



HISTORY WEST™

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September 2023

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The next meeting at Stirling House is on Wednesday 20 September at 6pm.
Refreshments available from 5.30pm; Bookshop open until 6pm.

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Apologies.
 2. Confirmation of minutes of AGM, 21 September 2022.
 3. Business arising from the minutes.
 4. Treasurer's Report and presentation of Annual Accounts.
 5. President & Chairperson's Annual Report.
 6. Declaration of elected members to replace outgoing Council members.
 7. Confirmation of Patron and Vice-Patrons.
 8. Approval of Honorary Advisors recommended by Council.
 9. General Business.
- Meeting closes.

Following the meeting, **Patrick Cornish will present a talk on 'Keepers of the Flame: The Leake family of Kellerberrin'.**

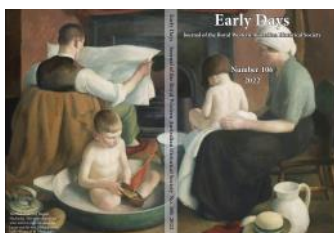


Three generations of Leakes 1923: Robert Buck Leake (1837-1924), son Bruce Wyborn Leake (1880-1962), and grandson Robert Bruce 'Rob' Leake (1914-2001).

Aren't we all historians to a lesser degree? I do not wish to stretch the word too far, but I detect a mild, but determined, historical function to many citizens who gather and distribute facts and views. Many keep old photos, for example, that we can all share.

The Leake farming family of the Kellerberrin district made a good living out of wheat and sheep, but it is not their agricultural achievements that I commend during my talk to members this month. It is their combine harvest of news and photographs that tell us what it was like to live there and then. They breathed, baked, chatted, prepared the horses and carts for visits to York and Perth. And Jane Parker Leake, wife of Robert Buck Leake, went further. She launched a monthly newspaper, the *Mooranoppin Times*. And she asked her husband to read it aloud to the family. Jane was to die tragically young but there was another family member to take up the baton — Jane's second daughter, Amy aged thirteen. Her newspaper was called *The Thunderer*.

Patrick Cornish has given history quite a nudge during his lifetime of reporting and sub-editing for newspapers and magazines. More than two decades ago, when the *West Australian* started a dedicated obituary page, he got the gig of section editor and chief writer. Nowadays he writes and edits books as well as contributing obituaries on a freelance basis to WA's daily paper.



This year's issue of *Early Days* is available!

Early Days, no. 106, 2022 was happily launched at August's General Meeting and all of those who requested a copy should have received it. There are many interesting articles, so we hope that you are all enjoying reading it. Thanks indeed to our splendid editors Heather Campbell & Jennie Carter.

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Forthcoming Events — Don't forget to book!

Or ring the office 9386 3841 admin@histwest.org.au



Stirling House, Nedlands

Wednesday 27 September, 10 for 10.30am

Sally Anne Hasluck

Digitising John Forrest Scrapbook - a journey

This scrapbook, closed for 150 years, is now open and digitised. A personal record by John Forrest of his expeditions in a collection of letters, telegrams and reports in newspapers

Tickets \$10, Bookings essential



[Click here to book](#)



**Citiplace Conference Room,
Perth Rwy Station Concourse**

Wed 6 Sept – 2pm

Dr Fiona Bush

A History of Stained Glass in Western Australia (1850-2003).

Entry \$10 at door,
No booking required



**A Vision for Australia's Health:
Dr Cecil Cook at Work**

Barry Leithhead

Thursday 12 October, 4.30-7pm

launch by Nicholas Hasluck

Dr Cook was an Australian physician and medical administrator specialising in tropical diseases and public health, especially leprosy.



'Orange Grove' Afternoon Tea

in the McLeod's splendid Mundaring gardens
with sculptures plus an outstanding gallery
— a private collection of WA art

Sunday 22 October 2-5pm

A unique function to fundraise for new premises

Tickets: \$90 per person Numbers limited.



[Click here to book](#)



History West Annual Lecture 2023

From Perth to Canberra & back again: 3000 km but only nanoseconds apart

**Dr Marie-Louise Ayres FAHA,
Director-General National Library of Australia (NLA)**

The Society thanks all members and supporters — 150 of them — who attended the annual lecture fundraiser to hear Dr Ayres speak. We were treated to a fascinating talk with audiovisual support that showcased the NLA's ongoing work across Australia. Apparently there are occasional West Australians who respond to her focus on the NLA by asking — Why would I be interested in a library in Canberra? She well and truly answered that question, explaining the myriad of services, collaborations and supports the NLA provides WA.

Dr Ayres began by illustrating the size of the national collection, saying that the shelf space would stretch from Perth to Margaret River! She followed by discussing the archival collections preserved by the library. The NLA concentrates on collections in Australian politics and literature, and we were reminded of many famous West Australians whose private papers rest at the NLA. These collections are wide-ranging and access to them is increasingly available to us all via the library's rapidly expanding digitisation program. This program is making outreach around Australia easier and we all benefit from newly digitised records coming online regularly. Perhaps most of all we consumers benefit from TROVE, the online aggregator database that has transformed the work of all historical researchers. Launched 2009, it is a one-stop-shop bringing collections of wonderful things together to become a starting point for everyone's searches. The online availability of Australia's newspapers is a particular joy.

However, our speaker was keen to explain to an audience of non-librarians that much of the good work is done behind the scenes in collaborations among the state libraries and NLA. The NLA might sit there physically on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin but it reaches out effectively to us all.

The lecture can now be viewed on our Facebook page.

Please donate for a new future, a new home, a new Community History Centre.



Community Talk

A utopian suffragist settlement at Denmark: Emily Crawford's plan

Miriam Crandell

This story of Emily Crawford's struggle to realise her dream of establishing a farming community for female emigrants at Denmark in the early 20th century was both fascinating and sad. It told of a vision that never came to be and that drove Emily to a nervous breakdown. Emily Crawford was an English suffragette and a leader of the Householders' League which aimed to see British women set up independent farming ventures overseas with small scale cultivation based on co-operative principles. Women would lead these enterprises and would own the land. Women's 'petit culture' would involve poultry raising and fruit and vegetable growing.

While the WA State government did not initially block the scheme it did become increasingly sceptical, regarding the plans as impractical, utopian and doomed to failure. As it was, the Denmark venture did not properly begin because of a clash between the women's plans and the details of WA's Land Act. The press also sensationalised and mocked the proposal.

The London suffragist group was drawn to WA because women here had voting rights that they were denied in Britain at the time. Emily attempted to establish her settlement at Denmark and petitioned the government to change the name of the town to 'Emilliah' – presumably after herself. However, Emilliah never eventuated and the story was forgotten. Miriam rediscovered and researched it for her History Honours thesis at UWA in 2016. It is one of those intriguing 'what-if?' stories in history and we all very much enjoyed listening to it.

Emily Crawford was indeed a surprising woman. Born in 1844 her first career was as a professional artist. She married, was widowed with no children, wrote three romance novels and embraced feminism, believing that women needed to be engaged in politics for society to progress and for women's equality to be won. She did not give up on this dream for the rest of her life, dying in 1919 aged 75.



History in the City

Rachel Roe



Our August speaker, Dr Nathan Hobby, delivered a fascinating insight into the globally acknowledged author – Katharine Susannah Prichard. It is no surprise that Nathan won the 2023 WA Premier's Book Award for *The Red Witch*. It seems he left no stone unturned in his meticulous biographical research. Nathan's presentation revealed Katharine's unique life journey from birth in Fiji (1883), through childhood poverty in Melbourne, marriage to Hugo Throssell, their son Ric, and then her long widowhood as the 'red witch' of Greenmount, a label which caught on because of her loyalty to communism and unconventional ways.

Despite protests from family members, Katharine was determined to become a writer. Initially working as a journalist, she published articles in magazines, wrote short stories, poetry, plays and published many novels. Her first story appeared in 1899 and her final novel in 1967. Prichard died 1969 at her Greenmount home aged 85. Nathan discussed the books this literary giant wrote which depicted Australian ways of life in a variety of regional areas such as Pilbara stations, goldfields or the opal mining area of Lightning Ridge NSW - *Black Opal* (1921). Her first novel written in WA - *Working Bullocks* (1926) was set in the karri forests of South-West Australia. It was jolly exciting when an audience member showed us a large historical book created using hand-made paper and inscribed to Katharine and her husband.

Please join us for our talks at Citiplace Community Centre (Conference Room) Perth Railway Concourse at 2pm, first Wednesday of the month - \$10 entry includes afternoon tea.

6 Sept: Fiona Bush – A History of Stained Glass in WA (1850-2003)

4 Oct: Jane Lydon – Our Slavery Legacy, including WA legacies

1 Nov: Bill Cutler – C Y O'Connor and the Pipeline.

6 Dec: Richard Offen – WA, an historical boast – from Pilbara fossils to early Swan River buildings

First call for books for the 2024 Giant Second Hand Book Sale



Donate any books you no longer want to a good cause.

Bring them to Stirling House or call 9386 3841 to arrange a pick up.

All books, except textbooks and encyclopedias, are wanted.

Many thanks from us all.

Stories from the Storerooms

Wembley Ware

Dr Dorothy Erickson

To continue our story of the Calyx and Brisbane & Wunderlich potteries



Cruet set, 1946-1960.
MA 2011.26



Tasmania Souvenir dish,
ca1950s. MA2011.22



Swan Ashtray, 1946-1960.
MA2011.30



Snapper platter, 1946-1960.
MA2011.19

These colourful pieces are part of the Society's collection of Wembley Ware, which was made during the years of import restrictions after World War II. Mrs Pat Griffiths donated all four items.

Produced from 1946 to 1960, Wembley Ware was an artware range that was functional, decorative, exuberant and very popular as there was little competition from abroad. The range serviced the needs of most Western Australians until the relaxation of import duties and the advent of the Crafts Movement and studio-potters in the early 1960s.

In an effort to attract a lower sales tax classification, the objects were frequently over-embellished functional ware. All the objects illustrated would have been classed as functional wares yet could serve a decorative purpose. A gilded swan is not necessary on an ashtray and a sculpted fish, although classed as a vase, was really a decorative object.

At this time the chief modeller was English-born John Tribe who had arrived in WA in 1925 and had taken art therapy under Guy Grey Smith at the Wooroloo TB Sanatorium. Norman Sherratt, an artist and decorator who was previously employed at Royal Doulton, worked at the factory from about 1958 to 1962. The Society has one of his pieces – a vase painted with an image of an Aboriginal man spearfishing. Many refugees and other migrants contributed their expertise, especially in the early post-war years. One long-time pottery worker was 'Gurtie' Dziwinski who arrived in 1951 to join her husband who had travelled ahead in 1950. She needed to reskill for work in the new country and was taught casting by William Yates. She worked in the casting shop until retirement in 1980. These workers would have met two Australian artists who were employed to make demonstration pieces to illustrate the qualities of the clay – Edward and Eileen Kohler, who later produced a range of their own pottery known as Kohlerware.

A new manager in 1960, Arthur Wells, oversaw another change in direction. Wunderlich became known for its quality ceramic technicians, including Mike Kusnik (from Czechoslovakia) who also lectured in ceramic technology at Perth Technical College and later WAIT, now Curtin University). The firm first experimented with making bone china but did not proceed with domestic tableware because of competition from the newly opened Johnson factory in Victoria, and Japanese and English imports. Instead they concentrated on hotel ware and developed a stronger, fully vitreous porcelain body. By 1968 Brisbane & Wunderlich was the second largest pottery in Australia. It also made vitrified earthenware and employed 152 people. Two tunnel kilns operated in the whiteware division. Yet together with all the other manufacturers they still supplied only 10–15 per cent of domestic demand.

In 1978, when the Wunderlich brick-making interests were divested, there was a name change to Bristle Ltd and in 1987 the name was changed again – to Bristle Fine China. A year later, when Stuart Knott took over as the general manager, a new range of hotel ware was developed for five-star hotels, and local artists were asked to prepare designs. Jill Smith, Sandra Black and other WAIT-trained ceramicists were commissioned as well as interstate artists. Smith undertook considerable research locally and in the USA on computer technology for the industry. Unfortunately the Society does not have any of these very attractive works in the collection but hopefully one day that will be remedied. By 1992 the pottery became part of the Futuris Corporation Ltd and changed its name to Australian Fine China.

With improved air and sea transport and high domestic labour costs, companies found off-shore production the more economical way to go and eventually Australian Fine China ceased to manufacture in WA. From 2005 the ceramics have been produced overseas in various countries including Brazil, China and Dubai. It was the end of an era for one of the few manufacturing industries remaining in WA.



Lustre fish vase, 1947-1960,
donated by Pat Griffiths.
MA2011.23



Norman Sherratt vase, 1958-1962,
donated by T G McKenzie estate.
MA2015.4.



Endeavour Replica Mug,
Bristle Fine China, 1993.
Found in collection; donor
unknown. MA2009.173a-b.



Challenger pill boxes,
Bristle Fine China,
commissioned by the
Society. MA2004.252a-b

Affiliates News

Busselton Historical Society

presents

GALA DAY 2023

Old Butter Factory Precinct
76 Peel Tce, Busselton
Sunday 1 October
9am-3pm

Come and immerse yourself in our history
on the banks of the Vasse River
Entry: Adult \$5, Children free

In July the RWAHS welcomed members of the **Toodyay Historical Society** — Beth Frayne, Adam O'Neill (committee member & researcher), Milton Baxter (committee member) and his wife Faye Baxter. A special Toodyay book display was set up in the front room and the group undertook a tour of the collections, with advice on archival storage.



Denmark Historical Society is celebrating its 40th birthday and *Koorabup* contains an interview with member Gilbert Wrightson about the early years of the Society. A busy year for the Society culminated in its successful hosting of last year's State History Conference. Congratulations from us all!

Eastern Goldfields Historical Society newsletter *Goldfields Diggings* is always full of interesting features! For instance, it has revisited the story of the 1929 centenary memorial to Paddy Hannan at the corner of Hannan and Wilson Streets, Kalgoorlie.

EGHS member H E Beer reported in 1951:

The Paddy Hannan memorial fountain at the town hall corner, while being a tribute to the founder of Kalgoorlie, is intended to remind the present generation of the great hardships and privations, particularly in regard to water, endured by that great band of pioneers who blazed trails into the unknown in search of gold, and incidentally laid the foundations for the real beginning of the development of this State. It is, too, emblematic of their great generosity. No prospector would refuse another a drink no matter how little was in his bag. The motto was "Share and share alike and trust to luck to find more". Up to 1928 the only memorial to the



foundation of Kalgoorlie was a miserable, stunted and dying "pepper" tree planted in what is believed to be the hole from which the first gold came....

The Kalgoorlie Municipal Council ... offered a prize of £5/5/0 for the best suggestion for a memorial to the founder of Kalgoorlie.... The special committee reported and recommended that Keith Craig of Ward Street be awarded the prize. He believed that the best way to perpetuate the memory of Paddy Hannan would be to erect a drinking fountain showing him in typical prospecting garb and carrying a water bag from which the precious water flowed. ... "It is only fitting" wrote Keith, "that now, thanks to Forrest and O'Connor, we have plenty of water. Paddy Hannan, as representative of those early pioneers, should dispense it freely and at the same time remind the drinker how much is owed to the privations of the pioneers and the courage, ingenuity and skill of Lord Forrest and C Y O'Connor. It should also be a lesson in unselfishness".... The fountain, paid for by public subscription, was erected on its present site and memorial tablets to Forrest and O'Connor placed in close proximity on the wall of the town hall and unveiled as part of the state centenary celebrations in 1929.

In July the EGHS awarded a bursary to Dr Belinda Beattie to work on a publication titled 'The Most Despised Residents on WA's Eastern Goldfields 1896-1905: Pimps and Brothel Proprietors'. We look forward to the publication.

As well, *Goldfields Diggings* draws our attention to the splendid website of the Goldfields Aboriginal Language Centre - <https://wangka.com.au> On the site you will find a number of digitised books, including histories of Mount Margaret; for instance, Margaret Morgan's *A Drop in a Bucket. The Mount Margaret Story*.

ADVERTISEMENT

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Sold-30 Neville Rd, Dalkeith -51 years in the family
Sold-4/1 Webster St, Nedlands - 26 years in the family
Downsizer available Off-Market - Waroonga Rd, Nedlands

I enjoy helping people make complex tasks
as simple as possible.

Daniel Ranshaw

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or

dranshaw@realmark.com.au

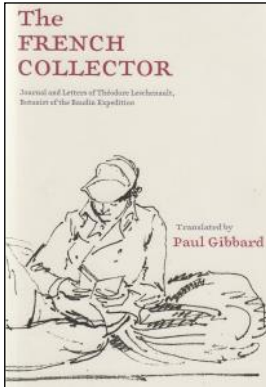


Realmark

Book Reviews

Paul Gibbard (trans.), *The French Collector: Journals and Letters of Théodore Leschenault, Botanist of the Baudin Expedition*, UWA Publishing, Perth, 2023. In Library.

Reviewer: Bernice Barry



As I watched the ocean's restless waves break on the shore, I was seized by a feeling of terror. This, this, will be my home for several years! I cried. And tears welled up in my eyes.

Théodore Leschenault (1773-1826) was born in Chalon, Burgundy, but today he is more widely known in Australia than in his native France. He was just 26, with no professional experience in

botanical collecting, when he applied to join an expedition to Australia in 1800 under the command of Nicolas Baudin, hoping at most to be offered the post of an assistant. Against the odds and the competition, and to his 'great surprise', he was given the position of senior botanist. In six years, he had made the transition from a prisoner of the French Revolution to Government Botanist. As a young man with a dissolved marriage already behind him and, perhaps, a desire to distance himself from the past, he recorded in his journal of the voyage not only detailed observations of what he saw and experienced but also his reflections on why he was there and the importance of the work.

I hope to gain some credit from it and prepare the ground for all the satisfactions of heart and mind in later life – those supreme delights that are independent of the events that occur in life (p.80)

Dr Paul Gibbard was given the opportunity to study and translate the original journal, thought lost for two hundred years, after it was discovered in 2016 at an auction in France. It includes chapters never seen before by researchers, providing a rich source of new observations and insights into Leschenault's personal thoughts. The Baudin expedition was tasked with charting the 'southern lands' and documenting not just botanical findings but also scientific activities, conduct towards indigenous people and the health of the crew on board the *Géographe* and *Naturaliste*. Therefore the journal is rich in details of Leschenault's encounters with all things new to him – places and people, flora and fauna – anecdotes that intrigue and surprise. His views reflect the society he came from and illuminate, sometimes starkly, historical differences in attitudes and values, particularly towards race, gender and culture.

The story of exploration told by the journal is at the heart of this book. It includes information about arrival at Cape Leeuwin in WA and what the British named Geographe Bay, but there is much more that will be of interest to a wide range of readers. A fascinating introduction, drawn from sources not previously used, provides a short but vivid biography of Leschenault's early life, including his imprisonment in a former convent for apparent belief in the concept of 'noble privilege' because his socially ambitious father was

using a newly acquired title that represented the family as aristocratic. As a prisoner, he slept in bed number 48 in the old sacristy, one of many examples of meticulous research that enliven this account.

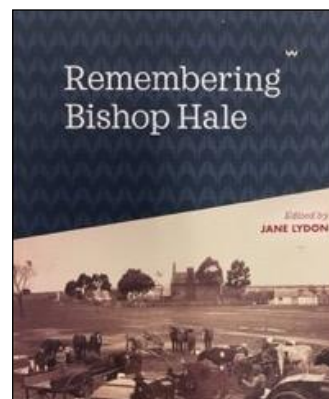
Other sections, very useful for keeping track of people, timelines and travels, include brief biographic information on all the shipmates mentioned in the journal, a simple chronology of Leschenault's life, another of the expedition, and maps of its route 1801-1802. The journal was a document he was employed to produce so examples of his letters provide a contrast, personal writing where he was more able to let emotions flow. The style is typical of the period and can seem flowery or grammatically formal today but it captures the essence of that time and place, preserving not just meaning but also feelings.

Research for this book was supported through the Baudin Legacy Project and funded by an Australian Research Council grant. Through skilled and thoughtful translation, the language of seafaring, science and botany, written in French more than two hundred years ago, is rendered accessible and interesting for a general reader today. The outcome of Gibbard's scholarship and in-depth background knowledge is a book that brings to life a turbulent period that shaped many futures, and a man whose insights into the world around him are sometimes surprisingly resonant.

We are setting out to visit unknown peoples; perhaps the moment of their discovery will be the start of their misfortune. But no, that can't be true, today's governments are more enlightened, they will be just...

Jane Lydon (ed.), *Remembering Bishop Hale*, Wakefield Press, SA, 2022. In Library & Bookshop \$35.

Reviewer: Pamela Statham Drew



The editor Jane Lydon's aim for this book is not only to tell the story of Mathew Hale's life but also to demonstrate his importance to Australian history. This reinterpretation has been made possible by his granddaughter Sophie's 2015 discovery of Hale's diaries from his time in WA (1858-1868). The diaries have been entrusted to Hale School,

transcribed by Patrick Bunbury and placed online by the State Library of WA.

The editor begins by providing an historical overview assisted by her research into the impact of the abolition of slavery in 1833. She notes that Hale fervently believed imperial conquest 'Cannot be right until she [England] exercises her mighty power as a means for promoting the glory of God and the welfare and happiness of mankind'. Christianising and educating indigenous people was a powerful ideal for Hale, but Lydon notes his pragmatism: 'it is one thing to stand on a platform and to hold forth about the duty of going to the heathen; but it is quite another thing to go oneself'.

Lydon believes Hale had significant influence in three areas – penal policy, transportation and secular challenges to religion in the colonies. He wrote a tract in 1857 on *The Transportation Question or Why WA should be made a Reformatory Colony instead of a Penal Settlement*, urging implementation of a progressive ticket of leave system. His alert to the Colonial Office and British contacts about the harsh penal regime of despotic Governor Hampton forced Hampton's early recall. Lydon claims that Hale's influence in reforming the system has not been sufficiently appreciated by historians. She suggests Hale was also influential in responding to the religious and secular challenges of the time. With moderate views, he was sympathetic to WA's evangelicals and, though opposed to the Roman Catholic Church, he negotiated with its representatives and was sensitive to claims for additional government relief given the increasing Catholic population. Though never abrogating Anglican supremacy Hale worked with Governor Weld to enact legislation providing equal support for all denominations.

In her chapter Peggy Brock compares Hale's views with those of Lutheran missionaries in South Australia. She demonstrates how German missionaries 'supported the survival of Aboriginal traditions', by adopting their mode of living, their kaurna language and culture, while Hale believed indigenous people could be effectively trained only 'if they were taken at a young age from all connection with native customs'. Brock argues that, while the Lutheran missions eventually collapsed from lack of support, Hale's success was reliant on access to money and establishment contacts rather than missionary policy.

Michael Challen focuses on commentary on the colony, the Church and Hale himself, portraying Hale as 'a conscientious man whose privileged upbringing did not prevent his willing endurance of hard work...and the social limitations of the new colonies'.

Rowan Strong examines Hale's personal theology in the context of debates between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics, noting that both Hale's biographers, A de Quetteville Robin and Michael Gourlay, portray Hale as evangelistic in outlook. Strong argues that Hale was traditional High Church, sympathetic to Evangelicals and opposed to Anglo-Catholics, especially Roman Catholics, making him suited to be a successful leader of the colonial church.

Odhran O'Brien looks at denominational relations within the colony as Bishop Hale and Catholic Bishop Griver vie for government support in the context of growing separation between church and state. O'Brien demonstrates the proportionate decline of the Anglican population and rising Catholic numbers which bolstered the latter's claims for state support. He then assesses Hale's role in influencing Governor Weld to provide support for each denomination based on its proportion of the total population.

Jane Lydon surveys mementos Hale retained in retirement, particularly photographs of young people from Poonindie. She asserts that Hale and his cohorts collected memorabilia from their mission days in order to change perceptions of Aborigines as inferiors to a humanitarian view of them as equals. These mementos then formed the basis for his memoir – a chronological account of mission work.

In studying the challenges Hale faced, Norman Etherington examines three of Hale's contemporaries – Bishops Robert Gray (Cape Town); George Selwyn (NZ); and John Colenso (Natal), and concludes that Hale's difficulties differed in scale rather than kind and were more prominent during his time in Queensland than in WA, where he was protected to some extent by the lack of a Tractarian presence and the status of his wife's family, the Molloyes.

I thoroughly recommend this book.

Community Officer:	Lesley Burnett
Editor <i>History West</i>:	Dr Lenore Layman

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