

PHA **WA**



NEWSLETTER

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Note from the President:

Welcome to the May 2015 edition of our eNewsletter, which features a range of interesting articles from members Cathie Clement, Damayanthie Eluwawalage and Peter Gifford as well as updates and pieces from key stakeholders.

It is with regret that I inform you of the resignations of Odhran O'Brien and Ann Hunter from the Management Committee to focus on study and on work respectively. Both Odhran and Ann have made considerable contributions to the Association over the last few years and will be sadly missed for the enthusiasm and commitment they brought to PHA (WA). Our best wishes to them in their endeavours.



The date for our AGM and Professional Development seminar has now been locked in for 11 October 2015 to be held at the State Library. As reported in the last eNewsletter, this session will focus on the more practical aspects of the profession such as preparing tenders and networking. If you have any comments or suggestions on this topic, we encourage you to contact us via info@professionalhistorianswa.org.au.

Kris Bizzaca MPHA
President

Advance Notice - 2015 AGM & PD Session:

Advance notice is given for the 2015 AGM of PHA (WA).

When: 11.45am for 12 noon start, Sunday 11 October 2015

Where: Great Southern Room, State Library of WA (Courtesy of the State Librarian)

AGM proceedings will be followed by a joint PHA (WA) and OHAA (WA Branch) Professional Development session, 'The Business of History Version 2.0'. This follows on from last year's seminar and will focus on practical matters associated with operating a business in the field of history and oral history; from preparing fee proposals to harnessing digital tools to create an online presence.

When: 1pm arrival to approximately 5pm, Sunday 11 October 2015

Where: Great Southern Room, State Library of WA (Courtesy of the State Librarian)

Afternoon tea provided free of charge.



Jennie Carter, Heather Campbell and Clare Menck discussing practical issues associated with consultancies, August 2014 PD Session. Photo: K Bizzaca.



The Mermaid Tree:

On 23 September 1820 – isolated at [Careening Bay](#) on the north coast – [Lieut Phillip Parker King](#) gave [instructions](#) to Frederick Bedwell and [John Septimus Roe](#). Addressing them as ‘Masters Mate’s of His Majy’s Cutter Mermaid’, King began:

A considerable leak, which has lately much increased, having induced me to careen H. Majy’s Cutter under my command in order to stop it if possible;

You are hereby directed to take to your assistance the Carpenter of the Cutter & examining into its Cause report to me...

The careening enabled the *Mermaid* to return to Sydney Cove. For decades after that, only [Wunambul](#) people saw an inscription that recorded the visit. Then a few settlers, pearlers and fishermen saw it. Now, [cruise ships](#) call at the bay.

Aeneas Gunn was one of the first people to comment publicly on the inscription. On 27 May 1899, almost a decade after visiting Careening Bay, he wrote:

The only interesting discovery that was made being a Baobab tree, which Captain King had marked when careening the "Mermaid" seventy years before. In foot letters, perfectly clear after the lapse of so many years, stood on the broad grey trunk of the tree, the memorial--

H.M.C.
MERMAID
1820.

The article from which that comes can be seen in the book *Under a Regent Moon : A historical account of pioneer pastoralists Joseph Bradshaw and Aeneas Gunn at Marigui Settlement, Prince Regent River, Kimberley, Western Australia, 1891–1892*. Published by the Department of Conservation and Land Management in 2002, the book was edited by Tim Willing and Kevin Kenneally.

A later description of the tree (recorded in 1978) reads:

The large boab tree upon which Philip [sic] Parker King’s crew cut the name of their cutter and the year in which they careened her on the beach nearby was found in the thick foliage about 60m from ISHWM...

There is no known record that states how large the tree was at the time of carving, but it can be assumed that the tree would have been large at the time, and that it has grown more subsequently. Neither is there a record of how deeply cut, or what size the original lettering, but I believe the lettering dimensions have expanded with the growth of the tree. At least the depth varies consistently, increasing towards the edges. Most of the depth of the lettering ranged from 20–300 cms [sic], with an average of 30–50 cms, but the “C” in “H.M.C.” measured 150 cms depth and the “D” in “MERMAID” measured 200 cms depth. The height thus:



In the report, the sketch of the inscription is the width of the page and has measurements on it. The "C" in "H·M·C" is shown as 38 cm high.

H·M·C
MERMAID
18 20

The tree bifurcates slowly ... The overall width of the words at its widest point, the word "MERMAID" was 3.60m...

That description is from Scott Sledge's *Wreck Inspection North Coast (W.I.N.C.) Expedition 1978: Report of investigation of shipwreck and historic sites along the North and Northwest coasts of Western Australia, June–September 1978* (Maritime Archaeology Department, Western Australian Museum, Fremantle). It appears on pages 55–6. A photo, taken by Patrick Baker, the museum's photographer, can be found at the end of a set of photos positioned between pages 59 and 60. It is captioned: 'Mermaid tree at Careening Bay, Port Nelson.'

Another photo taken during the 1978 expedition appears in Marsden Hordern's *King of the Australian Coast: The Work of Phillip Parker King in the Mermaid and Bathurst 1871–1822* (Melbourne University Press, 1997). Opposite page 251, it is captioned: 'The Mermaid Tree at Careening Bay (photograph by Patrick Baker, 1978)'.

In 1998, in *The Boab Tree* (Lothian, Port Melbourne), Pat Lowe commented that 'Some authorities see a ghostly "B" next to the "H" to read "His Britannic Majesty's Cutter".' She positioned that comment next to an illustration in which Huw Crompton had emphasised the "H" and hinted at a "B".

Michael Pearson's [Great Southern Land: the maritime exploration of Terra Australis](#) (Department of the Environment and Heritage, Canberra, 2005) has a colour photo on page 97. It seems to be the same as the one in the W.I.N.C. report but the inscription is interpreted differently. This time, the caption reads: 'The "Mermaid Tree", a boab tree at Careening Bay carved by King's crew with the words "HBMC Mermaid 1820". Photo: Patrick Baker Western Australian Maritime Museum'.

Pearson notes that a copper plate was also inscribed and attached to a tree, and he attributes that information to Hordern's book (p. 283). But did he get "HBMC Mermaid 1820" – rather than "HMC Mermaid 1820" – from that book? Or was it from another source, or from looking at the photo?



Sandy Scott's photo shows the lettering shot from an angle similar to the one in the photo by Patrick Baker.

Other photos, taken in different light, and from various angles, can be seen [online](#) and in books.

In some, a "B" does seem to be evident. But where does that leave us with regard to the "H"?

Can you see both the "H" and a "B"?

The ghostly "B" became a topic for discussion earlier this year when [A W \(Sandy\) Scott](#) wrote an article for a series called 'Features of the Kimberley Coast' in the Kimberley Society newsletter. Having seen and photographed the Mermaid Tree at various times, Sandy was, and still is, convinced that the inscription reads 'HBMC Mermaid'. He was also aware that naval people sometimes use "B" or "Britannic" to distinguish British Empire vessels from later ships of the same name, e.g. in writing about King's *Mermaid* and [HMAS Mermaid](#). Yours truly, being both the newsletter editor and a historian, was inclined to favour HMC as a more historically accurate prefix for King's vessel.

And so began a lengthy search. We wanted to know a) if anyone noted the actual carving of the inscription, and b) if the official prefix for the *Mermaid* contained a "B".

Reference to *King of the Australian Coast* showed that it indexes the *Mermaid* as 'Mermaid (HBM Cutter)'. Interestingly, Hordern did not use the prefix in his text. Nor did he use a prefix for King's next ship, *Bathurst*. It is indexed as 'Bathurst (HM Survey Vessel)'. This absence of prefixes could come from Hordern's chronological approach taking in the purchase of both vessels, for King's use, before either was assigned a prefix (on being commissioned by the navy).

Pedantic perusal of the index revealed that it contains some anomalies, e.g. where entries for vessels named *Cygnets* are split into 'Cygnets, HMS', 'Cygnets, HM Sloop' and 'Cygnets (ship)'. Within that small batch, both entries for 'Cygnets (ship)' relate to William Dampier's vessel, as does one of the two entries for 'Cygnets, HMS'. Only the 'Cygnets (ship)' entries are correct because, according to Dampier, he and his fellow privateers gained possession of the *Cygnets*, a trading vessel, through a 'Plot that had been laid to leave Capt. Swan and run away with the Ship'. These anomalies are mentioned here only because their presence suggests that writers need to look beyond Hordern's index when selecting prefixes to use with the names of early ships.



[National Museum of the Royal Navy](#) advises that:

The abbreviation HMS came into common usage around 1790s. Prior to this, ships were referred to as "His Majesty's Ship" in full to indicate it belonging to the Royal Navy. The earliest example of the abbreviation being used is in 1789 when it was used for HMS Phoenix.

No reference to a "B" there. Next stop, given the boab tree's involvement, was the renowned Kimberley botanist Kevin Kenneally. His transcription of portions of the journal kept by [Alan Cunningham](#), the botanist on board the *Mermaid*, contained a prefix but nothing about the inscription. At the start of each journal, Cunningham had written a heading, e.g., 'Third Voyage: Voyage of survey of the coasts of Terra Australis on board HMC Mermaid, ... 13 July – 9 December 1820.' Elsewhere, in a letter written to [Joseph Banks](#) on 8 November 1819, Cunningham referred to himself as 'the unworthy Collector of His Majesty's Cutter'. Marsden Hordern found that little gem in manuscript material held by the National Library of Australia.

The National Library generously looked at a microfilm copy of the log of the *Mermaid* to see if it held any helpful information. Again, perhaps as was only to be expected, there was nothing about the inscription. The library advised that the log gives details of tides, weather, wind directions and very little in the way of extra remarks.

Recourse to [logs](#) and [diaries](#) kept by John Septimus Roe provided information about the cutter but not the inscription. Roe's log entry for 16 October 1817 read:

The Mermaid Cutter, was purchased by Government, for a Surveying vessel; was commissioned by "Lieut^t P. P. King, of the Royal Navy, as His Majesty's Cutter Mermaid; & a pennant hosted at her masthead...

That day, and on subsequent days, Roe wrote 'His Majesty's Cutter Mermaid' at the top of each fresh page in his log. His diary entry of 16 October 1817 noted that the vessel would 'henceforth be called His Majesty's Cutter Mermaid'.

Trove results revealed that, during King's command, newspapers mentioned '[His Majesty's Cutter Mermaid](#)', '[His Majesty's schooner Mermaid](#)', '[the Government cutter Mermaid](#)', and '[His Majesty's surveying cutter Mermaid](#)'. Official notices tended to use the first of those names. No use of "Britannic" with *Mermaid* was found in the early newspapers. But, in 1822, [The Christian Observer](#), vol 23, page 320, carried a letter that mentioned 'His Britannic Majesty's cutter the Mermaid'. That, and further research, indicated that a "B" or "Britannic" was sometimes used when someone wished to make it clear that the sovereign to whom reference was being made was actually British.

More recently, George Seddon's *The Old Country: Australian Landscapes, Plants and People* (Cambridge University Press, 2005) mentioned 'His Britannic Majesty's Cutter Mermaid'. Page 56 has a [photo](#) showing part of the inscription.

The results obtained in this exercise point to HMC being the commonly used prefix for the *Mermaid*. Yet, with the inscription's appearance affected by light, shadow, angle, and the viewer's position, debate about the ghostly "B" is likely to continue.

If you are aware of other sources that relate to the prefix or the inscription, I would appreciate hearing from you. Your general comments would also be welcome.

Dr Cathie Clement MPHA



Seamstresses and Dressmakers in Colonial Western Australia:

The dressmaker was generally called the mantua-maker in the 1700s and until well into the nineteenth century. The women's dressmaking profession in Britain proliferated during the nineteenth century, primarily due to the new era of fashion, which rapidly changed and often reached to the lower classes. In contrast to previous centuries, when 'fashionability' had been restricted to the upper classes, fabrics became relatively affordable and, as well as social mobility, people's economic status and communication swiftly improved. Lace, for instance, which cost thirty shillings per square yard in 1815, could be had for three pence per square yard in 1851. In the eighteenth century, cottons were relatively expensive and were worn only by the affluent classes. Nevertheless, by the nineteenth century, cottons became inexpensive and more widely available to the lower/working-classes.

Female clothing workers in Victorian Britain could be distinguished between 1) dressmakers who worked for fashion houses and factories on contracts, and 2) freelance needlewomen who mostly worked from home. Nevertheless, there were enormous distinctions between them in terms of their work relations. Dressmakers had to complete an apprenticeship of two to three years, and then be promoted as 'improvers' who gradually mastered complex cutting, sewing and fitting. Freelance needlewomen had scarcely any professional mastery or expertise, despite their capability to cut, sew and construct a garment.

More than twenty thousand dressmakers lived in London during the 1850s. They were ranked according to their expertise and the profile of their clientele: 1) A first-rate house or court dressmaker for noble class; 2) A second-rate house, for wealthy, middle classes; 3) A third and 4) fourth-rate houses, for lower/working classes. According to the London census in 1849, there were approximately fourteen thousand freelance needlewomen in London, who especially worked for lesser classes. Regardless of their expertise or working status, dressmakers/needlewomen in general, experienced harsh living and working conditions. They were the lowest paid in the work force, although working eighteen to twenty hours a day.

Colonisation and transportation in the nineteenth century brought the migration of many British subjects within the British Empire, with numerous clothing workers relocating to different parts of the world, including Australia. In summarising the British woman clothing workers' life at home and abroad, *Punch* in 1850 stated: 'The needlewoman in England, ill-shod and clutching her thin garments about her emaciated form, is chivvied through the snow by a bullying official. In Australia she is shown, plump-cheeked and neatly dressed.'

Dressmakers and seamstresses were the most utilised terms for the workers of garment construction in nineteenth-century Western Australia. Dressmakers in the colonial era could be analysed in the dichotomy of: a. Commercial Dressmakers; b. Domestic Dressmakers.

Commercial Dressmakers in Colonial Western Australia

According to Kingston, 'as soon as the English newspapers with fashion plates and intricate descriptions arrived, it was to be interpreted as quickly as possible by colonial dressmakers.' The *Dictionary of Western Australians*, noted forty-six dressmakers from 1829-1914; three needlewomen and two lace-makers from 1850-1868 arrived as qualified clothing workers.



An advertiser published a notice requiring a needleworker in *The Inquirer* on 1844: 'Wanted - A steady, respectable servant, to take charge of children, do needlework.' According to Erickson, the emigration of professional Irish needlewomen and lace-makers in the 1850s, prompted a demand for servants and dressmakers in the colony.

In their personal correspondences, colonist Georgiana Molloy expressed her gratitude to the assistance of her dressmaker Kitty Sudlon, while the Bussells, who referred to their dressmaker Mrs Errington, illustrated the acceptance and wide existence of the commercial dressmaking profession in the colony. 17 May 1848: 'Mrs. Fruins lives in a cottage on Monger's land, and earns a good deal by doing needlework for Mr. Monger's family.' Evidently the commercial dressmakers/seamstresses were occupied in the colony during the nineteenth century. Bretton William's widow Ann Barry, who arrived in Western Australia on 24 June 1862, supported her three children by hand sewing men's shirts. This practice continued throughout the nineteenth century as Laura Brockman in 1895 wrote requesting a dressmaker to make a dress and skirt for her. In relation to the income they received as dressmakers (concurring with the British practice), perhaps they were amongst the lowest paid workers in the colony, as *The Inquirer* reported in 1870, '...a girl (in Guildford) has to work hard at needlework for the miserable pittance of one shilling per day.'

Domestic Dressmakers in Colonial Western Australia

Needlework was a skill which all Victorian-era girls understood. Needlecrafting was a customary and compulsory activity for every girl and woman regardless of class and status in the nineteenth century, whilst sewing has been a home activity for centuries. Colonist Georgiana Molloy requested 'Needles of the best description ...'. This British tradition was undoubtedly practiced in colonial Western Australia with assistance from the commercial paper pattern trade and the advent of the sewing machine. Colonist Rev. Wollaston acknowledged his riding dress made by his wife. As Fanny Bussell wrote to her mother in England: 'We are grown capital dressmakers, and have had some experience'. The numerous personal correspondences of the early Western Australian colonists suggested, regardless of their social position and class, they were engaged in domestic needlecrafting or dressmaking.

Georgina Molloy wrote, 'I am my children's sole instructress, seamstress, and that in conjunction with innumerable other peremptory duties'. In most instances, a household lady performed a task as a dressmaker, educator and nurturer for her family. In concurring with the above statement, Eliza Brown recorded in November 1850: 'We go on sweetly as far as lessons, the sewing and indoor...'

The familiar and visible placement of the sewing basket in domestic households in the nineteenth century, and the constant request of sewing needs, suggested the practice and significance of home needle work. Mrs John Lochee, who migrated to Western Australia in 1842, was a very clever needlewoman and made all her family's clothes, reminisces to her granddaughter Mrs Alma Jephson.

Colonist Eliza Brown in November 1846, for instance, expressed her domestic engagements including the matters with the needle. Mrs. Beeton wrote in 1861, 'A woman's working day included food preparation, mending and sewing clothes, cleaning, working on the farm.' Needlework was a compulsory and routine household activity, especially during the first part of the nineteenth century, with almost every personal document expressing its necessity and indispensability. As colonial female personal correspondents such as Georgiana Molloy in January 1833 and Isabella Ferguson in January 1835 indicated, the needlework or domestic dressmaking was a significant household burden with which they consistently contended.



The significance of needlework was depicted throughout nineteenth-century Western Australia as, in 1898, colonist Emily Roberts wrote explaining the prominence of her sewing basket and her obligation to sew for her family. Needlework must have been taught as part of the curriculum in colonial schools as the Ladies' School in Fremantle advertised in 1882, 'A sound English education, music, singing and needlework of every description...'.

Dr Damayanthie Eluwawalage MPHA

From the State Library:

NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week is held to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and is celebrated by Indigenous communities and by Australians from all walks of life. NAIDOC stands for the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee, which was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself.

This year NAIDOC Week runs from 5-12 July and the theme is *We all stand on sacred ground: learn, respect & celebrate*. Highlighting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' strong spiritual and cultural connection to land and sea, the theme is an opportunity to pay respects to country; honour those who work on preserving land, sea and culture and to share the stories of sites of significance or sacred places with the nation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the oldest continuing culture on Earth, are intrinsically linked with these sacred places.

The State Library of Western Australia will mount an exhibition in the Nook, featuring the recently re-digitised Schenk photographs of Mt Margaret Mission and the story of Sadie Canning, who became the first Aboriginal matron in Western Australia. There will also be a talk on the Schenk collection. Clint Bracknell, the 2013/2014 J S Battye Fellow, will give a talk at the State Library on the 6 July on his fellowship topic, Noongar Songs of the South-west.

Family History Month

National Family History Month is an initiative of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations. Instituted in 2006, it was originally only a week in August, but was expanded to include the whole month in 2013 to allow for greater participation across Australia. The State Library, in conjunction with the Western Australian Genealogical Society (WAGS), is providing a raft of talks and seminars over the month of interest to the genealogist. The main event will be a series of talks on a variety of topics at the State Library on 4-5 August. Other events will take place on 6, 10, 12, 13 & 19 August either at the State Library or WAGS. Check the brochure for program details or go to www.wags.org.au and click on Events Calendar or www.slwa.wa.gov.au and click on What's On – Family History.



Bounce Down: Women's Australian Rules Football Centenary

Presented by the Western Australian Women's Football League, Bounce Down runs from 22 May to 31 July 2015 in the ground floor gallery of the State Library. It explores the 100-year history of women's Australian Rules football in Western Australia. The women's game began in Perth in 1915 as a wartime fundraiser and by 1955 had been played in more than 100 locations around the country. Today player numbers are around 170,000.

The exhibition brings to life the social and cultural history of the past century through the eyes of the players and the lenses of the media. Early teams played in silk dresses and hats, but the later transition to more suitable playing gear mirrored societal changes allowing women more freedom generally. Featuring never before seen memorabilia, newly acquired heritage items from the State Library of Western Australia's collections, photographs, video footage and a replica of the first women's football uniform, this little known part of the social, cultural, and sporting history of the nation is revealed.

Two Battye Historians are better than one!

Battye Historian, Kate Gregory, who has been on maternity leave since December 2013, is returning to work on 14 May. Her position has been admirably filled by Susanna Iuliano from March 2014. However, as Kate is not coming back full-time, we are not losing Susanna in the short term. From 14 May, Kate and Susanna will job-share the position, Kate working Thursday and Friday and Susanna working Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (Monday being the designated day of peace for the rest of the team) until October, when the situation will be reviewed.

World War I

Some interesting pages relating to World War I have been added to the State Library's website. One of these is Collection Highlights, which features 25 interesting items from the collections which relate to World War I, including photographs, postcards, ephemera, letters, diaries and maps. This can be found on the home page. Another is a subject guide to World War I material to be found in the State Library. It includes details of books (including battalion histories), embarkation or nominal rolls, oral histories, photographs, letters and diaries, maps, ephemera, honour rolls and serials which may be of interest to anyone who is researching Western Australia's role in World War I (http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/world_war_1). Finally, to make finding World War I digital material easier, there is a page which details such digitised material held by the State Library: (http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/family_history/heritage_online/war).

New Battye Fellow

Professor Ian Reid has been awarded the State Library's James Sykes Battye Memorial Fellowship for 2015. Professor Reid is currently adjunct Professor in English and Cultural Studies at the University of Western Australia (UWA). He was one of 16 applicants and his project 'History's Grist and Fiction's Mill' will explore the challenges and opportunities for creative writers who blend imagination with fact when evoking times past. Professor Reid is a poet, scholar and author of historical novels including *The End of Longing*, *That Untravelled World* and *The Mind's Own Place*. His previous roles include Professor of Literary Studies at Deakin University, senior university management positions at Curtin University and UWA and CEO of Leadership WA.

The Fellowship honours the legacy of librarian and historian James Sykes Battye, Chief Librarian of the Victoria Public Library, the Public Library of Western Australia and the State Library of Western Australia (as the State Library was successively known)



1894-1954. Established through the Leah Jane Cohen Bequest, the Fellowship aims to enhance understanding of Western Australia through research based on the State Library's heritage collections, especially those of the Battye Library. Previous Battye Fellows have been Sue Graham Taylor (Swan River), Jane Davis (WA's 19th Century colonists) and Clint Bracknell (Noongar songs of the South-west).

Western Australian New Music Archive Opening

The Western Australian New Music Archive was launched at the State Library of Western Australia on 20 May as part of the 12th Totally Huge New Music Festival in Perth. At the beginning of 2010, the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts at Edith Cowan University (ECU), in conjunction with Tura New Music, a music organisation based in Perth, began a project to archive local new music. The project aimed to discover, collect, collate and digitise Western Australian contemporary music from 1970 to the current day, making material available for musicological research and performance. Later, a partnership was formed between ECU, the State Library of WA, the National Library of Australia, ABC Classic FM and Tura New Music to enable this to happen.

The Western Australian New Music Archive, a digital repository of and interface to Western Australian music composed from 1970 to the present day, will be hosted at the State Library of Western Australia, preserving and highlighting Western Australian new music works and performers in Western Australia and internationally. The initial stages of the project involved research into availability of materials, the methodologies of archiving new music and sound art, the function of metadata, key terms, ways of accessing material once placed on an electronic database and ways of linking with similar projects Australia wide. The project has also been investigating new models of copyright in addition to the evaluation of digitisation formats and database software.

10 New Newspaper Titles for Digitisation

The State Library has suggested the following titles to the National Library of Australia (NLA) for the next round of digitisation: the *Blackwood Times* 1905-1920, 1945-1954; *The Australian* 1917-1923 (RSL newspaper); the *Narrogin Observer* 1905-1918, 1952-1954; the *Northam Advertiser* 1895-1918, 1948-1954; the *Avon Gazette & Kellerberrin News* 1914-1916; the *Avon Gazette & York Times* 1916-1930; the *WA Record* 1888-1922; the *Southern Districts Advocate* 1913-1936; the *Leonora Miner* 1910-1928; the *Pingelly Leader* 1906-1925 and *The Sun* (Kalgoorlie) 1898-1919.

You will notice that all of these newspapers were published during World War I and that there are gaps in some of them; this is because the microfilm of the years missed was not of sufficient quality for digitisation (ie it had been microfilmed a long time ago) and has not been re-microfilmed. The NLA has also asked for a further 50 titles for the next 3 years and has agreed to count changes of title as one title - previously, if a newspaper changed title 5 times, to have that newspaper digitised would count as 5 titles; now it will count as one. That is why we have been concentrating on recently microfilmed titles with long runs as the same title. Once all these are digitised it will add around 585,000 new digitised WA pages to Trove.

Recent Acquisitions

Jean Butler and Laurie Allen report on the following new arrivals:



Evelyn Hay Robertson papers: notably an autograph album thought to have been collected by her from about 16 years of age. It contains signatures from family and friends from 1916-1924 from various locations including Blackboy Hill Camp, North Perth, Bunbury, Claremont, Cottesloe Beach and Subiaco. It has some illustrations by Harry Vernon Highman and entries from his father, Harry Vauneville Highman, including a poem, *Gallipoli 1915 the conflict*. Evelyn married Harry Vernon Highman in 1925, but they divorced in 1957. Harry then married Doris Ruby Halligan in 1957, but after her death in 1966, he and Evelyn remarried in 1968. After Harry's death in 1972, Evelyn married Francis Alexander Thomas in 1973. She passed away in 1999. The collection also includes marriage and death certificates, Harry's will and Harry's family history records.

Irene E Whitlock collection of Whitlock and Parker family photographs: Irene was one of seven daughters of Jonah Smith Wells Parker who was born in 1863 at Dangin, east of York (note: the State Library also holds a transcript of an oral history interview carried out with Jonah Parker in 1910). He established a eucalyptus oil industry on the Dangin property, and acquired significant land holdings for his branch of the family. He created and endowed the township of Dangin in 1908, and introduced a successful system of share farming which became well known throughout the State. In 1912 a water scheme involving construction of a weir at Toapin Rock was constructed on his land (by now one of the largest farms in Australia). After Jonah's death aged 51 in 1914, the Dangin Estate was sold to the Soldier Settlement Department and his widow Clara moved to Claremont where his seven daughters attended Methodist Ladies' College. The photographs, dating back to the 1890s, include Parker family and friends, Dangin Estate, Toapin Weir, and Claremont.

Loton Park Tennis Club photographs: mostly of winning inter-club pennants teams (1923-1997) together with a view of the clubhouse and grounds taken from Bulwer Street (probably pre-1930). The Loton Park Tennis Club is WA's second oldest tennis club, established in 1916, and named for Sir William Loton, who sold the land to the City of Perth in 1904. The clubhouse and grounds were completed in 1922 and are now heritage listed. Since 1995 Loton Park Tennis Club has been Australia's premier gay and lesbian tennis club. The photographs are captioned with competition details, dates and members' names and add a visual component to the State Library's existing holdings of Loton Park Tennis Club accounts, membership records, and minutes.

Richard Gale photographic collection: comprising the entire body of professional work of one of WA's leading advertising and commercial photographers, including colour transparencies, colour negatives, and black and white negatives in 'job bags' with dates and locations. Richard's company, Galeforce Photography, captured images of people, places, buildings, food, fashion, the North-west, and various developments around the state from 1983 onwards (e.g. Galleria 1995, the Superdrome, Canal Rocks, Channel 9, L. J. Hooker) providing a visual record to complement the State Library's recent *Illustrations Photography* acquisition. Richard Gale's photographs have won awards in New York, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

Whitfield family photographs: five daguerreotypes in embossed leather cases, believed to be Captain Francis Whitfield's wife Charlotte; his daughters Eliza and Anna; Nancy McDermott Green, née Turner; and Nancy's second husband Dr Alfred Green. The Whitfield, Turner and McDermott families were amongst the earliest settlers to WA. Captain Francis Whitfield was an Irishman who arrived in WA on the brig *James* in 1830 with his wife Charlotte (née Meares) and children Eliza, Anna, Francis, George, Charlotte, Edward, Jane and Thomas. The Whitfields took up land at Guildford and Helena Valley, and Francis became District Magistrate for Guildford and was involved in exploration and the development of the new colony. Eliza Whitfield married John Henty and moved to Victoria and Anna married the Reverend Porter and moved to Adelaide. Nancy Turner was the daughter of James Woodward Turner who arrived in 1829. She married Captain James McDermott in 1832 but he drowned



in 1834. In 1842 Nancy married Dr Alfred Green. Daguerreotypes are rare and unique portraits. The process was invented in 1839 and remained popular for about 20 years. Only one copy was made per sitting so there are no duplicates, and the expense of these portraits, housed in wood and leather cases lined with velvet, meant that only the wealthier classes could afford them.

Francis Aubie (Ali) Sharr photographic collection: slides, prints and negatives of WA architecture, 1950s-60s, indexed, together with notebooks, letters, postcards, speeches and programs. Ali (State Librarian 1956-76) was a keen photographer who captured architecture during his travels around the state overseeing the development of the WA public library system.

Philip Gostelow photographs of contemporary WA: includes photographs of the Geraldton Fishermen's Co-operative Ltd processing facility in North Fremantle, showing the various stages of the live lobster export; Mount Hawthorn Primary School Year 7 "clap out" ceremony; a suburban garage sale; Willetton skate park; Wellington Street temporary bus station; Perth International Airport cargo services; Karridale Crossroads roadhouse; East Augusta private jetties on the Blackwood River; Molloy caravan park; and Port Hedland (the port, Port Authority, Customs House, Police Station, War Memorial, Mining Museum, Yacht Club, Esplanade Hotel, local housing, shopping centre, BHP-Billiton, salt mining, and iron ore transport). These images capture social trends, leisure and business activities, industry and development in urban and regional Western Australia in 2015.

Mavis Walley photographic collection (lent for copying): comprising approximately 300 negatives and some prints relating to family and community life in Goomalling, 1950s-60s. This collection will be of great value to the Storylines database as it includes, in some cases, the only known images of Walley and Phillips family members. It also provides visual documentary evidence of the impact of the Native Welfare Act on the traditional indigenous way of life (clothing styles, accommodation, transport, farming and other activities captured on camera).

Steve Howell, Battye Librarian, State Library of WA

From the Foundation:

Newspapers: Their Erratic Life

The first newspapers appeared in the 16th century in Germany and with the advent of the printing press, quickly spread. In a world devoid of other communication systems, rich and educated people relied on this medium to find out the news in their local area and surrounds. With time and advances in technology, newspapers became more affordable and more popular. Although the early newspapers tended to devote themselves to the more sensational news, they were not afraid to exhibit bias and often were very selective in their reporting.

From these early days, newspapers have had a somewhat erratic life affected by the advent of such communication devices as radio, television and now the internet. In the modern world, we find the newspaper circulation slowly diminishing, particularly with the growth of independent media transmitted mainly through the internet. These days it is mainly the larger, more city-based newspapers that have survived and this leaves a dearth of local news for people in both metropolitan and regional



locations. In the main, these larger papers tend to only report on national and international items whilst state-based items are restricted to the most prominent items, or, in an eerie reflection of the early newspaper, the most sensational items.



Original offices of the *Inquirer* newspaper in St George's Terrace, Perth, c. 1860. SLWA Online Image: 024668PD.

As the world turns so does the fate of the newspaper - the larger city- based newspapers now have to find alternative means of getting their story across and there is a distinct emergence of the local newspaper/newsletter such as those generated by the Community Resource Centres across the state. It can be argued that local communities find these missives more relevant and more interesting than the larger, more global reports. Research shows we love where we live. Some 65 per cent of city residents have not moved home for at least five years, and more than 5.5 million own their own home. Once they've settled they want to know what's going on in the community, and research tells us that local newspapers play an important role in keeping them in touch.

Regional newspapers have a long-standing history of keeping readers up to date on local issues, representing the voice of the community. Readers trust them as the local authority, delivering relevant and factual news updates. We are harking back to a time when local matters and names familiar to us are the subject of the news that we want to read. Whilst researchers do not always find the newspaper to be the most reliable source of information, they are often a good starting point for a particular event, as the reporting is often 'on-the-spot', first hand observation.



State Library of Western Australia

Godfrey Wright, polio sufferer and newspaper seller reading the *Truth* Newspaper, 17/9/1927. SLWA Online Image: 049699PD.

The Library Foundation, recognising the worth and valuable content of these local newspapers, has launched a campaign entitled "On the Homefront" which is raising money to digitise a raft of early newspapers published around the time of World War 1. These newspapers reveal news from the battlefields but also provide fascinating insights into life back home, as families made the best of their day-to-day lives, often without their menfolk.

The newspapers once digitised will be uploaded to the popular Trove (<http://trove.nla.gov.au/>) and be available for all to peruse. The list of newspapers includes many from regional Western Australia that provide a valuable snapshot of life as it was back in the early days of the 20th century. For instance, this excerpt from the *Gnowangerup Times* on Saturday 16 November 1912 revealed that there were very few cars causing traffic congestion in Katanning in 1912:

Another splendid motor car has arrived in Katanning, the owner being Mr FTR Piesse. The car is a Darracq and has attracted a lot of attention. Still another of this popular means of locomotion is announced to arrive shortly.

The Foundation's website (<http://statelibraryfoundation.org.au/homefront>) has a list of the newspapers involved and in addition there are some diaries, journals and letters that will undergo the same process. The webpage also has details of how people can donate to this worthwhile cause.



Bringing these stories to life will help us to understand and appreciate the lives our ancestors lived, their challenges and their joys, their hardships and their triumphs. After all:

A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots. Marcus Garvey

Anne Chapple, Partnership Co-ordinator, State Library Foundation

Book note – *Castle Rackrent* by Maria Edgeworth:

To some of you, it may seem a little odd to be reviewing a book first published 215 years ago, in an edition reprinted 95 years later. Maria Edgeworth's works deserve the overworked expression 'timeless', particularly since they are now available free online through the good services of the University of Adelaide library, at <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/e/edgeworth/maria/castle/complete.html>.

My 1895 copy of *Castle Rackrent*, Miss Edgeworth's first novel, was given to me by a friend in Ireland several years ago, and came from Cathach Books, near Trinity College in Duke Street, Dublin, describing itself as 'Ireland's Leading Antiquarian Bookshop'. That may well be so, but the book is of interest, to me at least, for historical rather than antiquarian reasons (the word 'antiquarian' in its dilettante sense being anathema to serious historians). Having packed it away originally on returning to Australia and moving house, I re-discovered it recently while re-arranging my bookshelves.

Maria Edgeworth was a product of Ireland's 18th century Protestant Ascendancy. Although born in England, she lived for most of her long life (1768-1849) in Edgeworthstown (now also known as Mostrim), County Longford, which was 'owned' by her family. Hence the ironic title of *Castle Rackrent*; as an Ascendancy insider, she was able to comment on, and satirise, her class in a style first established by Jonathan Swift and continued by other Anglo-Irish writers such as Swift's fellow clergyman Laurence Sterne in *Tristram Shandy* and, to some extent, the Englishman William Makepeace Thackeray (in *Barry Lyndon* at least). Thackeray's daughter, Anne Thackeray Ritchie, an Edgeworth devotee, contributed the introduction to the 1895 edition of *Castle Rackrent*, which is also reproduced in the University of Adelaide online version.

Not included in the online version, unfortunately, is the fine artwork of the 1895 edition by Chris Hammond (1860-1900), who also illustrated works by Thackeray, Jane Austen, George Eliot and Oliver Goldsmith. Miss Hammond, who trained at the Royal Academy, abbreviated her first name from Christiana so that she could earn equal pay with male artists of the late 19th century; the Misses Edgeworth, Austen and Eliot (real name Mary Ann Evans) would no doubt have approved.

It is for their historical importance, so my friend Professor Ruan O'Donnell tells me, that Miss Edgeworth's works are very much still on the agenda at Ireland's institutions of higher learning. In a recent email, Professor O'Donnell, who teaches Irish and European history at the University of Limerick, said:

Peter, ME is very much in good standing and the book is taught in universities here as an example of the genre. The anti-rack renting landlord theme [is] obviously important. Many in the hereditary privileged element in the 18th and 19th Centuries were



not oblivious to the fact that 3% of the population ran 100% of the politics. The 'Great' O'Connell reduced the non-C[hurch] O[f] I[reland] electorate in 1829 in a country that was 80% Catholic. [There were] No remotely 'democratic' elections in either Ireland or Britain prior to December 1918 when slightly more than half for the very first time could vote. Satire [is] a major Irish theme; Swift, Sterne, [Wolfe] Tone *et al.* 'Irish' sense of humour?

As to that sense of humour, it is very much present in the works of Dean Swift; *A Modest Proposal*, for example, is one total outrageous leg-pull against the English, although its cannibalistic suggestion is tinged with a shade of bitterness as well. Starvation stalked Ireland in Swift's time, just as in the 1840s, largely through the mismanagement of absentee landlords and the rack-renting of tenants. This of course as Professor O'Donnell says, is also a major theme of Maria Edgeworth, who incidentally is credited with doing much more than many others in the Irish landlord class to alleviate her family's tenants' problems during the great famine years, even though by then she was aged and infirm.

There is no mention of this in Mrs Ritchie's introduction; she is nonetheless friendly and perceptive in her observations about the Edgeworths and the country in and around Edgeworthstown, which she visited nearly half a century after Maria Edgeworth's death. She quotes Maria Edgeworth approvingly as stating that while there exists a 'spirit of recrimination and retaliation which the lower Irish are too prone to cherish', they are nonetheless 'such acute observers that there is no deceiving them as to the state of the real feeling of their superiors.'

It followed therefore that when Maria's father voted in the Irish Parliament against the 1801 Act of Union with Great Britain, a decision which 'cost him his peerage', he became 'suddenly the idol of those who would previously have stoned him', the more so since he had refused an offer of £3000 – a huge sum – from the British Prime Minister, William Pitt, for his vote.

Maria's father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, had been responsible largely for her education, along with that of her 21 siblings from his four marriages; he also later edited some of her work. But apart from receiving formal education at his hands, she was a shrewd and careful observer of how he managed his estate; well and reasonably benevolently, by the standards of his time.

First and foremost, after his return to Ireland in 1778 with his third wife, he was not an absentee landlord. According to Mrs Ritchie, with Maria as her authority,

Mr Edgeworth desired that none of his tenants should pay rent to anyone but himself; thus taking away subordinate interference, he became individually acquainted with his tenantry. He also made himself acquainted with the different value of land on his estate. In every case where the tenant had improved the land his claim to preference over every new proposer was admitted.

In Miss Edgeworth's own words, 'Not being in want of ready money, my father was not obliged to let his land to the highest bidder. He could afford to have good tenants.'

He could afford to be reasonably indulgent in terms of time allowed for rent payment; by Maria's account this meant that his tenants 'rarely ventured to into arrears, and never did so with impunity.'

It was his practice likewise to ask rather than demand, when putting forward his wishes, and to appeal to the tenants' prejudices rather than putting forward his own convictions. Maria concluded it would be impossible for her



... without ostentation to give any of the proofs I might record of my father's liberality. Long after they were forgotten by himself, they were remembered by the warm-hearted people among whom he lived.

It should be remembered that *Castle Rackrent* in particular was written in what was the 'bad century' for the great Roman Catholic majority in Ireland; when, as Mrs Ritchie puts it, 'severity was the order', and

It was not ... only ignorance and fanaticism that encouraged the giving of pain, it was the universal custom. People were still hanged for stealing, women were still burnt ... in St Stephen's Green; though, it is true, they were considerably strangled first. Children were bullied and tortured with the kindest intentions ...

The great Irish writer Sean O'Faolain has described *Castle Rackrent* as one of not more than nine or ten 'feet-on-the-ground realistic novels' in modern Irish literature; perhaps this is why, according to Mrs Ritchie:

Sir Walter Scott has told us that it was Miss Edgeworth's writing which first suggested to him the idea of writing about Scotland and its national life. Tourgenieff [sic] in the same way says that it was after reading her books on Ireland that he began to write of his own country and of Russian peasants as he did. Miss Edgeworth was the creator of her own special world of fiction, though the active Mr Edgeworth crossed the t's and dotted the i's, interpolated, expurgated, to his own and Maria's satisfaction. She was essentially a modest woman; she gratefully accepted his criticism and emendations ... The only wonder is that, considering all they went through, his daughter's stories survived so well, with directness and conviction, that best of salt in any literary work.

Admirable man that he was in many ways, *Castle Rackrent*, the first of Maria's novels, may well be the better for his not having edited it as he did so much of her later work. The satirical note is fixed in the preface, when the editor – actually Maria herself – expresses hope that 'his' readers

... will observe that these are 'tales of other times;' that the manners depicted in the following pages are not those of the present age; the race of the Rackrents has long been extinct in Ireland; and the drunken Sir Patrick, the litigious Sir Murtagh, the fighting Sir Kit, and the slovenly Sir Condy, are characters which could no[t] ... be met with at present in Ireland.

Leg-pulling, of course, just as Swift did. They were still around, and they stayed there until their class was finally broken, along with its fine houses.

Consider how Sir Murtagh's wife – 'she was of the family of the Skinflints' – was

... very charitable in her own way. She had a charity school for poor children, where they were taught to read and write gratis, and where they were well kept to spinning gratis for my lady in return; for she had always heaps of duty yarn from the tenants, and got all of her household linen out of the estate from first to last; for after the spinning, the weavers on the estate took it in hand for nothing, because of the looms my lady's interest could get from the Linen Board to distribute gratis. Then there was a bleach-yard near us, and the tenant dare refuse my lady nothing, for fear of a lawsuit Sir Murtagh kept hanging over him about the water-course. With these ways of managing, 'tis surprising how cheap my lady got things done, and how proud she was of it. Her table, the same way, kept for next to nothing; duty fowls, and duty turkeys, and duty geese, came as fast as we could eat 'em, for my lady kept a sharp look-out, and knew to a tub of butter everything the tenants had, all round. They knew her way, and what with fear of driving for rent and Sir Murtagh's lawsuits, they were kept in such good order, they never thought of coming near Castle Rackrent without a present of something or other ...



The preceding passage typifies the book, and belies Mrs Ritchie's 1890s comment that: 'Perhaps we in our time scarcely do justice to Miss Edgeworth's extraordinary cleverness and brightness of apprehension ... Those were the days of good rollicking jokes and laughter.' There are jokes and laughter in *Castle Rackrent*, to be sure, but more often than not with an edge.

The warning was there for the Ascendancy; if they had all behaved toward their tenants as did the Edgeworth's, then perhaps the bands of armed men with fiery torches would not have burned so many of them out when the time of retribution finally came in the 20th century – a fate which Edgeworthstown House conspicuously avoided.

Dr Peter Gifford MPHA

They Served with Honour - Untold Stories of WA Aboriginal Servicemen at Gallipoli:

From the website of the Aboriginal History Research Unit at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs:

The unknown story of 13 Western Australian Aboriginal Servicemen who served at Gallipoli have been brought to light in a book titled *They Served with Honour: Untold Stories of Western Australian Aboriginal Servicemen at Gallipoli*.

Over the last decade, there has been a growing interest in Australia about the contribution made by Aboriginal men and women in times of war. Whilst their involvement in our nation's more recent conflicts is featured in many contemporary publications, little is known about Aboriginal service in World War I (1914-1918), and even less about their role at Gallipoli. It is estimated around fifty Aboriginal men fought during this Campaign. The stories of those who served have to a large extent remained untold or, in some cases, known only to the immediate families. Faced with the prospect of losing these stories forever, comprehensive research has been undertaken to provide an insight into the lives of thirteen Aboriginal Western Australian servicemen who fought at Gallipoli.

Their stories include tales of courage, valour, of finding love, and of their continued struggles post-war.

This book is available as a free download here: <http://www.daa.wa.gov.au/en/Aboriginal-History-Research-Unit/They-Served-With-Honour/>



Items of Interest:

Royal Western Australian Historical Society (Inc.)



HISTORY IN THE CITY 2015 PROGRAM

Why not come to Perth,
hear something of WA's history,
have a marvellous afternoon tea
and do some shopping?

EVERYONE WELCOME!

WHERE: at Citiplace Conference Room
Perth Railway Station Concourse

WHEN: 2pm, 1st Wednesday of the month
Entry \$5.00 at the door

Wed 3 Jun **Bruce Devenish** – *Sir James Mitchell's legacy to Western Australia.*

Wed 1 Jul **Barbara Hellriegel** – *Picture Our Past: celebrating Joondalup's past together.*
Barbara traces the history of a small hamlet in the 1800s to today's city landscape
through photographs, clippings, and oral history

Wed 5 Aug **Sue Hobson** – *Cast Iron Letterboxes of WA and the J & E Ledger Foundry.*

Royal WA Historical Society Tel : 9386 3841

Enquiries: History in the City Committee
Royal WA Historical Society.
Weekdays, 9.30am-5.00pm
Tel. 9386 3841
A/hours, Lorraine Tholet 9342 3439



Call for papers: Circa Issue 5

Submission to *Circa: The Journal of Professional Historians* is open to all members of Professional Historians Associations in Australia.

Contributions are invited in the following categories:

- **Explorations** – Issues we face as professional historians
- **Discoveries** – Discovering and telling a story
- **Reflections** – Thinking about history, its impact on us and our role in understanding it

Reviews of books, exhibitions or other relevant forms of historical interpretation are also welcome and encouraged.

Issue 5 will be published in July 2016. The closing date for papers for Issue 5 is **31 July 2015**.

A prize of \$500 will be offered for the best article and two prizes of \$150 each will be offered for articles that are highly commended.

Submissions and correspondence should be directed to the [Editor](#).

All submissions must conform to the requirements detailed in the Circa Submission Guidelines, which can be downloaded from the PHA website at the following link: <http://www.historians.org.au/acpha/Circa/index.shtml>

Registrations Now Open: OHA Conference, Perth 2015



Fast Forward: Oral History in a Time Of Change

Registration is now open for the national Oral History Australia conference to be held in Perth 9 - 12 September 2015. Take advantage of Early Bird offers which **close 31 July 2015**.

Further information about the program as well as registration forms can be found here:

<http://www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/page/conferences.html>



2015 Margaret Medcalf Award

This Award is made each year rewarding the authors/creators of works demonstrating excellence in research and referencing using original sources in the State archives collection.

The 2015 Award winner will be announced at an event held at 10am on Wednesday 24 June 2015 at the State Library of WA.

For further information please contact Gerard Foley at gerard.foley@sro.wa.gov.au.

Next Newsletter Deadline:

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 by 14 August 2015** and can be sent to Newsletter Editor Chris Owen.



PHA (WA) Management Committee 2014-2015:

President	Kris Bizzaca
Vice-President	Vacant
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Teegan Gaunt & Jennifer Weir
Membership Secretary	Sue Graham-Taylor
Committee Members	Prue Griffin
	Chris Owen
	Cathy Day
	Kerry King
PHA Representative	Kris Bizzaca & Sue Graham-Taylor

Sub-Committees 2014-2015:

Rules & Incorporation	Kris Bizzaca
Promotions & Publications	Sue Graham-Taylor, Cathy Day, Prue Griffin
Newsletter Editor	Chris Owen
Credentials	Sue Graham-Taylor, Robin Chinnery (co-opted)
Commissioned History	Prue Griffin, Sue Graham-Taylor

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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