



Founded 1926

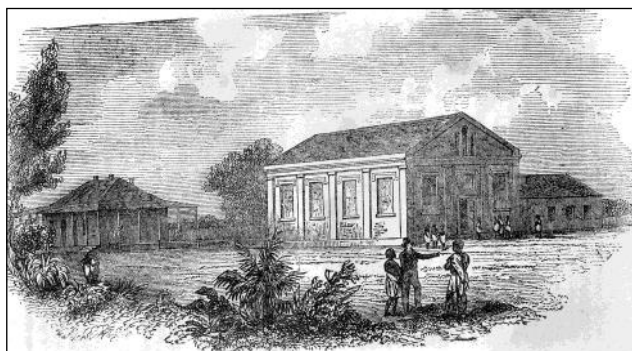
HISTORY WEST

PUBLISHED BY THE ROYAL WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

June 2024

GENERAL MEETING

The next meeting at Stirling House is on Wednesday 19 June at 6pm when Janet Osborne will present a talk on 'To "be sufficiently civilized": Nyungar owners of Town Lots at Perth, Guildford and York, 1841-51'. Refreshments available from 5.30pm; Bookshop open until 6pm.



Perth Wesleyan 'Centenary Chapel' (1840-1867).
Courtesy: Uniting Church Archives.

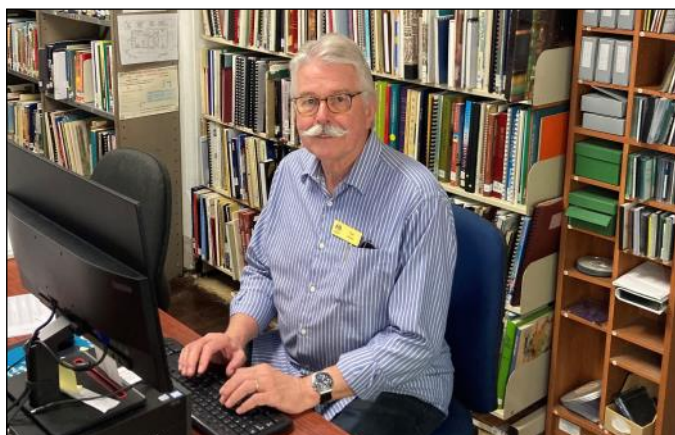
My talk explores an aspect of the early colonial past which has been rarely noted: the colonial administration's practice between 1841 and 1851 of granting town lots at Perth, Guildford and York to Nyungar men, under certain conditions. I will also briefly discuss other examples of Nyungar land ownership under the colonial system, and Governor Hutt's scheme for allocating land to white men who married Nyungar women.

Janet Osborne is a PhD Candidate in Archaeology and History at the University of Western Australia. She has worked for nearly 20 years as a native title research anthropologist in the goldfields and southwest of WA. As a Swan River Colony settler-descendant,



she has a strong interest in the early contact history of Nyungar country. This talk evolved from research that won't make it into her yet-to-be-completed dissertation on the history and archaeology of early Swan River Colony missions.

New Volunteer



We are delighted to welcome new volunteer **Tom Hunt** to our Library team.

Welcome to new members

John Andrewartha, Des Bradley, Vaughan Brown, Bernadette Doolan, Richard Goodwin, Zara Jones, Diana Lloyd, Arlene Philip, Lorin Walker, Wanneroo Community History Centre.

A Giving Time Preserving History June 2024



Celebrate the cultural diversity of this State by supporting **The Royal WA Historical Society** in its preservation of collections and promotion of history.

Now is the time to give: an end-of-year tax-deductible donation that will make a difference to the work of the Society.

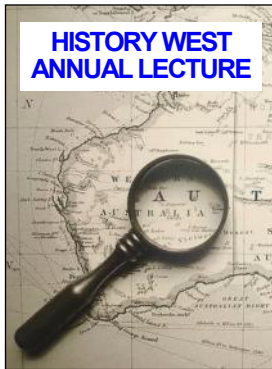
Make a choice of gift on the website

www.histwest.org.au

Or [click here](#) to donate direct

Forthcoming Events — Don't forget to book!

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



UWA Club Auditorium
Thursday 6 June, 5.30 for 6pm

People's stories making Australian history

Chaired by Professor Jane Lydon, a panel of three speakers will explore the three epic stories which shape Australia today — our ancient heritage, British inheritance and multicultural transformation

Panelists

- Steve Kinnane** – family history and Miriwoong story making
- Mike Lefroy** – British heritage in family stories
- Susanna Iuliano** – the Italian multicultural strand in Australia's story

Book online at www.trybooking.com/CPXGB



Citiplace Conference Room,
Perth Rwy Station Concourse

Wed 5 June, 2pm

Tales from the bush, tales from the sea: snapshots of Dongara and the Irwin Districts

Dr Bruce Baskerville & Trish Parker
of the Irwin Districts Historical Society

Come for a sneak peek into some of the people and places that will feature at the State History Conference in Dongara in September. For instance, Sojan Singh, the early Sikh businessman who defied societal convention; Annie Money, *The Lady with the Hurricane Lamp*, who never gave up searching for her sons lost at sea; the recently discovered *Lost Lane* featuring an astonishing wealth of biodiversity; and the much-loved Denison House, which has served as mill, residence of the town's first doctor, and retreat for the Benedictine Order of New Norcia.



COMMUNITY PANEL

Stirling House, 49 Broadway, Nedlands

Tuesday 25 June, 10 for 10.30am

Women of Spirit – A Centenary of CWA Stories

2024 marks the centenary of the Country Women's Association (CWA) of WA. It is a memorable year and the CWA has published *Women of Spirit – A Centenary of CWA Stories*, a storybook which telling 100 stories of women, from remote, rural and metropolitan WA who have faced challenges, endured hardships, supported one another, and worked to improve the lives of women, men and children.

A panel consisting of the CEO of CWA, editorial team members & Honorary Life Members will explain how the book came to fruition as well as telling the stories of some of WA's extraordinary women.

Cost \$15

To book online [Click here](#)
or scan the QR code



TOUR



Australian Army Museum of W.A.

Artillery Barracks, Burt St, Fremantle

Friday 19 July, 9.30 for 10am

A walking tour of WA's Australian Army Museum.

This museum houses a treasure trove of army memorabilia tracing WA's military history from colonial times to the present. After the tour morning tea will be served giving us an opportunity to swap impressions of our visit.

Cost \$25. Bookings essential

photo ID essential for participants to sign in.

Meet at checkpoint gate, 6 Burt Street, Fremantle.

To book online [Click here](#)
or scan the QR code



Boorloo Perth Heritage Festival

Going to Town

Wendy Lugg



History West's museum team has been busy with a major project this year, preparing and presenting the *Going To Town* exhibition as part of the City of Perth's Boorloo Heritage Festival. With the help of a grant from the City,

the exhibition was mounted across three prominent venues — Perth Town Hall, London Court and Trinity Arcade. An associated visual presentation was shown at various times on the City's two large screens in Forrest Chase and Northbridge Piazza.

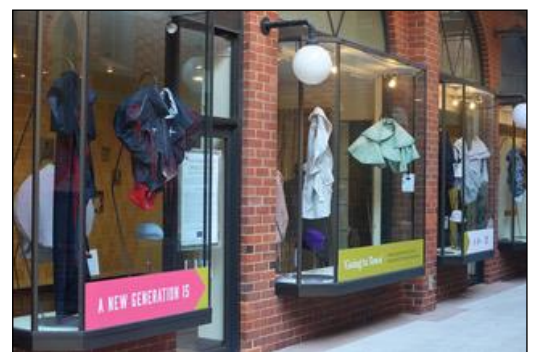
Going To Town told the story of the changing face of Perth streets and fashions captured through the lens of the commercial street photographers who stood in prominent locations from the 1930s to 1970s, taking candid snapshots of passers-by. Over 100 photographs were displayed alongside vintage garments, hats and fashion accessories from History West's costume collection.

The related exhibition *A New Generation Is Going To Town* was the result of an exciting collaboration with the North Metro TAFE Fashion and Design Department. The final year students each chose a hat from our collection as inspiration to make a contemporary outerwear garment and the results were fabulous.

Thank you to all the members who shared their family street photos. *Going To Town* was enthusiastically received. The Town Hall alone had several thousand visitors who came expressly to visit the exhibition and another several thousand who lingered to view it whilst attending other events.

The museum team plans to tour portions of the exhibition and to eventually make all the photos available for viewing online. Meanwhile, a *Going To Town* display can be seen at Stirling House for the next few months.

All our thanks and congratulations to Artist in Residence Wendy Lugg who led the Society's work on this wonderful and nostalgic exhibition!



Community Talk

Celebrating James Sweeny, an ordinary man on an extraordinary expedition

Greg Branson



Greg Sweeny with Sally Anne Hasluck

It was a busy few weeks in March for the great-grandson of James Patrick Sweeny, Greg Branson, as he gave a Community Talk and mounted an exhibition at the City of Perth lower Town Hall gallery, in honour of his great grandfather James Sweeny who was the farrier on John Forrest's 1874 expedition. This expedition traced a path inland from Geraldton to

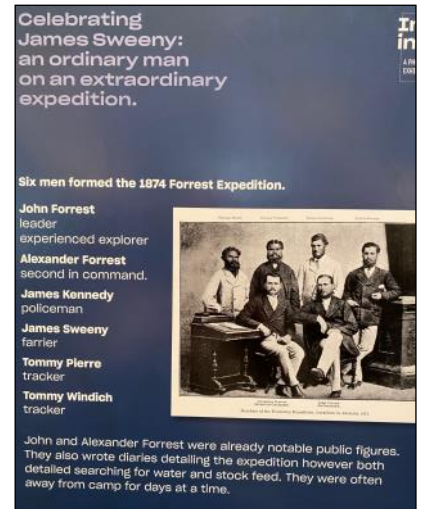
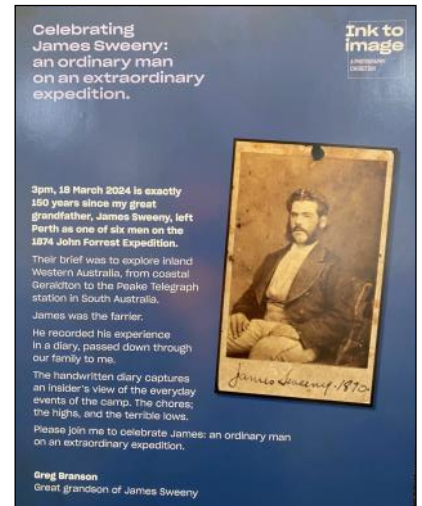
the Peake Telegraph station in South Australia. As well as his duties as farrier on the journey, James Patrick Sweeny kept a diary to chronicle the expedition's everyday trials and triumphs, and this diary is the focus of his great grandson's talk and exhibition. Greg and his partner Carol Mackay travelled along some of the route to shoot photographs that illustrate the diary entries and he shared some of these images with us at his talk at the Society.

James Patrick Sweeny was the youngest of nine children, born at St Helena in 1851. The family moved to Cornwall and then in 1861 to WA, his father serving as a pensioner guard. James Patrick served in the police force from 1886 to 1918 and died in 1921.

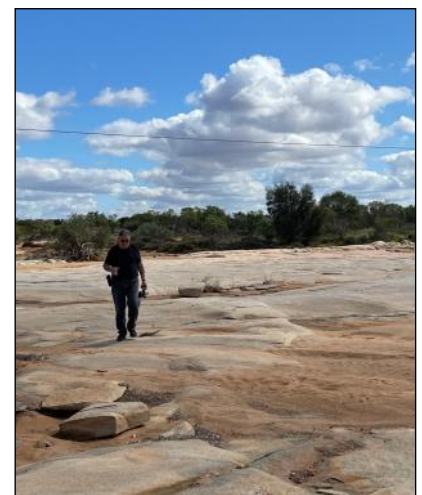
Greg has created a digital version of the diary along with a catalogue of the exhibition. The link below takes you to the exhibition catalogue but the first image if clicked goes to the flipbook of the original diary.

<https://gregbranson.net.au/projects/ink-to-image/>

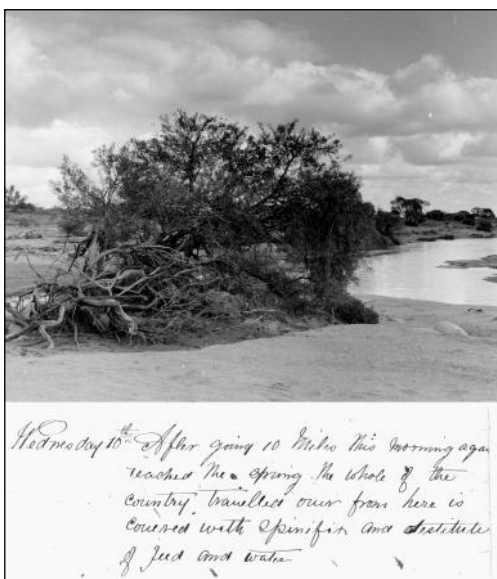
History West hopes you enjoy browsing through it.



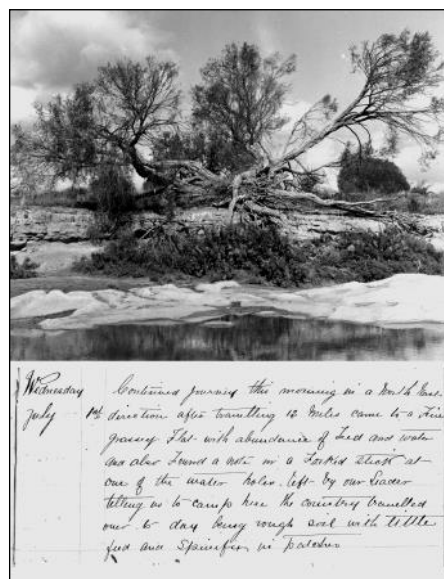
Derelict Bowes Estate shearing shed and homestead



Stanford River



Diary, Wed 10 June 1874



Diary, Wed 1 July 1874



2024's Giant Second-Hand Book Sale

Patrick Cornish

A week after Good Friday came a very good Friday for the Society. At 4pm on 4 April the doors opened on our annual second-hand book sale. Months had been spent collecting, pricing and sorting thousands of donated books. A queue of browsers and buyers formed well before the doors were opened and, by 6pm, the two hours had produced over \$7400 in sales. Saturday and Sunday were busy with a steady stream of interested visitors. EFTPOS and cash sales amounted to another \$10,000.

At the end, on Sunday afternoon, all books left over were channelled to various charities by a team of 30 volunteers who had come especially to help pack up. There were marquees to be put away, tables to be dismantled, signs to be taken down — a superb all-round effort completed the day.

Convenors Pamela and Nick Drew were delighted, especially with the comments from Jeanette Longwood, who praised the 'successful bonding exercise that the whole sale experience proved'. Among the valuable helpers was Val Hutch, a stalwart among stalwarts. Pricing, selling and showing a friendly face, she even helped dispose of excess cardboard boxes.

For the Society as a whole, it was a fine occasion with new memberships, new friends and lots of reading for happy purchasers. 'See you next year' was heard as people drove away.

Congratulations all round!

History West joins with Society members in acknowledging the year-long dedication of Pamela and Nick Drew and their team to making the book sale such a success. This year sales totalled \$17,788. The money is essential to the operational budget, supporting the day-to-day running of the Society. Many thanks from us all.



Exploring 'Rare Books' in the Collection

In the Library collection is a group of books, all Westraliana, which have been declared 'rare books'. They are 'rare' because

- they were published before 1950 (with an emphasis on books, reports and pamphlets published in the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century);
- or they are limited, signed or first editions of works on Western Australian history (including diaries and reports and accounts of pioneers and explorers);
- or they are of high monetary value.

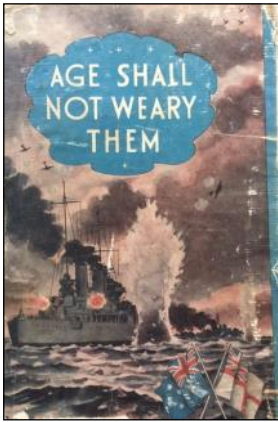
These books are worth re-visiting and *History West* is introducing an occasional column to explore just a small number of them.

We begin on page 6 with Roberts' *Age shall not weary them: the story of HMAS Perth (1942)*.

Rare Book

Yeoman of Signals Rowland G Roberts RAN, *Age shall not weary them: the story of HMAS Perth, Patersons, Perth, c1942*

Hilaire Natt, library volunteer



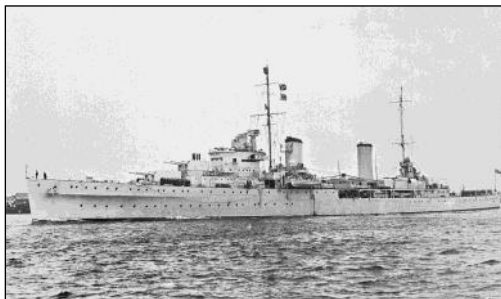
RB ROB

Among the Society's rare books is a well-loved and worn volume with a uniquely West Australian provenance and interest. *Age Shall Not Weary Them* is the story of the cruiser HMAS *Perth* which was sunk in the Battle of Sunda Straits on 1 March 1942 defending the Dutch East Indies at the time of the fall of Singapore. It was the first of three Royal Australian Navy warships named after the City of Perth.

Over half the crew of 680 were lost, and only two thirds (or 218) of the 326 survivors, including many West Australians, returned home after suffering considerable hardship as Japanese prisoners of war.

Bruce Hewett donated the book to the Society at the request of his father Kevan Davidson Hewett, who was given the book by his grandmother for Christmas 1942. The donor wished to ensure that this unique record of HMAS *Perth's* history could remain in Western Australia.

It is written (and signed) by former crew-member Yeoman of Signals, Rowland G Roberts RAN and was published locally by Patersons Printing Press Ltd of Murray Street, Perth, in 1942.



HMAS *Perth* (1936-1942)

The book outlines the history of the ship, a modified Leander class light cruiser, built by the Royal Navy and originally commissioned in 1936 as HMS *Amphion*. It was one of three light cruisers transferred to the RAN in 1939, and was renamed HMAS *Perth*. The author gives a lively account of life on board with numerous photos and concludes with news that HMAS *Perth* is missing in the Sunda Strait in March 1942.

In 1941, after active service and escort duty in various locations from the Pacific to the Mediterranean, the ship was transferred to the combined American, British, Dutch and Australian Force in the Indian Ocean to defend Singapore against the Japanese. Before leaving the Mediterranean, HMAS *Perth* took part in the Battle of Matapan (27-29 March 1941) when the British and Australian fleets defeated the Italian Navy off the coast of Greece.

Before sailing north to Darwin and Java, the ship spent a couple of months in dry dock in Fremantle while damage sustained at Matapan was repaired. The crew was granted leave in Perth, some families being flown in from the eastern states, and it was at Fremantle that this photograph of the ship's company was taken on 6 August 1941.



HMAS *Perth* company in Fremantle,
6 Aug 1941

Sailing north, escorting four empty fuel tankers to retrieve as much oil as possible from Dutch East Indies ports, the ship encountered a large Japanese fleet. After surviving the Battle of Java, HMAS *Perth*, low in fuel and ammunition, together with fellow cruiser USS *Houston*, were sunk in the Battle of Sunda Strait at midnight on 1 March 1942.

Accompanying the book is a collection of Kevan Hewett's newspaper cuttings with details of some of the survivors. The missing are listed in the book and of special interest is a page at the back with the signatures of several local survivors present at the group's 1995 reunion.

South Australian diver David Burchell discovered the wreck of HMAS *Perth* in the Sunda Strait in 1967. It was essentially intact, however by 2013 the wreck had been partially stripped by unauthorised Indonesian 'marine scavengers'. It wasn't until 2017 that the Australian and Indonesian Governments conducted a joint archaeological survey resulting in the Indonesian government's decision to establish a marine conservation zone, the nation's first, around the site in Bantam Bay. It is hoped to establish an information centre and possibly a museum in cooperation with local authorities, to mark the historic importance of HMAS *Perth* as well as to bring practical benefits for the local people.

There is much local interest in the ship. One of the ship's bells was given by David Burchell to the Australian War Museum and a second bell, dating from the ship's commission in 1939, is on display at the Perth Town Hall.

A Memorial Regatta is held annually by the Nedlands Yacht Club, Perth, in honour of HMAS *Perth*, Captain Waller, the crew and USS *Houston*, and guests of honour include representatives of the RAN, descendants of former crew members and the US Consul. There is also a memorial plaque in St John's Anglican Church, Kings Square, Fremantle, and a memorial service is held there each February.

References

Ned Overton, Interview with his survivor uncle John Robert Grant.

Natali Pearson, 'Too Little, Too Late? Redefining the Legacy of HMAS *Perth*(1)', *Historical Archaeology Journal*, 2023.

Wikipedia HMAS Perth D29, www.navy.gov.au

SHERRATT'S FAMILY HOTEL,

And General Store,
KING GEORGE'S SOUND.

The Proprietor begs respectfully to intimate to Families and Gentlemen visiting the Sound, that they will find a comfortable home at the above establishment and that every attention will be paid to the comfort of inmates.

Inquirer, 4 Nov 1840.



Cup & saucer. MA1980.146 a-b



Sextant. MA1940.1-8

from Ship to Shore

The Sherratt family of Albany

Bruce Hoar

Thomas Brooker Sherratt (1800-1857) came to Albany on the *James Pattison* in 1833, the same ship that brought the Bussell family to the colony. On arrival he bought prominent sites in the town, including on three corners of the intersection of York St and Stirling Terrace, and built Sherratt's Family Hotel and General Store on the southwest corner.

He became a publican, merchant, whaler, ship-owner and the self-appointed owner, builder and lay preacher of Albany's Octagon Church. He was a devout member of the Church of England.

In 1836 he had started whaling operations on the bays east of Albany in partnership with a William Lovett, an experienced whaler from Hobart. His son Captain Thomas Sherratt Jnr (1829-1895) and his brothers later took over and ran the business until the 1870s.

In his latter years Thomas Brooker Sherratt wrote hundreds of letters to Albany and Perth newspapers, usually concerning local issues. Sadly he ultimately lost much of his wealth and died of mental illness in 1857.

Thomas Sherratt Jnr built a number of boats including the *Walter & Mary* (named after two of his children) that traded as far as Adelaide and Singapore. From 1875 the construction of the Perth to Adelaide telegraph line resulted in three years' employment for Albany-based schooners, including Sherratt's, in supplying materials, equipment & food. The *Walter & Mary* continued trading until its sale in 1885 when Thomas Sherratt Jnr retired from the sea.

Thomas Jnr went on to run the hotel business but finally settled on continuing his father's storekeeping and merchant trading business. He built a new family home and store on the corner of Duke Street and Stirling Terrace, and became a prominent citizen of Albany as a town Councillor and churchwarden at the Anglican Church.

Thomas Sherratt junior's son Walter continued running the family store until 1939.

Mrs Walter Sherratt (Clara), daughter-in-law of Capt Thomas Sherratt Jnr donated his sextant to the Society in 1940. The sextant was manufactured by R M Barrett of West India Dock Road, London, and is currently on display in an exhibit in the Museum.

In 1980, descendants of the Sherratt family also donated a china cup & saucer that was brought out from England by the Sherratt family in 1833. It has a brown basket design and flowers, with blue flowers at the bottom inside of the cup and is also on display.

The wealth of knowledge in business accounts

Maley's flour mill & general store: Greenough 1862-1890

Nan Broad in discussion with Gary Martin, curator, Greenough Museum & Gardens



John Stephen Maley operated the first steam-powered flour mill in the midwest, financed by Solomon Cook and George Shenton. The three storey mill and two storey general store serviced a large hinterland ranging through Northampton, Narra Tarra, Chapman Valley to Greenough and the Irwin, and included the mines, convict establishments, the Bay (Geraldton), the Flats, Walkaway and Dongarra.

The store and living area, with its original gardens, now houses a museum which contains 75% of Maley's business transactions in docket books, letters, orders and notes on scraps of paper, all of which are being transcribed and placed on the museum's database.

These business documents invite research into the following subjects and more:

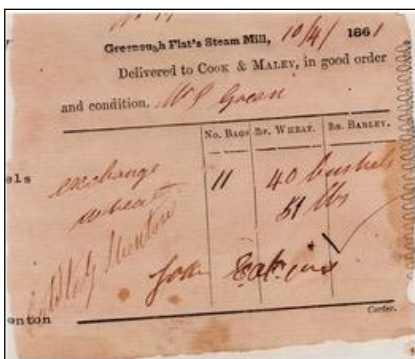
- Transactions, often using promissory notes, as cash was in short supply. The museum holds the greatest number of notes in any Australian archive. The barter system also operated between deliveries and purchases.
- Accounts for Maley's other business enterprises – Golden Sheaf Hotel at Greenough, brewery in Geraldton and flour mill at Dongara. He was also an

auctioneer and agent for Hamersley & Co.

- Farmers and pastoralists selling their wheat and fruit, and buying flour and general goods.
- Farm workers, including Aborigines, sent to deliver or collect goods and the range of conveyances used – wagons, carts, traps, horses and even wheelbarrows.
- Women running properties after the death of their husband or just purchasing feminine goods.
- Pensioner guards, doctors purchasing medical materials and medicine, ministers of religion.
- Institutions, such as the Mechanics Institute.
- Government workers engaged in building roads, bridges and railway lines

These topics encompass people living in the region during the late 19th century and provide insights into their occupations, finances, habits, preferences, and the goods used in that era of hands-on operations for all businesses. In effect they are invaluable in locating extra information on many fronts and should be treasured for the insider knowledge they contain.

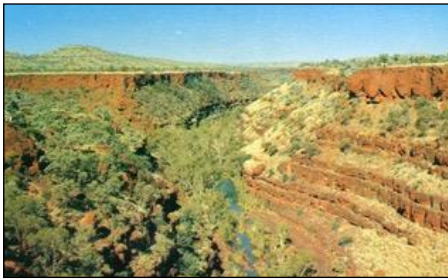
So, keep the old account books; they are a valuable resource for any historian.



Have you thought about attending the **State History Conference, 6-8 September at the Priory Hotel, Dongara**, hosted by Irwin Districts Historical Society?
Do join us for the weekend and don't forget to **book accommodation early**.
See our website, www.irwinhistory.org.au
Conference webpage, '2024 State History Conference'

Banjima people's most eminent law (and lore) man

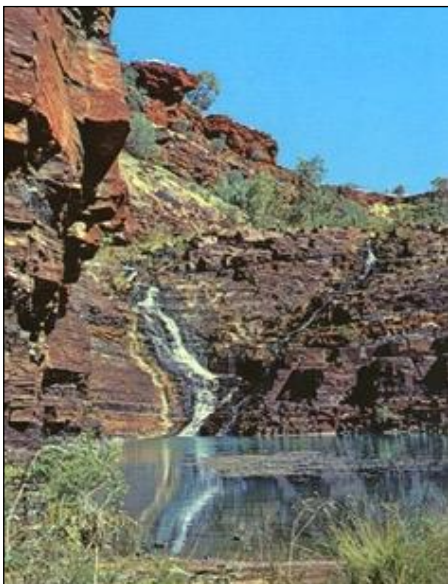
Peter Gifford



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In 1945 and then again in 1977 with added chapters, the long-serving professor of anthropology at Sydney University, A P Elkin (1891-1979), published a book dealing with Indigenous 'clever men', or shamans, which he called *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*. As his fellow anthropologist the late Jeremy Beckett noted in the preface to the 1977 edition

Elkin's subject is the medicine man. But this term, with its connotations of chicanery and gullibility, scarcely conveys the importance such figures hold for Aborigines. The "clever man" ... acquired wonderful powers through ... a long and rigorous apprenticeship and an initiation of terrors and ordeals beyond those that ordinary men undergo. He is what Elkin calls a man of high degree and his experiences have changed him utterly.

I believe that my friend Maitland Parker, the Banjima people's most eminent law (and lore) man who died in the Pilbara in February this year, was almost certainly such a man. I never discussed such matters with him, it would have been inappropriate and indeed improper; I make the claim mainly on the basis of my own observations of him and the sort of person he was, a 'clever man' who used his powers not only for the good of his own people but for others as well, including European Australians.

He was not at all like the only other 'clever man' I have knowingly encountered, a Martu man from the Canning stock route region whom I met at Jigalong a few years ago and who had a singular effect on me. I sensed immediately – and this was later confirmed by other Martu people – that he had executed people in accordance with Aboriginal law; he was what white people call a 'featherfoot'. But he was not just a ritual killer, he had powers which I do not pretend to understand. Without having met me previously, and knowing nothing about me, his first words to me were to ask how things were at Cocklebidy, on the Nullarbor, and whether a certain person was still remembered there. He had crossed huge expanses of desert country, in other words, to meet this long-dead other man – but he knew somehow also that I had been to Cocklebidy, worked in the area, and knew something about the long-dead Mirning man.

Mr Parker, by contrast, was a quietly spoken man who, as far as I'm aware, didn't have an enemy in the world, but who radiated authority and knowledge. He was known and respected throughout the Pilbara and beyond; I am aware for example of several Noongar people from the Perth region who have gone to his country around Karijini to learn from him and his family members and to be put through a form of law which replaces their own – now long lost.

Like his late father Herbert, Mr Parker was an exceptional man, a leader of his people even from afar. Herbert Parker may also have fitted Elkin's 'man of high degree' category; Herbert was a devotee of the Baha'i faith, but that would not necessarily have prevented him from adhering to old Aboriginal customs and practices. The story of Herbert Parker's relationship with his European antecedents was explored by the late Dr Bill Day, an anthropologist with many years experience in the Northern Territory and Pilbara, in an online essay entitled 'A Story of Three Pilbara Families'. Dr Day wrote at one point that, while Herbert had no known contact with his 'whitefella' relatives, the genetic link was evident from his 'acknowledged work' among his people, resulting in the award to him of an Order of Australia in 1985, while his son received a Commonwealth Centenary Medal in 2003.

The Centenary Medal was first awarded in 2001, the centenary of federation, to recognise those who had made a contribution to Australian society and government. Recipients included those whose achievements or research had a notable impact nationally and internationally. In Mr Parker junior's case, and despite Dr Day's genetic claim, he – Mr Parker – imputed much of his knowledge not just to his father but to the Banjima 'old people', along with his determination to bring justice to Aboriginal people generally through native title (achieved for the Banjima in 2014) and as an avid and active indigenous cultural ambassador. Part of his reputation came from constantly raising cultural heritage and royalty

payment issues with government and heavyweight resources companies, including BHP and Rio Tinto – usually with tact and skill based on his wide-ranging knowledge of country – which resulted in key agreements.

Apart from chairing the Banjima Native Title Aboriginal Corporation for several years, Mr Parker was also head ranger at Karijini National Park in the Pilbara – Karijini being the Banjima word for the Hamersley Range, a 'hilly place' in English. His retirement in 2016 came as he was diagnosed with mesothelioma, the deadly lung disease resulting from his exposure as a child to blue asbestos at nearby Wittenoorn. He spent the rest of his life campaigning constantly on behalf of communities – black and white – affected by the mining of asbestos at Wittenoorn, and to have the mine site and dumps properly cleaned up. That this has still to happen is no fault of this selfless man, whose funeral took place in Onslow on 17 March, and who was buried there beside his father.

A tour with Tours & Events

Exploring Perth's Expanding Northern Corridor to Yanchep National Park

Georgina Wigley

Saturday 20 April witnessed 35 history enthusiasts boarding the bus at Stirling House ready to learn why this tour was billed 'history in the making'. The first stop in our experiential journey along Perth's rapidly expanding northern corridor was to view the ambitious, large-scale, multifaceted Ocean Reef Marina project. Construction began in 2021 and, to date, two breakwaters, made from 1.25 million tonnes of rock, have been completed. When finished in 2036, the marina will encompass 1000 new residences, various boating facilities, a coastal pool as well as entertainment, commercial and community spaces. Morning tea was in the delightful surrounds of Lake Joondalup's Neil Hawkins Park. Several participants commented on the striking sculpture of the Bibulmun Woman silently reminding us of this district's significance to Noongar people.

The park's tranquility soon faded as we continued our journey of discovery, this time by train. The extent of urban expansion northwards was in full view as we travelled from Currambine to Butler, the current terminus. Soon this endpoint will be superseded with the commencement of passenger services from Yanchep station in mid-July 2024, providing passengers with a 49 minute train trip to Perth's CBD.

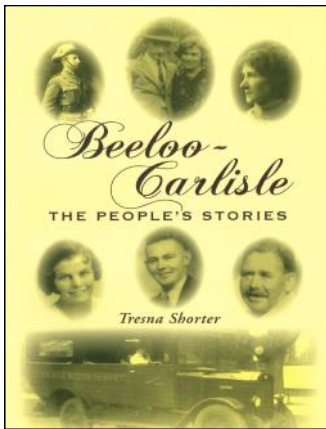
Yanchep Lavender Park was our lunch stop where Jacqueline (Jacqui) Huntley, President of the Wanneroo Historical Society, and other members warmly greeted us. This group proudly took us down memory lane with a series of beautifully presented display boards reminding us of Wanneroo's colourful past, including Sun City Atlantis and King Neptune (recently restored to his former glory) and the African Lion Park. Later Jacqui, also a City of Wanneroo Councillor, added to our knowledge of urban development when she explained that the City of Wanneroo's population growth rate had been 3.70% over the past decade and this is expected to continue. Currently the City is home to 230,000 people and is forecasted to reach 600,000 by 2071. She talked of the impact this rapid expansion is having and will have on the area's flora and fauna, water levels and conservation spaces. The environmental impact of rapid urbanisation generated lots of discussion amongst participants who found 'the scale of development astonishing' and 'its impact difficult to appreciate'. It was with considerable relief that we entered the peaceful confines of Yanchep National Park — back to the past to reflect on what we have learnt over the day and to reminisce on Yanchep memories over a beer in the historic Yanchep Inn, a cup of tea and homemade chocolate (coconut rough highly recommended) at the Chocolate Drops Tearooms or remembering being boated around Loch McNess.



Book Reviews

Tresna Shorter, *Beeloo–Carlisle: the people's stories*, self-published, 2023. In Library.

Reviewer: Glen Morgan



Local historian Tresna Shorter's latest publication, *Beeloo-Carlisle*, pays homage to Carlisle, the suburb where she lived as a child from 1949-1956. The Aboriginal community in the area were the *Beeloo* people, hence the honouring of their name and recognising their lives and possession of the land before colonisation. Her story begins with

the shameful treatment of the Indigenous people.

It is a delightful trip down memory lane; well written in an easy-to-read format, meticulously researched, with excellent photographs to accompany the text. Now retired at Eaton, I met Tresna at her home to review her new book – from the unpromising beginnings of Carlisle to what is now a vibrant suburb of six thousand residents.

Land was first subdivided in Victoria Park East (as Carlisle was called then) to provide residential blocks to meet the population increase caused by the 1880s-1890s gold rushes. Road works, however, were slow to develop; indeed, many roads were still nothing more than planked tracks in the 1930s.

Originally called Bickford after a local real estate agent, blocks of various sizes were sold, mainly by land agent, Peet and Co. Peet came up with the catchy slogan, 'If you are on a building bent and haven't a cent, we'll start you with a tent!' True to their word, Peet offered prospective buyers a tent for £3 to live on their block until a home was built. Blocks sold for between £10-35. The land, however, was slow to sell given there were no roads, water supply, electricity, public transport or shops. Residents who lived in Bickford agitated for a name change and in 1919, it was resolved at a public meeting to change the name to Carlisle. This was popular because Carlisle in England is a border city near the Scottish border; it was felt that the new Carlisle was land 'on the borders' of Perth. It also suited the British immigrants who pined for reminders of their homeland.

Tresna explained that growth came with the purchase of land by prosperous business owners who had made their fortunes during the gold boom. The arrival of basic services needed to develop Carlisle came in the 1920s, including the provision of satisfactory roads. Prominent identities emerged, including the Doney family, who operated the Carlisle Milk Supply from its inception in the early 1940s until 1965. Other significant businesses were a pharmacy run by the Scull family, and a much-loved bakery, operated for many years by Mrs Hunter. Fred White began his fleet of passenger buses in 1924, operating as the Carlisle Bus Service, its drivers

resplendent in white coats and ties.

Tresna recalled a way of life long gone. 'There was the soft clip-clop from horses doing the bread cart deliveries; the sharp clink of milk bottles from the milk man, delivered to the front door. Milk money was left out under a weight on the doorstep, with never a thought about theft. We also had deliveries from the iceman, Eric Lane. Eric was extremely fit and a ball of energy; he would come into the house with a huge block of ice for the ice chest over one shoulder. The ice was placed in the ice chest which had a tin-lined section at the top to hold the ice. The safe kept perishable food cool, even in the summer months. If we were lucky, us kids would get a sliver of ice to suck from the iceman as he left', she laughed.

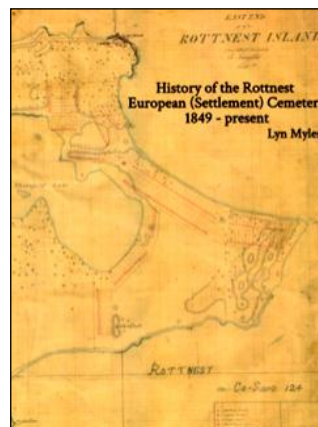
Tresna reflected again on the simple life in those days. We were lucky to grow up in those times. We lived a life of freedom, on quarter acre blocks. Everyone had a wood heap for heating, raised chickens, grew vegetables and some kept bees. It's hard perhaps for younger generations to think of times when a meat man would bring meat (and fish) to your door on slabs of ice; others came selling dressed rabbits; the "bottle man" collected bottles; rag-and-bone men took old clothes to turn into rags for the motor industry. Carlisle in my time was a quiet, conservative suburb. We were taught to refer to adults as Mr and Mrs and where everyone minded their own business and pretty much kept to themselves.

I recommend the book to any lover of local history (and aren't we all!).

* * * * *

Lyn Myles, *History of the Rottnest European (Settlement) Cemetery 1849 – present*, Swan Genealogy, Perth, 2023. In Library & Bookshop \$20.

Reviewer: Steve Errington



In this short book there is a lot to like for Rottnest devotees, especially for those interested in its long and colourful history. There are many old maps and old black and white photographs, including those of prominent Rottnest figures from the nineteenth century. There are many new photos as well. People with fond memories of Monsignor O'Shea who is buried in

his own church will be delighted with his section.

There is also good coverage of the important shipwrecks *City of York*, *Carlisle Castle* and the mysterious *Gem*. Those who lost their lives are all listed, giving ready access to this information, but it is a bit odd as none was buried on the island.

There are also six pages spent discussing 'Individuals who are not buried in the Rottnest European cemetery'. This is presented as part of a process of elimination from an early list of 28 (I counted 27) people 'who died (or may have died on Rottnest and

were possibly buried in the Rottnest European Cemetery.’ This source is confusingly referenced but apparently dates from 1994. Six of them are now confirmed as being buried on Rottnest. That work is pre-dated by the 1986 first edition of *Lonely Graves* by Yvonne and Kevin Coate who confirmed four Rottnest burials.

All surviving 22 headstones in the European Cemetery by Garden Lake have been carefully re-photographed for this book. Most, though not all, are confirmed as burial sites by a Ground Penetrating Radar survey conducted by Curtin University in 1993. Although not highlighted in the book (and it should be), the author has added two more known burials by her personal research. What emerges from all this are the detailed stories of twelve people who are confirmed as being buried in the little cemetery. Seven of the twelve are children, less than twelve months old.

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