how techniques and communication have developed since the 1970s when Don Garden was writing.

Of a similar nature is a blog – *The View from Mount Clarence* - that is written by Ciaran Lynch, a former Albany resident who now lives in the town of his birth, Dublin. Lynch's passion for Albany is remarkable, and he uses the web to great effect.

Blogging is how local author Sarah Drummond began her writing career. Her skills as a historian (she is about to complete a PhD in history and literature) have brought her accolades with her first book, *Salt Story*, and this is about to be joined by a second, *Sound*, which will be launched next month. Drummond uses history to illuminate her fiction, and *Sound* is a true story about the early sealers who traversed the south coasts and beyond in the early 19th century – and the effect they had on the local indigenous populations.

So the boundaries between history and fiction are becoming blurred. Some will remember the stoush between historian Inga Clendinnen and Kate Grenville in 2006, after Grenville, a novelist, claimed that *The Secret River* was a new form of historiography. Perhaps it is – and two of Albany's most famous writing products, Tim Winton and Kim Scott, have each used Albany history in some of their award-winning works.

Winton won the Miles Franklin Award in 1984 with *Shallows*, a novel based around the end of whaling in Albany – or, as he preferred, Angelus. He used thinly-disguised names and places to tell a powerful tale of Western Australia's earliest colonial industry, and, in so doing, highlighted some of the issues that surrounded whaling culture.

Scott, now returned (at least part-time) to his home country, also used 'real' people in his *That Deadman Dance* so that locals can easily recognize personalities like Collie, Mokare and Cheyne from his vivid descriptions of early European



settlement in this part of the state. His other Miles Franklin Award winner, *Benang: From the Heart*, is a powerful cry about the destruction of his people and their country by the newcomers.

Scott and Winton are both known for their thorough research of historical sources. I would argue that, by using their writing skills, they are bringing history (Albany history, in this case) to a much wider population, and literary fiction can indeed be seen as a new kind of history writing – at least in their hands.

Dianne Wolfer, another Albany award-winner, has used Albany's ANZAC military history in her books, *Lighthouse Girl* and *Light Horse Boy*, to bring stories of the past to a younger audience. Her influence has been profound, to the extent that her works have been translated into plays, illuminated shows, and even became the centerpiece of The Giants' memorable visit for the Perth International Arts Festival in 2015.

The list goes on – I haven't touched on reproductions of diaries and journals (true primary sources), on photographic books, on district histories, or even on songs, poetry and plays.

All are evidence of a development of historiography in the Albany area, even though they may not fit the mould of the traditional 'local history'. Perhaps that tradition is a thing of the past, and authors are now using alternative ways to get history out to the community.

More power to them, I say!

Malcolm Traill, Graduate Historian
Public Programs Officer, WA Museum - Albany

Note: A comprehensive list of publications about Albany is available on request from the author, via this Newsletter.

Touched by Gold - 'Bounty Lass' Phoebe Morgan and her legacy:



Phoebe Morgan's spectacle case. Photo courtesy: MADE, Ballarat.

In 1853 a seventeen year old Welsh girl, Phoebe Louisa Morgan, found herself orphaned in London when her parents, exiles from the Snowdonia area, died in a cholera epidemic in the borough of Southwark. Having seen and read about Australia at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851 and read about the excitement of the goldrushes in the newspapers of the day, she sailed on the barque *Mooltan*, arriving in Victoria in August 1853.

Phoebe went into service as a ladies' maid for a few months with Mr Gladstone of Geelong but the pretty and vivacious teenager with her Welsh colouring soon married cabinet maker John Clarke. Together they journeyed to the diggings at Sailor's Gully near Sandhurst (Bendigo) where she set up in business catering for miners from her tent. A lantern was hung and a table was constructed of boxes on which she placed their tin dishes, pots, pannicans, knives, forks and spoons in regimented order. A camp oven and kettle were set up on a tripod over the campfire. Cords were



stretched on which to hang garments, and the mining equipment placed near the front of the tent.

Indulged by her husband the thrifty lass bought whole sides of lamb, cadged offal and muttonheads which, with the addition of an onion or two made tasty dishes, stews and broths that miners paid for with nuggets. A kerchief on a pole beside the tent indicated she had left over food for sale. Each night Phoebe would whitewash the logs she used for seats in her informal dining area, sweep the ground and place the nuggets under one of the stumps. No one guessed this was her hidden safe.

Tragically, their eldest child drowned in a water hole, and in 1856 they moved on to Heathcote, where a son was born. At age twenty-three, Phoebe's husband died of enteritis. Widowed, Phoebe set up her tent and store and again served meals to hungry diggers. She was not without admirers. Before long she married Quaker Frederick Wheeler, a Londoner from fashionable Marylebone, who came to the country lured by gold and had set up as a storekeeper in Redcastle. He was attracted to the lively young widow with gentrified manners. That he was a Quaker was to cause problems later on; the children of Quakers who married 'out' were considered to be illegitimate by the Society of Friends, though legitimate by the State. In due course laws were made to organize this in a better manner. A son, Herbert, was born to the new couple in 1861, but a few months later his half-brother died of meningitis. In an attempt to console her, Frederick gave her a large gold foliate brooch. He then moved the family to Myer's Flat, near Sandhurst, which in the intervening years had become a thriving town.

The family continued to move to follow the gold, and were soon in Eaglehawk, where Phoebe ran their large home as a boarding house. Four more children were born, but one, Sarah May, tragically died of dysentery. After the birth of their youngest daughter Frederica Georgina Elizabeth, Phoebe and Frederick decided to rent the two-storey Prince of Wales Hotel in Sandhurst. With a number of servants life was much more comfortable for Phoebe. This, however, was not to last. New laws were being enacted in England in regard to Quaker marriages. The couple thought it best to part before they were mired in laws soon to be enacted in Victoria. Before the birth of a new baby, Phoebe had separated from Frederick, declared herself a widow, and planned to run a Temperance Hotel with her older girls to help her. 'Look before you leap' and 'a bird in the hand is worth two in a bush' were two of her sayings that her daughters recalled. Sadly the new-born died, and Phoebe moved to live in prominent businessman William Clarke's Sandhurst home as a wet nurse to his young son Clive. In 1874 Clive was weaned, and Phoebe and her family removed themselves from the embarrassment of living in the same town as her former husband. The family left the goldfields and reestablished themselves in Echuca, at the time the fastest growing town in Victoria. Echuca had many potential customers for her proposed restaurant.

Phoebe started by managing 'The Red Gum Home' at McGrowther's Mill which catered meals for the mill workers, then bought a mill owner's twelve-roomed house in East Echuca, opening her profitable Phoenix Hotel with a son-in-law as licensee. She mixed with the gentry and married again, this time to Peter Hamling, owner of a transport business. Unfortunately, as it would later become apparent, this decision was unwise as his intentions were far from pure. After her marriage, Phoebe decided to lease the hotel and was pleased to note the Married Women's Act of 1878 allowed her control of her own earnings. She advertised a change of address and business, and then leased a two-storey building with stables and cottage under the name 'City of Sandhurst Hotel'. It was here in 1879 that she was poisoned. Newspapers reported she 'swallowed an ounce of sugar of lead, dissolved in water, which she mistook for Epsom salts', leaving her in a 'very dangerous condition'. Family lore suggests that her husband poisoned her in order to gain control of her properties; something he had been attempting to do for some time. His own children by an earlier marriage rallied round Phoebe and he left town in disgrace.



Upon recovery, Phoebe continued to manage the Sandhurst Hotel, a job with no shortage of challenges. One evening in 1880, the outlawed Kelly gang asked for food and lodging. She had locked her daughters safely up stairs when the gang rode into town, to the girls' surprise the following morning, after serving breakfast to the men, a sovereign was found under each plate. It was a story they would tell their grandchildren. When the lease of the Sandhurst hotel expired Phoebe returned to the Phoenix Hotel, although it was no longer as profitable. So, in 1885, with her youngest two children in tow she moved to Melbourne, where as an investment she purchased land at Werribee. During these years she also spent time at Horton College at Ross in Tasmania, before returning to Victoria. When her youngest and tomboyish daughter Freddie - also known as Rica - married her employer in 1888, Phoebe decided to accept some work in Mt Alexander. Phoebe travelled there by hansom cab: a journey that was to end in tragedy, when the drunken driver lost control of his horse on the hilly road, collided with a tree and overturned the cab. Phoebe was mortally injured. Her broken goldfields brooch was divided into four pieces - one for each daughter. Rica had her piece made into a brooch to wear herself. She had spent a lot of time with her mother, and knew her stories well. These she passed on to her own granddaughter Rica Erickson who committed them to print in *The Misfortunes of Phoebe*. Phoebe herself had written her own life story in an old exercise book, however no one seems to have it now.

Phoebe's treasured youngest daughter Frederica Georgina Elizabeth Wheeler, named for her best-loved husband, was also married and widowed young. Like her mother, she was also resourceful. Widowed, Rica trained as a midwife to support her children and stepchildren then following the lure of gold and her sister moved to the goldfields of Western Australia in 1906. There, she set up her shingle in Boulder City and became a local legend as Nurse Cooke.



The brooch made by Mazzucchelli's using part of Phoebe's brooch. Photo courtesy: Dr Dorothy Erickson.



Frederica (Rica) Cooke wearing her brooch. Photo courtesy: Dr Dorothy Erickson.

It was here she had her piece of her Mother's brooch made up by local jewellers Mazzucchelli. The style was that of the time, a light double bar brooch similar to many made on the Western Australian goldfields. Her mother's brooch on the contrary had been a large bulla style of brooch to be worn high at the throat typical of the work made during the NSW and Victorian gold rushes when great bulla brooches were the fashion. This is quite different from the Western Australian goldfields jewellery where, although the goldfields were even richer, the jewellery was of a simpler design. Fashion played its part in this for there was forty-year's distance in time. This was the Aesthetic period and sporting jewellery, name



brooches, bar brooches and lace pins were the fashion. Climate was also a factor for Victoria has a climate more akin to southern England or France whilst Boulder and other Western Australian goldfields are in the dry and dusty interior more suited to light cotton clothing for much of the year. Distinctive work was made utilizing swans or mining implements combined with nuggets or an arch spelling out the name of the mine, town or occasion. Rica's brooch was a little different. The bar-brooch incorporating the treasured fragment of her mother's brooch was constructed of hollow tube terminated with gallery-strip and scrolls. The central section features, in place of the usual nugget, the torn leaves of the brooch originally made on the Sandhurst field.

The maker of Rica's brooch, Matthew Ernest Mazzucchelli, had begun an apprenticeship with Benjamin Cohen in Melbourne and completed it in Stawell, Victoria where his father, a Swiss, was working as an engineer in the mining industry. When Matthew's apprenticeship was completed, the family came west to repair their fortunes lost in the 1890s Victorian bank crashes. The firm begun as Mazzucchelli & Downes in Boulder, which was a partnership of Mazzucchelli and Sam Downes. They had met at the Boulder jeweller James Robertson who had employed both men before they ventured out on their own in 1903. About 1907 they purchased the Lane Street business of T H Manhire. The shop with its striking black paint and gold lettering made quite an impression in Boulder. The firm was soon the most important in town, being commissioned to make the gold key used to open the new Boulder Town Hall in 1908. The partnership broke up in 1912 and Mazzucchelli continued in business, founding the firm that continues today with premises around the State.

Frederica Cooke sought out Mazzucchelli and had the very sentimental memento of her mother incorporated into a new brooch. Only three pieces are known marked with the 'M&D' of the firm. One is a fifteen-carat gold brooch presented to Nurse Cooke in 1909 in recognition of her professional efforts. It is in the form of a Goldfields' Infantry Regiment badge. On the verso is inscribed 'To Nurse Cooke from members of E company with heartfelt thanks 30/9/09'. Mazzucchelli also made her wedding ring for a new marriage – an experiment that did not work.

Rica returned to nursing and, as Nurse Cooke, was a familiar figure wearing her pinstripe hospital-blue uniform with long sleeves and floor length hem, carrying her nursing bag as she walked briskly on her rounds. She often wore the new brooch at her neck. When her daughters married she delivered their children, and claimed to have delivered over 1000 babies, and never lost a mother or a full-term child. She retired at seventy-three. Her story is told in *Reflections: Profiles of 150 Women who helped make Western Australian History* edited by Daphne Popham. With a halo of white curls and a wicked twinkle in her eye she entertained her adoring great grandchildren with sometimes risqué tales of her and her mother's life on the Victorian goldfields. The brooch meanwhile, passed on to be treasured by other generations.

Dr Dorothy Erickson MPHA

Editor's note: This story accompanies Phoebe Morgan's spectacle case, which is on loan to MADE, Ballarat for their exhibition, *Bling: 19th Century Goldfields Jewellery*. A review of *Bling* can also be found in this edition of the eNewsletter.



Keeping the Past Present - Collecting WA material at the State Library:

This paper is about the why, what, and how of collecting original material for the J S Battye Library of West Australian History within the State Library of Western Australia.

If a person loses his or her memory, it is generally agreed it is a tragedy. The same is true for a body of people such as the population of a state or country. The Battye Library arguably functions as the memory of the state. (Other major government repositories with different collecting foci from that of the Battye Library are the State Records Office of WA, the National Archives of Australia and the Western Australian Museum.) The Battye Library contains published works as well as original material concerning Western Australia. The focus of this paper is the unpublished or original material.

The difference of meaning between the words past, heritage and history, although sometimes used interchangeably, is important in relation to the function of the Battye Library collection.

Notwithstanding the nice alliterative title of this paper, Keeping the Past Present, the past is gone. It has been lived in all its complexity. Parts of it will exist in living memory for a limited time. Access to the rest of it lies in sources of various sorts which were created back then, whenever 'then' was.

And that leads to heritage. There are many definitions of heritage but this one is relevant to the material collected by the Battye Library: something which is carried forward from the past into the present.

So to history; as historians know, history is not the past; it is what is written (or perhaps spoken) about the past. It is constructed from what is known or deduced about the past using extant sources. In Western Australia, the largest collection of non-government written, photographic, recorded or filmed items is in the Battye Library. The aim of the Battye Library collection is to capture and preserve creative and everyday sources from any aspect of WA's complex past.

That is the Why. Now for the What.

The Battye Library has private archives typically comprising letters, diaries, maps, records of organisations, and unpublished music manuscripts occupying over three kilometres of shelving. Digital collections of private archive material are also increasing.

In addition to the private archive collection, there are over 750,000 photographic images, 16,800 hours of digitised oral history, films, artworks, selected websites, and ephemera, which although published, have a close affinity with the private archive collection and includes posters, menus, pamphlets and other items generally intended to be discarded after use.

Fittingly, as it is 'our heritage, our State memory', the vast bulk of the Battye Library collection has been amassed over the years by donations made by ordinary and extraordinary West Australians. Infrequently, items are purchased rather than see very significant material lost to the state.

It is through the Collection Liaison team that new additions are added to the collection. The team tries to liaise with anyone who has original material they would like to offer to the library as potential donations need to be assessed to see if they fit the collection policy. Primarily, is it West Australian? There are other considerations. How did it come into the donor's possession? The more information the better but donors shouldn't be deterred from offering something because they don't know everything about an item or collection or because they don't think it is important. Other considerations from the library's point of view are, does the item fill a gap in the collection and what condition is it in?



The significance of every item offered is gauged using a Significance Assessment form which contains questions like 'How well does it [the material] depict the social, economic or cultural history of Western Australia' and 'How well does it support research, innovation and creation of knowledge'. The answers to such questions are subjective and one person's judgement will be different from another's. It is not a precise science.

Following are a couple of collecting scenarios. As a donation can range from two photographs to several hundred boxes of papers, the collecting process is very variable.

Generally, after a phone or email exchange with a potential donor, if the collection or items seem to be suitable to collect, a series of papers which make up our Donor Kit is sent out, usually by email. For the most part, people very obligingly produce a list of what they wish to donate, which is of enormous help to the library. It is also useful to the donors to work out what they have. When the library confirms it would like the material, donors usually box or pack the items consistent with the list they have created.

If the material is not suitable for the Battye Library collection, donors could consider offering it to other collecting organisations such as historical societies, local studies centres or local museums.

On occasion, a very large or important or chaotic collection is offered and it is necessary to make a visit - sometimes memorable - to assess it.



Part of an important but challenging collection opportunity. Photo courtesy: Collection Services, State Library of WA.

The collection pictured was part of a deceased estate. Once it was decided what was appropriate for the library, the family gradually listed and, via the van dock, brought in the collection over a period of nearly four years. It eventually took up 22 metres of shelf space.

The messy collection illustrates another very important point in collecting. To avoid cross-contamination of existing collections, nothing is added or even brought any further into the building than the ground floor until Conservation staff checks it for mould, insects, mouse droppings or other contaminants.



Because of the poor storage conditions illustrated, all the items in that collection were frozen to kill anything which needed killing. The papers were also dusty and gritty so they were all painstakingly cleaned by hand before being catalogued, listed in detail and boxed.



Paper conservator, Bindy Wilson, placing papers in the freezer. Photo courtesy: Conservation and Preservation, State Library of WA.

A more usual situation is, after negotiation with Collection Liaison, a donor will bring their donation to the ground floor Welcome Desk where they are given an Interim Receipt to verify that the library has taken possession of the material. Although donations are mostly contaminant-free, the material stays securely on the ground floor until checked by the Conservation staff. Once it has been confirmed that all is in order and the library is keeping the material, a Deed of Gift is prepared to mark its formal transfer to the library. In 2015, nearly 200 deeds were issued covering a wide variety of donations.

So in summary, this paper has outlined the basic process of adding new donations - material which allows West Australian stories to be told - to the Battye Library collection. It is always an interesting, varied, worthwhile and sometimes challenging experience dealing with the treasures which people are generous enough to offer to the state.

Dr Jean Butler, Collection Liaison - Liaison, Acquisition and Description, State Library of Western Australia

From the State Library of WA:

Jean Butler reports the State Library has acquired the following material:

Papers of Robert Cecil Clifton (1854 - 1931), including 25 x handwritten diaries, 1874 - 1930; notebooks of poems and other writings, 1869 - 70; original correspondence to and from his parents and siblings in Australind and from family friend and future father-in-law Governor Leake, 1874; letters relating to organ work and to his 26 years as Secretary to the Cathedral Chapter, 1930; cashbooks; and ephemera relating to church organs and concerts. This collection documents the life of a well-educated young man of the colony and provides wider insight into one of Western Australia's most prominent families. The diaries cover 56 years of Clifton's life, starting in July 1874, soon after he arrived in Perth from Australind to work as a Clerk in the Lands Department, and ending in December 1930, just a few weeks before his death on 17 January 1931, aged 74. The diaries provide a comprehensive record of Clifton's daily routines, domestic arrangements, social activities, health issues, clerical work, organ-building hobby, marriage and parenthood. His cash books record Clifton's personal expenditure



as well as measurements and costs of organ building, and the warm and affectionate letters from Australind provide further details of extensive Clifton family connections and enterprises throughout the state.

Anthony (Tony) Leslie Whitely papers, 1917 - 80, including WW1 silk embroidered cards from his uncle Pte John Leslie Bailey (1917), 1959 telegrams, and other family correspondence. The collection also includes photographs taken in the mid to late 1940s when Tony travelled, often by bicycle, with his Box Brownie taking photos of buildings and places of interest including Perth, Bunbury, Burakin/Ballidu, Geraldton and Dongara. Several of the photos were taken at the farm of "Auntie Veanie", pioneer lady farmer at Burakin/Ballidu, others show the Whitely family home at 100 Canterbury Road, East Victoria Park. The Whitely collection provides insight into the activities and daily concerns of a multi-generational family and their friends and relatives. One letter dated 1968 describes the gas bath heater and the replacement of septic tanks with sewage pipes in East Victoria Park, another describes the concert and fireworks on the Esplanade to celebrate the 150th year anniversary of WA (1979). Many of the photos have captured buildings and landscapes now changed beyond recognition.

Rob Neave's photographs of Yarloop Museum, circa 2006, provide an important visual record of the historic Yarloop Workshops, constructed 1901 - 10, and now totally destroyed by fire. Images (colour transparencies) include the main hall, Davey Paxman steam engines, a rail trolley, rope-drive pulley, flat-belt pulley, and racks of wooden patterns. This stock of wooden patterns was the largest in the southern hemisphere and paid tribute to the skilled tradesmen who created exact replicas of each part to be cast in iron. The display of other machines and tools was educational in showing how replacement parts were constructed for rolling stock and mill equipment, providing vital support for the extensive Millars railway system. Photographs recording these items and processes are a poor substitute for the actual objects but they do help to alleviate the loss of this internationally recognised collection showcasing early WA manufacturing and production techniques in the South West.

Digital copies of Yasukichi Murakami photographs including images of the pearling industry; the diving suit he designed; family life; and social events in Broome in the early 1900s. The original photographs are part of the Murakami Family Archives. Murakami (1888 - 1944) arrived in Cossack in 1897 aged 16 and found work with Takazo Nishioka, a Japanese storekeeper in Broome. After Nishioka died Murakami married his widow Eki. They expanded the business which also served as Murakami's photography studio and he soon became a well-respected leader of the community. Murakami later went into partnership with pearler A C Gregory and helped run the Dampier Hotel. After Eki died, Murakami married (Theresa) Shigeno Murata and they had 9 children. Murakami designed and patented a modern day pearling suit but never received credit for this invention and after the pearling industry declined he moved to Darwin with his family. His application for naturalisation was turned down and when Japan entered the war in 1941, the family was interred in Victoria. Murakami died in 1944 but his wife, six sons and three daughters all survived. For many years Murakami's photographs were believed to be lost but they were eventually tracked down thanks to the efforts of Japanese-Australian photographer Mayu Kanamori and Murakami's great granddaughter. Kanamori created a stage play from this story called *Through a Distant Lens* and at long last Murakami is receiving the credit he was due for his invention and contribution to the business affairs of Broome. This collection of images captures scenes of the northwest of WA at the turn of last century but has broader, national significance in telling the often overlooked story of Japanese and Australian relations in the lead up to WWII.

Ron Williams' collection of photographs: This extensive collection depicts Aboriginal communities and families in the Kimberley, Pilbara, and Great Southern regions of Western Australia, as well as other parts of Australia. Pastor Ron Williams was a beloved and well-known Noongar man who was born in Gnowangerup and spent his life travelling and



preaching. He was afforded a memorial service in the Great Hall of Parliament House after his death and was only the second person to receive that honour. This collection of 1000+ photos and slides has been donated by his widow, Diana Williams.

Professor Fred Alexander: papers, letters, photographs. These papers and photographs add to the collection of the remarkable Professor Fred Alexander. Donated by his grandson, Andrew Blanckensee, these are mainly personal letters to Mr Blanckensee as well as letters written by Professor Alexander to his wife from Berlin during the 1930s. There are also copies of speeches, some photographs of a young Fred Alexander and scenes of Perth and surrounds. A personalised artistic tribute to Professor Alexander's work in adult education is included which has been compiled by the students who attended the 21st Summer School at UWA. This donation underlines the great contribution made by Professor Alexander to political, artistic and intellectual life in Western Australia as well as showing some of the personal side of the man.

Selected papers of Professor Geoffrey Bolton. While the bulk of Professor Bolton's papers are destined to be lodged at the National Library of Australia, this small collection, when added to material already held by SLWA, will help to show part of the research career and breadth of interests of this influential West Australian.

Dr Jean Butler, Collection Liaison - Liaison, Acquisition and Description, State Library of Western Australia

From the National Trust (WA):

Discover the property that gave Dalkeith its name. Learn more about Gallop House at a rare open day on **Sunday 19 June**.



Gallop House prior to conservation. Image: Dan Klovverskjold. Photo courtesy: National Trust (WA).

Gallop House is the oldest private residence in the City of Nedlands and is a recognisable icon sitting on the banks of the Swan River. In 1831 Captain Adam Armstrong took up the 320 acre Swan Location 85 and called it Dalkeith after his birthplace in Scotland. Armstrong established a farm but it was the Gallop Family who took over the property in 1839, and turned it into a flourishing market garden. Gallop House was also the scene of a gruesome murder in the 1890s. The property fell into disrepair in the 1950s and was saved from demolition by the Royal Western Australian Historical Society.



The National Trust of Australia (WA) took over the property in 2009 and has recently completed conservation and interpretation works.

This is a one-off opportunity to visit Gallop House as it will soon be occupied and not be open to the public on a regular basis. The place is to be used for a composer in residence program, which has been established by the National Trust (WA) through the vision and generosity of the Feilman Foundation and a partnership with the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composers' Trust.

Gallop House is located at 22 Birdwood Parade, Dalkeith and will be open from 11.30am - 3.30pm. For more information visit www.nationaltrust.org.au/wa.

From WAGS:

The Western Australian Genealogical Society (WAGS) has many events planned for National Family History Month (NFHM) in August.

This year the national launch will be held in Perth and hosted by the National Archives of Australia. As Shauna Hicks, the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations' representative for NFHM and an experienced researcher and presenter, will be in Perth for the launch, WAGS has organised a seminar, 'Making History', to be held on **30 July** at the new City of Perth Library (573 Hay Street).

Then on **9 and 10 August** WAGS will be holding 2 days of presentations, 'Grow your Family Tree', at the State Library of WA. There will be a variety of talks and volunteers will help people with research in the Genealogy Centre on the third floor.

On Sunday **28 August** we will hold our annual Family History Open Day at WAGS library and resource centre at units 4, 5 and 6, 48 May Street. This is a great opportunity to see WAGS' facilities and resources and get tips on starting your family research.

Details of these plus other events can be found on the WAGS website www.wags.org.au.

Liana Fitzpatrick, President, Western Australian Genealogical Society



From Museums Australia WA:



Museums Australia WA State Conference **“Engaging your Community- New Times, New Strategies”** **Wed 12, Thurs 13 & Fri 14 October 2016**

The **MAWA State Conference** is back in 2016 and will be held in the exciting **Perth Cultural Precinct** at the State Library of WA, The Art Gallery of WA and the State Theatre Centre of WA on **12-14 October**.

Engaging Your Community-New Times, New Strategies will explore lowering barriers and engaging visitors while still conserving and securing the collections for the future. Given today's hectic and stressful lifestyle, museums can provide a place for visitors to meet for social interaction and experiences. For museum goers to become regular visitors museums need to provide multiple opportunities for aesthetic, emotional, recreational and social connections. Connected visitors are more likely to have positive museum experiences and come back for more.

The event will include International keynotes, interactive discussions, lightning talks, focused parallel session, and a discussion panel. Topics include :Digital Connections, Raising Your Profile-Marketing and Tourism, Secrets to Successful Exhibitions and Events, The Face of Your Organisation on the Web, All Dressed Up and Finding Somewhere New to Go.

Detailed speaker and program information will be added to the WA Branch of www.museumsaustralia.org.au/site/wa.php and www.facebook.com/MuseumsAustWA. Be included in our mailing list to get Conference Alerts to keep up-to-date with Conference news.

The conference is curated to appeal to a broad audience, from large state institutions to small volunteer-run organisations, and aims to bring together the WA museum, gallery, heritage and conservation community, connecting regional and metropolitan volunteers and professionals and showcasing some of the best museum and gallery practice.

A **Welcome Cocktail Function** will be held at the State Theatre Centre of WA on Wed 12 Oct 6.30pm & a **Peking Duck Banquet Dinner and Drinks** package with a cultural performance by Chung Wah Association will be held at Dragon Palace Chinese Restaurant on Thurs 13 Oct 6.30pm!

Registration opens on the 1st August 2016 on www.trybooking.com/LLXS or www.trybooking.com/201388
Become a member to MAWA or renew your membership for special conference discounted rates at www.museumsaustralia.org.au/site/wa.php
We will be sending out conference alerts to keep you up to date with conference news, speakers, special tours, etc. If you'd like to join our mailing list and receive alerts contact nina.frichot@museum.wa.gov.au and “Like” our facebook page www.facebook.com/MuseumsAustWA



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From the Royal WA Historical Society:

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a journey of discovery and rediscovery

A new exhibition celebrating the landing of Dirk Hartog at Shark Bay 400 years ago and also the 90th birthday of The Royal WA Historical Society Inc.

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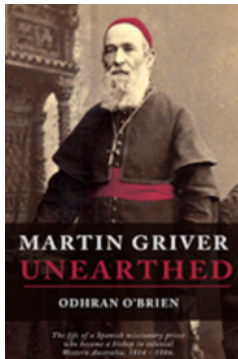
The Exhibition's Community Talks Program will be available on our website www.histwest.org.au from 18 April 2016.

Royal Western Australian Historical Society
49 Broadway, Nedlands 9386 3841



The Exhibition has an Exhibition Community Talks Program to enhance and expand its meaning to visitors. This program can be found at www.histwest.org.au under Activities / Meetings and Talks and under What's New.

Book Note - *Martin Griver - Unearthed*:



Odhran O'Brien, *Martin Griver - Unearthed: The life of a Spanish missionary priest who became a Bishop in colonial Western Australia 1814 - 1886*, St Pauls Publications Australia, 2015. Soft cover, 276 pages, illustrated. ISBN 978-1-92196-332-2. RRP \$35.95.

This book is an unusual mix of detective story, student thesis and biography which is understandable as it grew out of an Historical Commission Research Scholarship awarded by the Roman Catholic archdiocese in connection with the conservation of St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Perth, which Griver started and where he is buried. The conservation was undertaken by a team, which included staff of the University of Notre Dame where the author was a student. The purpose of the scholarship was to document the little known life of the second Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth, the Spanish monk Martin Grivér y Cuní. Apart from a comprehensive acknowledgements list, the book contains two forewords, a large preface, an introduction and a first chapter introducing the archives, evidence and literature before we come to Griver's life and then a concluding chapter summarizing achievements. The author had the full cooperation of the church hierarchy in having documents made available and, where possible within the time constraints of the brief, translated from Spanish. Luckily some order had recently been instilled in the local church archives, not something that had happened when I tried researching there some thirty years ago.

This book is meticulously researched, scrupulously footnoted and comprehensively edited. Despite the slightly conflicting narratives with the first person often foremost, it is easy to read and very interesting. I volunteered to review it as there was a gap in my own knowledge of this subject and others may well feel the same. While most people with an interest in Western Australian history are well aware of the Bishops Salvado and Serra and the Benedictine monastery at New Norcia, of Bishop Brady and his turbulent life and of Ursula Frayne and the teaching Sisters of Mercy they have little knowledge of Martin Griver who had slipped between the cracks. This book more than adequately redresses that imbalance.

The author gives a sympathetic and warm picture of a sincere and conscientious man from humble beginnings who rose in a wilderness and against considerable odds (and more surprisingly without ambition) to prominence in the church. He details a man with many useful skills including: viticulture, agriculture, homeopathy, book keeping and tutoring in Latin to add to a medical degree and his liturgical training. He tells us Griver was born to an agricultural-worker family in Granollers in Catalonia in north-east Spain and entered a seminary in nearby Vic at fourteen. This was at a time of great turbulence in Spanish history when the power of the church was being challenged and monasteries were being nationalised and closed. The book details how this altered his path in life, as after he completed another seven years of studies at the Barcelona higher seminary, he undertook a medical degree whilst waiting for the chance to be ordained as a parish priest, something that did not happen until 1847. He was fortunate to have sponsors such as powerful Cardinal Emmanuele de Gregorio and the Marquis de Milan who employed him at this time as a tutor and as an accountancy clerk, honing skills that proved useful in his later career in Western Australia.



O'Brien then goes on to recount how he was recruited in 1848 by Bishop Serra for missionary work in the colony of Western Australia where Bishop Brady was in financial difficulties. He tells us that Griver arrived with a number of recruits in December 1849 into what has been called 'the Great Schism of Perth' – the fight for supremacy between these two bishops. This meant building and living in a quasi monastic setting in Guildford at first, before servicing the Fremantle parish, acting as Serra's secretary and administrative assistant as well as attending to medical problems at New Norcia. With the increase of Roman Catholics in the colony, following the arrival of convicts and the 'Bride Ships', Griver was sent on missionary duties to isolated outposts forming a bond with these underprivileged people that led to his naturalisation in 1854. He also mentions that Griver was not particularly tolerant of other denominations, instancing his 1948 correspondence describing Anglican Bishop Hale as a 'Minister of Satan'. This seems to be something he overcame.

The book is divided into chapters: Early Years, Recruitment, The Serra Years, Administrator and Bishop. The last two cover the time following Serra's departure in 1860 and resignation in 1862 when Griver was the vicar general and apostolic administrator of the Perth diocese until 1870 and then, when the suspended and recalcitrant Brady died, was Bishop of Perth. As administrator he had overseen in a mere two years the building of a new and dominant cathedral in Victoria Square across from Serra's imposing Bishop's Palace and productively built a collaborative atmosphere in the squabbling Roman Catholic community thereby promoting their cause to the wider community. The author tells us Griver travelled to Rome for his ordination as Bishop of Tloa (an empty bishopric in a non-Christian country that he was granted for reasons the author did not discover) and was able to attend the First Vatican Council, travel in Europe, fund raise and make contacts which would prove fruitful in the future. He details how Griver brought assistants back with him and was able to put his diocese in a flourishing state with the help of Matthew Gibney who followed him as Bishop and Governor Frederick Aloysius Weld, a member of his flock. O'Brien tells us that by this time Roman Catholics had risen to be nearly thirty per cent of the colony's population and the three leaders were able to negotiate the Elementary Education Act of 1871 which was of considerable benefit to the Roman Catholic community. Griver also encouraged the building of churches, convents, schools and orphanages spread over the isolated outposts of the colony. His attempts to open missions to Aboriginal people in the Kimberley failed but his second visit to Europe was particularly successful in recruiting missionaries and nuns. His final actions which impacted on the population were to submit ideas for discussion to the Plenary Council in Sydney in 1885 that resulted in stronger restrictions on mixed marriages between Roman Catholics and people of other faiths.

I have one small quibble in author's discussion on what I perceive to be a sense of grievance against the Anglican hierarchy and the governing classes, particularly in relation to lack of support for denominational schools in a struggling colony. In a colony founded by British interests and with the Anglican Church playing an integral part of life in the mother country it is only to be expected that the Anglican church would also be the church of the new colony which was controlled by Britain until 1870 and still largely so until 1890. The colonial chaplain appointed in the letters patent was naturally an Anglican even if society was secular. When Perth was elevated to City status in 1856 the Anglican Diocese of Perth was established in Queen Victoria's letters patent. Had the colony been founded by Spain then the Roman Catholic Church would have been the state religion with the majority of the immigrants of that faith.

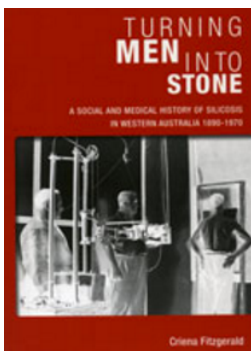
Odhran O'Brien has successfully documented the life and achievements of a humble man who brought harmony to a troubled congregation, increased the Roman Catholic presence in the community by ministering to the parishioners,



building schools and churches as opposed to building a monastic chain or converting the Aboriginal population. He was a man who healed the rifts his predecessors had created with civil society, particularly by mixing in the social life of the community. As O'Brien concluded, 'He was an unwilling leader but one who left a rich legacy of spiritual care, community cohesion and material progress'. A useful book for an historian's bookshelf.

Dorothy Erickson MPHA

Book Note - *Turning Men into Stone - A Social and Medical History of Silicosis in Western Australia 1890 - 1970:*



Criena Fitzgerald, *Turning Men into Stone: A Social and Medical History of Silicosis in Western Australia 1890 - 1970*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, WA, 2016. Soft cover, 252 pages, illustrated, indexed, ISBN 978-0-85905-635-9. RRP \$50.

Perhaps it is not surprising that it has taken until 2016 for an historian to tackle the biggest occupational disease mining has produced in 'the mining state' – silicosis. And Criena Fitzgerald is the right person for the job – both a medical and social historian with significant experience in goldfields research.

Silicosis has been a hidden scourge, well known in established mining communities but not much outside them. A respiratory disease, it is caused by the inhalation of silica dust, which results in fibrosis, gradually preventing the lungs from functioning and leading to death. The book's powerful title – *Turning Men into Stone* – provides a vivid image of lungs so filled with silica dust particles as to be solid. The disease is unstoppable in its progression, even after a miner leaves the industry, a fact the author argues was not grasped by decision-makers. It is a cruel illness and death, and Criena demonstrates how little understood it has been, except by occupational health physicians, through the course of its Western Australian history.

The author has a terrible history to relate, beginning in the early 20th century when silicosis was just starting to be 'seen' on the WA goldfields'. Naming the disease was muddled – was it miners' complaint or phthisis or miners' phthisis or silico-tuberculosis or silicosis? These names were all used. As tuberculosis was endemic in the society and silicosis predisposes to tuberculosis, should authorities focus on eradicating TB or should dusty working conditions in the mines be the chief focus? Adding to this uncertainty were medical practitioners' difficulties in diagnosing the disease in its early stages. Above all, tuberculosis continued to obscure silicosis. Several commissions of Inquiry in the first decades of the 20th century failed to advance understandings very much. Miners and their unions wanted workers' compensation and less dusty mines.



Medical practitioners were concerned with both the infectious nature of tuberculosis and miners' dusty workplaces, while the Department of Mines was certain its engineers had matters in hand. The Chamber of Mines, representing employers, played down the problem and successfully resisted the extension of workers' compensation to silicosis until 1922.

In place of workers' compensation a Mine Workers' Relief Fund was established, described as a band-aid system of minimal assistance without an adequate funding base which staved off starvation but little else. Extensive archival research enables Crena to personalise Western Australia's history of silicosis. She makes particularly effective use of Mine Workers Relief Fund records in this regard. Family struggles are highlighted through the experiences of women and children dependent on the Fund, many of them Italian or Slav by birth and therefore battling additional discrimination. Family photos bring these proud families alive on the page, including the Dressa family who introduce the book. The account of the dusted miners' settlement on marginal farmland at Southern Cross to place sick miners in the healthy open air is examined to demonstrate that it was foolish and doomed from its inception. Here we have a picture of suffering made worse by inappropriate policies.

The Commonwealth Health Laboratory based in Kalgoorlie began routine X-ray examination of miners from 1926, in so far as the unit could reach them in a far-flung industry. More cases of silicosis were unmasked but still nothing effective was done about better dust control. A further chapter provides a valuable account of the legislative and administrative complexities of workers' compensation in relation to silicosis and the diagnostic impossibility that medical practitioners faced in being required to assess degrees of disability attributable to particular causes. Silicosis, Crena argues, remained peculiarly ill-suited to a workers' compensation system premised on the notion of 'accident'.

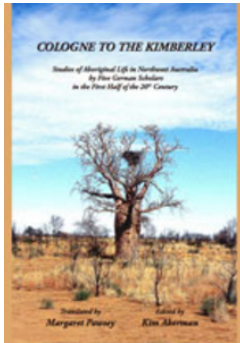
She also traces the failure of mine regulation to achieve effective dust control despite the efforts of many mines inspectors. This remained the case through to 1970, the end of that phase of underground mining which began with the rushes in the 1880s and 1890s. 'Where there's mining there's dust', so the old saying goes in the mining industry, and so it was in WA for all this period. The final chapter examines the experiment with aluminium therapy in the late 1940s-1950s. Was it magic bullet or snake oil, the author asks, coming down on the side of the latter. As a conclusion to the study, the story of aluminium therapy highlights the continued failure of industry and government to extend an adequate duty of care to mine workers through a century of gold mining beginning in the 1880s.

This important history needed to be told and *Turning Men into Stone* does so persuasively. It is to be recommended.

Lenore Layman MPHA



Book Note - *Cologne to the Kimberley - Studies of Aboriginal Life in Northwest Australia by Five German Scholars in the First Half of the 20th Century*:



Cologne to the Kimberley: Studies of Aboriginal Life in Northwest Australia by Five German Scholars in the First Half of the 20th Century, translated by Margaret Pawsey, edited by Kim Akerman, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, WA, 2015. Soft cover, A4, 384 pages, illustrated, ISBN 978-0-85905-594-9. RRP \$70.

This book contains 18 papers written by Father Joseph Bischofs, Helmut Petri, Dr Gisela Petri-Odermann, Agnes Schulz and Father Ernest A Worms. Each author has a brief biography.

In his introduction, Kim Akerman states that most Australian anthropologists have ignored works that were not initially presented in English. That began to change with the publication of translated works by Andreas Lommel and Helmut Petri. *(Editor's note: Peter Gifford has more to say on this point in his book note about Petri's work that follows.)*

The papers in the anthology were selected 'to illustrate the scope of the knowledge and information recorded by the anthropologists concerned'. They contain detailed information about change in technology, economy, social interactions and ritual; 'information that is not to be found in the works of English and Australian anthropologists who have worked in the northwest of Western Australia'.

Commencing with Bischofs' comments on the Niol-Niol people from the Dampier Peninsula, the anthology moves to four papers by Worms on initiation ceremonies, religious concepts, culture, magic, tools and legend. 'The Gorañara-Ceremony in the Australian Kimberley', with extensive footnoting, offers intriguing insights into black magic beliefs and practices. Petri's 'Kuràngara - New Magic Cults in North-West Australia' then offers further insights. Other coverage of mystical and spiritual powers and objects is found in two further papers by Petri and in one that Odermann titled 'Healing arts of the Njañomada, northwest Australia'.

Rock art enthusiasts will welcome 'Rock Engravings from North-West Australia' by Petri and Shultz, and 'Badurr' (Parda-hills), a rock art and culture centre in the north of Australia's Western Desert' by Petri. Rock art also features in Petri's 'Ritual Increase Activities in the Kimberleys', a paper in which the coverage extends to stone arrangements. The latter topic is then discussed in a paper by Odermann.

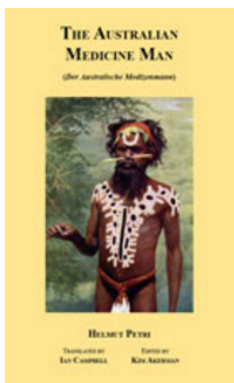
The remaining papers, mostly by Odermann, cover ownership, sign language, the sea, women, and vitamins. In selecting them, Kim Akerman wanted to draw attention to the work of Odermann, offsetting the extent to which it has been overshadowed by her husband's work.



A thorough reading of the anthology - a somewhat daunting task - is required to appreciate the mass of information contained within it. For those less hardy souls, it will be equally rewarding to read only the papers that hold personal appeal.

Cathie Clement OAM MPHA

Book Note - *The Australian Medicine Man*:



Helmut Petri, *The Australian Medicine Man* (*Der Australische Medizinmann*), translated by Ian Campbell, edited by Kim Akerman, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, WA, 2014. 194 pages, ISBN 978-0-85905-583-3. RRP \$55.

Helmut Petri (1907 - 1986) was a German anthropologist whose *Der Australische Medizinmann* was based on fieldwork among Aboriginal people in the Kimberley in 1938 - 1939, but not published in his native language until after World War 2 army service (including time as a prisoner of war). It was written originally as his 'habilitation' or senior doctoral thesis, on Australian shamanism, and submitted in 1949; he had been awarded an initial PhD in 1933.

Petri was a well-rounded scholar who had studied economics, history and philosophy as well as physical anthropology and pre-history (archaeology) in Berlin, Rome and Vienna, and had travelled to countries such as Greece and Turkey for research purposes before coming to Australia in the spring of 1938 as the leader of an expedition organised by the Frobenius Institute (of ethnology) in his birthplace, Cologne.

Der Australische Medizinmann was published in 1952 and another related work, *Sterbend Welt in Nordwest Australien* (*The Dying World in North West Australia*) in 1954; this was first published in English by Hesperian Press in 2011. As with *The Dying World*, *The Australian Medicine Man* has been translated by Dr Ian Campbell of Armidale, NSW, and edited by eminent Western Australian anthropologist Dr Kim Akerman (now resident in Tasmania). Doongan station proprietor Susan Bradley, described by the *Australian* newspaper's Nicolas Rothwell as 'queen of the Kimberley' and 'raconteur extraordinaire', has contributed an informed foreword in which she notes that

Peter Bridge of Hesperian Press, Perth, whose professionalism and dedication to publishing Western Australian history is unsurpassed, is much admired and acknowledged for publishing important works which would be passed over by larger publishing houses focused mainly on economic return. If it weren't for Hesperian Press many of these scientific, historical and virtually unknown journals would be forgotten.

As someone whose work has been published by Hesperian Press, I can endorse those comments without reservation.



Ms Bradley also acknowledges Akerman's 'many years in the field', writing 'extensively on the anthropology of the Kimberley'; it was mainly due to him and the late Dr Grahame Walsh, she says, that Petri's 'research was not lost to English speaking scholars, and most importantly the Aborigines about whose identity, country, culture, traditions and forebears, these two studies are written.' Walsh, an authority *inter alia* on Kimberley rock art, died before the editing of the Petri books was completed.

My friend Kevin Shaw, a qualified anthropologist who administered the WA Aboriginal Heritage Act for ten years on the ground in the Kimberley from the mid 1990s, was on collegial terms with Walsh and stayed with him for a period in 2005. Shaw says Walsh 'was working on a few significant things when he died', including an 'important' archaeological dating model which 'was likely to put forward results/evidence that challenged the status quo of convenience for corporate administration/manipulation of the N[ative] T[itle] A[ct]' as well as the work done in universities.

Walsh, according to Shaw, had his enemies among the 'cultural establishment' who were 'mostly lacking in spine' and who 'waited until he was dead' before publishing attacks on him. What Walsh and he - Shaw - had in common was opposition to

The institutionalisation of cultural anthropology... in universities, research grants and so on [which] obscured and largely killed off anthropology that would have better informed Native Title legislation and its application, and importantly facilitated Aboriginal entry into authentic education/employment that owed nothing to anyone but themselves. Cultural anthropology in Australia and America as with British Social Anthropology in Africa is just another variation of the Bastard of Colonialism... Petri, like [Father Ernst Alfred] Worms and other Germans had a stronger interest in ecology and internal politics that could hinder the task of surviving and living successfully in an invaded world - foci that the culturalists generally considered mundane and therefore unworthy of the attention of their wonderful intellects. Their field was high culture - religion and stuff that means bugger all today. It is a shame Worms did not have the resources/time to develop his accounts of relations to land along Dampier Peninsula. It may have held back the tsunami of bullshit in connection reports that has spewed forth since. The patchy accounts that I have read by Worms indicate that a promising mode of inquiry and observation never evolved into what it might have become, and perhaps real justice as opposed to confected justice too...

Connection reports, for those unfamiliar with the native title process, are intended to establish 'connection' in spiritual, cultural, linguistic and other terms between Aboriginal people and the land for which they claim native title. Without them, no native title claim can succeed.

Father Worms (1891 - 1963) and some of the 'other Germans' including Father Joseph Bischof (? - 1958) and Father Hermann Nekes (? - 1948) to whom Shaw refers, were missionary/anthropologists who spent many years among Aboriginal people in the Kimberley.

Some of their work, along with contributions by Petri and his anthropologist wife Dr Gisela Petri-Oderman (1923 - 2006), forms another collection edited by Akerman entitled *Cologne to the Kimberley: Studies of Aboriginal Life in Northwest Australia by Five German Scholars in the First Half of the 20th Century*. Translated by German-born Dr Margaret Pawsey, a Monash University graduate whose experience including translating documents for denazification tribunals after World War 2, it was published last year, likewise by Hesperian Press.

In his introduction to this collection, Akerman commented that he had been able to gain access over the years to various 'papers and other publications' by European anthropologists only by having them translated, and

In the Kimberley, where I have focused a lot of my attention, there was in fact very little academic material written in English that had not been the result of research conducted with a focus on social organisation or modelled on the Radcliffe-Brown/Elkin approach to anthropological research. It seemed to me that only the European trained anthropologists and linguists cast a wider net, one that embraced economics, material culture and rock art – even the latter was, until relatively recently, only peripherally touched on by Australian anthropologists.



Australians in this respect (and others) were

... a monolingual nation. Works that had not been initially presented in English were generally ignored by most Australian anthropologists and rarely referenced.

At this point it should be noted that Shaw's comments were made independently of those by Akerman and vice versa.

A R Radcliffe-Brown and A P Elkin were the founding professors of anthropology at the University of Sydney; Elkin was Radcliffe-Brown's post-doctoral student and conducted his first major Australian field research in that capacity in the Kimberley during the 1920s. Some of that research was drawn on by Elkin in what was possibly his most famous work, *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*, which as its title suggests, deals with Aboriginal shamanism throughout mainland Australia.

Radcliffe-Brown, an Englishman, had earlier conducted fieldwork in Western Australia with the largely self-taught anthropologist Daisy Bates; they fell out and Bates famously accused Radcliffe-Brown of gross plagiarism at a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Melbourne in 1914. Radcliffe-Brown left Australia for the University of Chicago in 1931; he was replaced by Elkin, who held the chair until his retirement in 1956 and continued to edit the journal *Oceania* until his death in 1979.

Elkin's influence was immense throughout Australian anthropology during that period, but his and Petri's paths seem not to have crossed much professionally if at all, which may have something to do with the opinions expressed above by Shaw and Akerman. Petri does acknowledge some of Elkin's early articles and in particular his influential 1938 book, *The Australian Aborigines: How to understand them*, in his - Petri's - bibliography, but there is no mention of *Aboriginal Men of High Degree* in *Der Australische Medizinmann*, and vice versa.

As Akerman points out, Petri may well not have had access in Europe to the first edition of Elkin's book, which was published in 1945, but Elkin did not refer to Petri's *Der Australische Medizinmann* either in the second edition of Elkin's book in 1977, 25 years after *Der Australische Medizinmann*'s appearance in German. This may be simply be, as Dr Akerman says, on the basis that 'neither scholar had had the opportunity to read each other's seminal works on the topic.'

In 1977 Elkin did acknowledge that:

During the ten years between 1928, the year of my work amongst the Ngarinyin, and that of Dr Petri in 1938, the Aborigines had improved their English, a result mainly of working on Munja Aboriginal Cattle Station, Walcott Inlet. Consequently at least some of them became better informants and so Dr Petri obtained more material on medicine-men and their making than I did.

But, as Akerman points out, Elkin was referring here not to *Der Australische Medizinmann* but to the relevant sections of *Sterbendewelt in nordwest-Australien*, about which Petri had said:

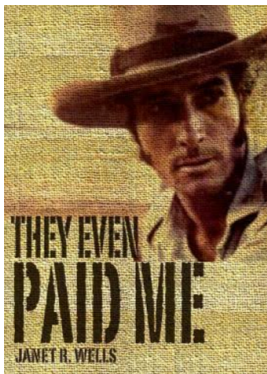
The accounts about medicine men in the Kimberleys now following are unfortunately incomplete, perhaps no less fragmentary than many other sources for Australian cultural history. That is firstly because the time available for our fieldwork was too short, secondly we made the same mistake from the start as most observers of Australian Aboriginal life: we allowed ourselves to be so taken up by more striking phenomena of the tribal cultures that the figures of the medicine man at first seemed to us to be of not very vital importance. When we realized this error, it was to some extent already too late to make up lost ground.



Given that Elkin's book remained until the Hesperian Press publications one of very few readily available sources in English on traditional Australian medicine men, this gives added point to Akerman's comment about Australian monolingualism and Shaw's about the institutionalisation of cultural anthropology and the effects this has had on the native title process and Aboriginal society in general. At all events, anyone interested in these matters should obtain copies of these new Hesperian Press translations as a matter of urgency.

Peter Gifford MPHA

Book Note - *They even paid me - Raw reflections of a third generation Kimberley cattleman:*



Janet R Wells, *They even paid me: Raw reflections of a third generation Kimberley cattleman*, A Touch of Silk, Capel, WA, 2015. Paperback, 500 pages, illustrated, map, ISBN 978-0-9942327-0-0. RRP \$35.

John Wells, whose stories fill this solid but absorbing volume, is the son of Margaret Wells whose life was recalled in *Ready for anything*. John's wife Janet did an excellent job in compiling and publishing both books. Poignant pieces of her poetry, which is available through her website or from Hesperian Press, introduce each chapter.

John's father George was a manager for Emanuel Brothers in the Kimberley, first on Cherrabun Station and then on Meda. George's father Billy managed Oscar Range Station and then Brooking Springs. Between 1900 and 1988, Billy, George and John put 70 years into station management. John spent the remaining 18 years in other roles. In retrospect he says, 'a man resembles the land from which he came'.

Many things, not least his 32 years on Meda, qualify John to tell Kimberley stories. His commitment to people, animals and work is evident, both in the text and in the naming of individuals in many photos. Particularly valuable are his comments about people who are mentioned only fleetingly elsewhere, little known characters such as Cecil Roderick. Other better known people include Gerry Ash, Robin Campbell, Tim Emanuel, the Le Lievres, Willie Lennard, Bob and Sheryl McCorry, Merrilee MacDonald, Frank Mugford, Peter Murray and Roderick Wells. The book has no index but the bold subheadings used throughout contain lots of names. In some anecdotes, the use of only a first name or a nickname protects privacy.

The book contains language that is more down-to-earth than one might expect from someone with a strict religious upbringing. Overall, however, it offers a lively stream of stories about people, places and activities. Chapter four, for instance, describes the life a ringer in a stock camp - 'not for the faint hearted or feeble, but for many young blokes in the



first flush of manhood it was a thrilling, adrenalin charged existence'. That chapter also discusses horse and cattle diseases and ailments.

They even paid me opens with John's childhood on Meda Station, schooling in Derby and Perth - where life proved grim until he began to defend himself against bullies - and two years' training at Narrogin Agricultural College. In 1961, when an accident claimed the life of Stumpy Fraser, head stockman on Meda, John went home and worked with George Wells for 18 months. A stint in the city, on much better money, separated that work from a Kimberley Downs job. By the end of Part One, John has married and is about to become a station manager. Part Two covers his time on Napier and Myroodah stations; personal crises that included the end of his marriage; a wet season on Oobagooma; working as studmaster on Meda in 1975; meeting Janet; managing Frazier Downs; and marrying Janet. Part Three discusses a return to Meda in 1978; an overseas trip; the sale of Meda and the other Emanuel stations to EXIM (an arm of the WA Government); the subsequent sale and subdivision of those properties; dashed hopes of becoming a part owner of Meda in 1991; and five years working in Derby before moving south.

The book is candid and can readily be described as 'warts and all'. It will interest people familiar with station life and the West Kimberley as well as those who want to know what that area was like between the 1940s and the 1980s. Copies can be purchased from the author (www.janetwells.com.au), with \$14 added for postage and handling, or from selected book shops.

Cathie Clement OAM MPHA

Exhibition review - *Bling - 19th Century Goldfields Jewellery:*

The launch of *Bling: 19th Century Goldfields Jewellery* on Saturday 16 April at MADE (the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka) at Eureka - a suburb of Ballarat about 90 minutes north-west of Melbourne - was a superb event.



Coolgardie exhibition souvenir brooch, c1900, maker Larard Bros, Perth and Melbourne. Photo courtesy: MADE, Ballarat.



Coolgardie Windlass and 'Golden Hole' brooch, c1900, maker Donovan & Overland. Photo courtesy: MADE, Ballarat.

We were treated to a magnificent display of early Australian goldfields jewellery - and not just brooches and locket, but necklaces and ear pendants and, for the males, rings, a cravat pin and fobs, as well as four sets of mayoral chains. Some 250 - 300 items were on display and will remain so until 4 July. There were a few items from public institutions, which,



given the time constraints, was all that could be loaned. Most items on display were lent by private individuals who wished to remain anonymous. Many items certainly would have not been seen by the public for a long time - if at all. The lighting and display set up was most professional and even the jewellery boxes from various items were shown.

Amongst those attending included Australiana Society editor John Wade, jewellery doyenne Anne Schofield and collector Michel Reymond - all from Sydney. Dr Dorothy Erickson, author of many scholarly works on the subject, travelled from Western Australia. Trevor Kennedy a Western Australian now living in NSW has enthusiastically endorsed the show and lent many important items as did Western Australian dealer Trevor Hancock. A considerable number of collectors and devotees travelled up from Melbourne and many intend to return again.

A book, *Bling: 19th Century Goldfields Jewellery* (softcover, A4, 160 pp, full colour, \$35) was released on the night and, for those that can't visit Ballarat, this is a 'must acquire book'. It contains detailed articles: 'Souvenirs of Global Gold Seeking' by Dr Linda Young, 'The Little Aussie Battlers in Australian Art' by Trevor Hancock, 'Lola Montez' by Amber Evangelista, 'South Australian Fields and finds' and 'Mourning Brooches and Memory' by exhibition curator Cash Brown, 'Phoebe Morgan and her Legacy' and '19th Century Goldfields Jewellery' by Dorothy Erickson, and 'The Jewellers of Northern Queensland' by Katrina Banyai.

The photographs form almost a catalogue raisonné of important items in private hands. The article by Linda Young answers the question: 'were similar miners' brooches made elsewhere?'. Dr Young answers this with text and photos of brooches branded 'South Africa', and she shows us others from The Transvaal, from Canada (complete with a maple leaf) and those with origins in the USA (South Dakota, Alaska, Colorado, Nevada). Discussion on this subject is well overdue.

There has been some criticism of the name *Bling* but I think this is ill-informed as these pieces can so amply demonstrate. Here, we have some of the most garish and over-the-top items of golden jewellery made in Australia. They were made by expatriate craftsmen to show off, hence the name 'bling', and many of the items were made to impress the locals and show what success by 'striking it rich' can do for one. Other items were sent back to the 'old country' to show how well those at the goldfields had done.

One of the largest items was made as a presentation piece for courtesan and stage performer Lola Montez who also gathered up the nuggets thrown at her during performances. They made her a wealthy woman.

More importantly, many of the items on display at MADE demonstrate working life on the goldfields with depictions of winches, working men, nugget bags, pistols, picks and shovels, buckets, nuggets per se, gold pans, riddling and sluice boxes etc. Other items depicted on the jewellery include Australian fauna and flora, as well as quartz - along with doves, grapes and oak leaves. These, along with Strutt's watercolours (not on display), give us some of the few images we have of working life on the goldfields in the 1850s. Their rarity could be attributable to the tendency to melt down such items to produce cash in hard times. Thus, the few that remain are incredibly rare and their cultural significance cannot be overstated.

The exhibition organisers, led by MADE Director Jane Smith and Curator Cash Brown, and their sponsors, including philanthropic bodies such as the Ian Potter Foundation and the Gordon Darling Foundation, are to be congratulated.

Robin Hunt



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 **early December** and can be sent to Newsletter Editor [Kris Bizzaca](#). Calls for submissions will be emailed closer to the date of publication.



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Credentials	Sue Graham-Taylor, Robin Chinnery (co-opted)
Commissioned History	Prue Griffin, Jenna Lynch
Newsletter Editor	Kris Bizzaca with assistance from Lenore Layman

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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