



Founded 1926

HISTORY WEST™

PUBLISHED BY THE ROYAL WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

October 2025

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The next meeting at 109 Stirling Hwy Nedlands is on Wednesday 15 October at 6pm
Refreshments available from 5.30pm; Bookshop open until 6pm

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Apologies
2. Confirmation of minutes of AGM, 16 October 2024
3. Business arising from the minutes
4. Treasurer's Report and presentation of Annual Accounts
5. President & Chairperson's Annual Report
6. Election of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary
7. Election of four councillors
8. Confirmation of Patron
9. Approval of Honorary Advisors recommended by Council
10. General Business

Meeting closes

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SECONDHAND BOOK SALE JUMBO DELIGHT FOR BOOK LOVERS

At our new home — 109 Stirling Hwy, Nedlands, corner Baird Ave



Fri 7, Sat 8, Sun 9 November

Fri 4-6pm, Sat & Sun 9-4pm

We will open on Friday, 4pm till 6pm;
then on Saturday and Sunday from 9am till 4pm

What do we have on offer?

All sorts of books, WA & Australian history,
military history, kids books, every type of fiction,
our famous big books for \$5 and much more...

... As well — An auction of maps
& WA books on Sat @ 11am in the
Wright Family Community Hall



TEXTILE SALE

Saturday 8 & Sunday 9 November ONLY, 9am – 4pm
in the Margaret Medcalf meeting room

Upstairs from the book sale at 109 Stirling Hwy

Select from an eyewatering range of vintage textiles, new fabrics, craft books & even some Liz Davenport designer garments. Or browse bags of timeworn pre-loved handwork for repurposing in creative projects. Revisit old favourites, explore hand blocked batiks, indulge in journal joy!

The Royal WA Historical Society (Inc.) | 109 Stirling Highway | NEDLANDS Western Australia 6009

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Forthcoming Events — Don't forget to book online!

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

HISTORY IN THE CITY



**Citiplace Community Centre, Upper-Level
City Railway Station Complex**

Wednesday 1 October, 2pm start

**Wanneroo: From Bushland to
Boomtown – A Journey Through Time
and Transformation**

**Jacqui Huntley, City of Wanneroo
Councillor**

Jacqui will take you on a flight through time — from the arrival of the first colonists in 1852, through decades of transformation to the visionary mega-city Wanneroo is becoming. It encompasses 36 suburbs stretching from Two Rocks to Koondoola.

And, as a final note, what is the impact of this development on our wildlife?

TOUR



**A specially organised visit to the
Digitisation Centre of WA
at Barry J Marshall Library,
University of Western Australia**

Wednesday 12 November, 9.30 for 10-11am

**Digitisation: how WA's history
is being preserved**

This exciting one-hour guided tour, with Q&A welcomed throughout, will give members a unique opportunity to see how WA's rich cultural heritage is being preserved and made accessible for us to view. Janet Luk, Coordinator of the Centre, will lead the tour.

Meet in foyer Barry J Marshall Library,
UWA Crawley Campus

Parking for visitors Car Park 43, Fairway Entrance 4.
Also street parking along Myers Street and Parkway

Cost: \$15 Bookings essential 15 places only
Click on link or scan QR code

<https://square.link/u/amoKy5of>



COMMUNITY EVENT



109 Stirling Hwy, Nedlands

Saturday 4 October, 1.30-3.30pm

**Louisa Clifton: The First Lady
Norm Flynn**

Tours & Events Committee has much pleasure in inviting members, friends and descendants of Louisa to an afternoon of thespian delights. Join us while we watch actors from Bunbury perform an entertaining historical documentary compiled and narrated by Norm Flynn using Louisa Clifton's (1814-1880) diaries, letters and artwork.

Afterwards join the actors and playwright to discuss their reflections of the experience as you enjoy afternoon tea.

Cost: \$15.00 Bookings essential
Click on link or scan QR code

<https://square.link/u/ixFIZ0oJ>



COMMUNITY TALK



Rock art from Rosemary Island showing birds and land and marine animals

109 Stirling Hwy, Nedlands

Tuesday 4 November, 10 for 10.30-11.30am

Prof Jo McDonald

**Director of the Centre for Rock Art Research
+ Management at UWA**

**Rock Art: collaborative research and scientific
values in the Murujuga cultural landscape**

This talk discusses research done over the last 13 years between researchers at UWA with custodians of the now Murujuga Cultural Landscape World Heritage property, providing highlights of the archaeological work recording rock art and stone structures, excavating midden and rockshelter sites and developing a collaborative research framework with the archipelago's custodians.

Cost: \$15.00 Bookings essential
Click on link or scan QR code

<https://square.link/u/917bOTDg>



With gratitude to Lotterywest



Lotterywest is a major supporter of the Society which enabled the purchase of our new premises at 109 Stirling Hwy. Therefore we had particular pleasure in showing Nicole Clarke from Lotterywest around our new premises. Nicole enjoyed the behind-the-scenes visit in her role as Manager Grants Activation and Partnerships and was delighted by our new spacious accommodation. In the costume collection store where Nicole met volunteers Lynette and Jordan (L to R) their work on the black silk dress was explained. This early 20th century garment – an important addition to the collection – is a recent donation. It was made and sold by the Eastern Goldfields firm Brennan Bros of Boulder. We look forward to further exploring with Nicole ways of recognising Lotterywest.

See <https://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/> to explore the many contributions Lotterywest makes to Western Australian life.

Correction – Dr Dorothy Erickson



In 'Stories from the Storerooms' (*History West* May 2023) I wrote that the Benjamin Robins' silver cups were donated to the Society by Miss Habgood.

However recently, in researching original museum records, I have found this to be incorrect and apologise to the Robins family who were the actual donors. Undertaking an audit of museum records is a slow but ongoing process, having commenced in 2012.

Fond memories of Ruth Marchant James (1930-2025)



One of the Society's long-time and valued members, Ruth Marchant James, has died at the age of 95. Ruth contributed greatly to the life of the Society for four decades as an author, researcher, councillor (1995-2013) and vice-president (2001-2004). She joined the Society in 1976 and presented seven research papers which all can be read in *Early Days*. As well she was a keen supporter of the Pioneer Memorial services held annually on Foundation Day (writing tributes to prominent early settlers). She worked to ensure recognition of Celebrate WA day particularly in schools, producing a series of articles tracing the colony's history from Foundation Day 1829 to Proclamation Day 1890 and devising *Our Western Land* for educational use.

A well-recognised author, Ruth published many books, most importantly her histories of Cottesloe – *A Heritage of Pines: A history of the town of Cottesloe* (1st published in 1977 with 2nd edition in 1992) and finally *Cottesloe: A town of distinction* (2007) which included additional research material. This last update of Cottesloe's history won her the Premier's Book Award for History in 2007.

Ruth was schooled by the Iona Presentation nuns and paid tribute to their work by writing *Cork to Capricorn; a history of the Presentation sisters in Western Australia 1891-1991* (1996) and *Fields of gold: A history of the Dominican Sisters in Western Australia* (1999). She also published *The Meath Story* (1982), *Untamed by Time* (1987) and *Tides of Change: A history of St Philip's Anglican Church, Cottesloe 1911-2011* (2011). Ruth's long-time friend Margaret Medcalf recalled that 'Ruth was a wonderful storyteller'.

For her contribution to the research and writing of Western Australian history as well as to the life of the Society Ruth was made a Fellow of the Society in 1999. She received further recognition with her award of the Centenary Medal in 2003, the Order of Australia medal in 2009, and Cottesloe's Citizen of the Year in 2011.

Many of us recall Ruth's personal warmth, enthusiasm and assistance with others' projects. She was a kind and helpful person to the many people she encountered. Safe to say she had no more loyal soulmate for 71 years than husband Bill James, with whom she raised a daughter, Rochelle, and sons, Kieron and Damien.

We remember Ruth with appreciation and affection, and are grateful for her commitment to the work of the Society.



Naturalist Club excursion, by Joy Lyon, c1950. ACC6052aA/4.1 SLWA



Community Talk

Instilling a love of nature:

The WA Naturalists' Club, 1924-2024

Dr Sue Graham Taylor, speaker at our August talk, is currently writing a centennial history of Naturalists' Club and we enjoyed the opportunity to hear the story of the Club's foundations and its activities across a century. Sue tells an important history of a successful community organisation which for a century has promoted greater knowledge of and respect for our natural environment among the general public and particularly among children. Today it continues to play this role in so far as it is able (although higher costs and tighter regulations limit the scope of bush activities for children which were once popular).

Before the Club's establishment in 1924 one of its founders, Dominic Serventy, wrote that:

the only sure and completely satisfactory method of ensuring the preservation of our wildlife is to instil into the people themselves a sense of responsibility for their protection ... The most sound way is to inculcate into the children a love and knowledge of wild nature at their impressionable age.

Earlier nature-based organisations, pre-eminently the Royal Society, focused on scientific and technical research and writing, and drew its membership mostly from educated and prominent men. The Naturalists' Club was particularly committed to educating children. Ludwig Glauert, director of the WA Museum, the Serventy family, notably Dominic, Lucy and Vincent, and Harry Butler were among the well-known personalities of the Club's early decades. The Club concentrated on getting into the bush, to enjoy, observe, record and research the fauna and flora found there. It was an excellent (and fun) way to extend children's education in natural history.



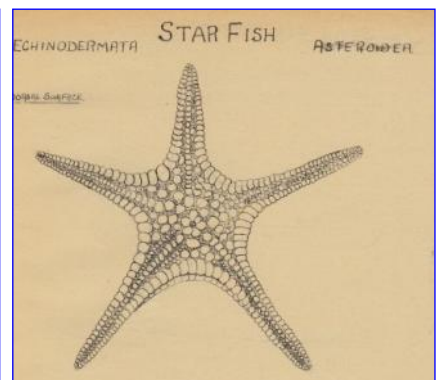
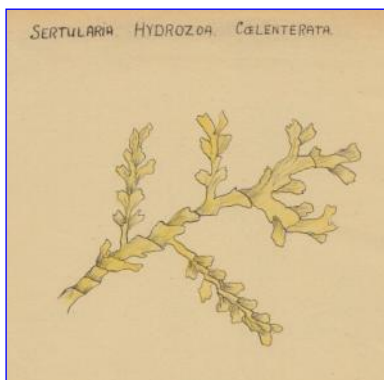
Emily Pelloe, early member of WANC – image of Christmas Tree (Nuytsia Floribunda in *Wildflowers of WA*, 1921)

Bush excursions made clear the need for the establishment of reserves as well as for flora protection. Native animals were under threat from feral cats; indeed by the 1890s species extinctions were being identified and it was becoming clear that statutory protections were needed.

The 1962 purchase of a Congregational Hall in Merriwa Street, Nedlands, saw large growth in the numbers of Junior Naturalists who grew to 25% of Club membership. Demonstrations and other social activities were held at the hall, including preparations for the annual Town Hall Wild Life Shows.

The Naturalists' Club has been an important catalyst in helping to develop the nature-centric attitudes to the natural environment that are now influential in most Western Australians' feelings for the environment in which we live.

Natural History was introduced into school syllabuses in the early 20th century and the Society is fortunate to hold in its collection a wonderful example of its study. In 1922 **Connie Harvey** (Constance H Harvey) was completing her Leaving Certificate at Perth Modern School and one of her subjects was Natural History. She was required to complete a Practical Book and Connie's practical book has been donated to the collection (MA2021.22.2). Connie has meticulously sketched and labelled natural history specimens found in her school laboratory but as well she has included a section headed '**Ocean Beach area**'. Here she sketches, labels and describes specimens she has collected on excursions to the beach.



At Ocean Beach. MA2021.22.2

Remembering Robert McMaster

Peter Gifford

Dr Peter Gifford, a resident of the Victoria Park municipality, reflects on a First World War battle 110 years ago which has special significance for Western Australians, particularly those living in McMaster St, Victoria Park.



Victoria Park's first mayor, Captain Robert Thompson McMaster, designer of the Broken Hill Hotel, was among 80 soldiers of Western Australia's 10th Light Horse Regiment killed at the battle of The Nek, during the Gallipoli campaign. McMaster had served in the second Boer War as an officer in the second contingent from WA, and then, having volunteered again for the AIF in World War I, 'fell fighting for King and Country at Gallipoli on August 7, 1915'. He would have been 50 years old later that year.

As the great historian of Australia's part in the First World War, Dr Charles Bean, describes, the men of the 10th had known full well what awaited them at The Nek, a badly mishandled attack by the 3rd Light Horse Brigade in which a supporting but inaccurate artillery bombardment ended seven minutes early, allowing Turkish soldiers time to set up massed machine guns only a few metres from the Australian line.

The saps were crowded with dead and wounded Victorians who had been shot straight back from the parapet and were being carried or helped to the rear. Among the Western Australians, who occasionally halted to let them pass, every man assumed that death was certain, and each in the secret places of his mind debated how he should go to it. Many seem to have simply determined that they would run forward as swiftly as possible, since that course was the simplest and most honourable, besides offering a far-off chance that, if everyone did the same, some at least might reach and create some effect upon the enemy. Mate having said goodbye to mate, the third line took up its position on the firestep.

Capt. McMaster was one of those reported missing after the attack. His remains were never formally identified, and his name was later inscribed on the Lone Pine Memorial to the fallen on Gallipoli. He had come to Western Australia, like so many others in the early 1890s from his native Victoria, then in the grip of economic depression. Rather than join the rush to the newly discovered eastern goldfields, however, as a trained architect he gained a position with the colonial government's Dept of Works and then set up on his own account two years later.



The Broken Hill Hotel, across Albany Hwy from McMaster St (originally called Hereford St but re-named in 1918 in his honour), is one of few surviving of the numerous private, mercantile and civic structures he designed. Those since demolished include the Central Arcade, the United Service Hotel and the Ozone Hotel, while the Smith's Chambers building still stands in Barrack St.

The historian J S Battye also recorded in 1912 that Capt. McMaster 'has considerable landed interests in the State, owning large pastoral and agricultural properties in the eastern districts, and devotes a great deal of time and attention to the breeding of blood stock on his stud farm at Merriden [sic]'

He had retired from the architectural profession in 1899 and went to South Africa after serving a term as Victoria Park's first mayor. His initial time as mayor, in 1897, that he was contracted by the Russell family to design the Broken Hill Hotel.



He designed and built his own house during the same period. It still stands, well maintained and with a fine garden, at the corner of Berwick and Courthope Sts, Victoria Park. McMaster St runs off Berwick St directly opposite, down the hill to the Victoria Park war memorial garden on Albany Hwy, and the Broken Hill Hotel next door. McMaster designed another fine house for the Burt family before his retirement from the architectural profession; it likewise still stands at No. 7 Rosendo St, not far from the beach at Cottesloe.

At the age of nearly 50, Capt. McMaster – a family man – could have avoided further service, particularly since he had been placed on the retired list at his own request after South Africa. Instead, he put his age back by five years when volunteering for service in the AIF. He left behind a wife, Emily Frances Helmsley McMaster (née Holman), who had been born in Adelaide, and two sons and two daughters. A third son had been accidentally killed in 1912, another served in the 10th Light Horse like his father and survived the war, only to die as the result of accident in 1922. Emily McMaster, a talented musician, was the music teacher at Scotch College, Swanbourne, for 22 years between the wars, and played the organ at her local church in Mount Lawley. Mrs McMaster died in 1941, aged 76, and was buried at Karrakatta.

References

J S Battye (ed.), *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia*, Vol. I, 1985 (orig. 1912), p.410
C E W Bean, *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918: Vol. II, The Story of Anzac*, 1938, p.616

A memory of Ian Berryman Colonel Latour

The latest issue of the *Settlers Gazette* (June 2025), newsletter of the Swan River Pioneers, contained an interesting excerpt from its first newsletter in 1993, edited by member Ian Berryman. Many of us are still sad at Ian's loss earlier this year. Ian left much of his research unpublished. He was about to present a paper to the RWAHS on Thomas Peel and had also accumulated additional information on Colonel Latour. Alas this research will not now be published.

In the *Settlers Gazette* in 1993 Ian wrote of Colonel Latour, never a 'pioneer' but an influential figure in early colonial history. His article added to the information Pamela Statham provided in her article on him (published in 1986 by JRAHS).

Ian wrote —

Peter Augustus Latour has a good claim to being the forgotten man of Western Australian history. He and Solomon Levey were the major absentee investors in the Swan River colony, and the number of emigrants they sent to the colony far exceeds the number sent or brought by any other colonist or investor. Levey in collaboration with Thomas Peel, sent out over 400 persons to WA, and Latour claimed to have sent over 234. The next largest group was that headed by James Henty, who came here in the ship *Caroline* with his two brothers and 33 indentured servants.

.....

As yet I have not been able to find any record of Latour's birth. It seems most likely that he was born in Madras in 1786 or 1787. His father, Francis Latour, was born in Alsace in about 1730 and in about 1770 went to Madras where he went into business as a merchant and banker, evidently with some success. In 1779 he married an English lady named Anne Hordle (or Hoddle), by whom he had a family of three sons and four daughters.

Francis Latour was unable to return to France because of his royalist sympathies, and about 1805 he and his family left India and settled in England. Francis died in 1807 and it is likely that Peter inherited a substantial sum of money, since he later invested about £50,000 in the Australian colonies, and he could never have acquired such an amount merely through his salary as an army officer.

All three sons joined the British army. Joseph, the eldest son, married an heiress and acquired Hexton House, a large estate in Hertfordshire. James, the youngest, was killed in action at Bayonne, in France, on 24 December 1813, aged 24. Peter, the second son, enlisted in a regiment of Dragoon Guards, and took part in the battle of Waterloo in 1815. After a few more years of active service he appears to have gone on to half pay, and to have gone to live on an estate called Staughton Lodge in Bedfordshire.

Latour was about 40 when he married. His wife Cameron, whom he married on 8 September 1826, was

the daughter of John Innes, a Scot. There was one daughter from the marriage, who was christened Une Cameron.

Latour's involvement with the Australian colonies began in 1825 when he invested £25,000 in a land settlement scheme in Tasmania. He was acquainted with James Stirling, who probably persuaded him to invest in the Swan River colony. Latour was certainly one of the earliest investors in the scheme, since he began making preparations as early as December 1828, when he chartered the ship *Calista* to take settlers, livestock and equipment to the new colony. Latour himself did not go to the colony, and as his agent he chose Richard Wells, who was then working as a farm bailiff in Hertfordshire. Wells and his wife Susanna left for the colony in the *Calista* with a number of servants. More servants, livestock and equipment were sent out in later ships. Latour later claimed to have sent out 234 indentured servants, and to have invested about £30,000 in his venture.

Unfortunately for Latour, his venture collapsed almost immediately. During the year 1829 he continued to send more emigrants and livestock to the colony, but Wells was unable to pay or support the servants and by the end of 1830 most of them had been discharged from their agreements with Latour. In May 1830 Latour went bankrupt, and from then until his death he was involved in a long and bitter quarrel with the Colonial Office over his land in Western Australia.

Wells applied for a grant of land for Latour and received permission to select 113,000 acres. He took up 10,000 acres at what is now the Australind district. Neither grant was ever developed. The land on the Swan was sold, and the grant at Australind was resumed and granted to the Australind company.

Latour died in England on 11 January 1866, aged about 80. Almost to the end of his life he was still fighting the Colonial Office over his land.

Latour might be a daunting subject for a biographer, but he certainly does not deserve to be neglected.

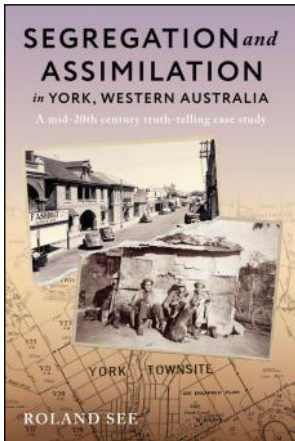
Editor's notes: While Latour might never have visited WA & his scheme might have failed, nonetheless he made a significant contribution to the establishment of the colony through the more than 200 servants he brought out on the *Calista*, *Marquis of Anglesea* and *Lotus*. These settlers were unlikely to have come to the colony without him and many of them stayed to contribute their skills, labour and family members to the early struggles to establish the colony.

Recent research using newly available online sources now provides us with many of the answers to Latour's life and genealogy. See Jane Lydon and Xavier Reader, 'Peter Augustus Latour (1789-1866)', *People Australia* website — <https://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/latour-peter-augustus-33759>

Book Review

Roland See, *Segregation and Assimilation in York, Western Australia: A mid-20th century truth-telling case study*, Book Reality Experience, Leschenault, 2025. In Library & Bookshop \$30

Reviewer: Meredith Wilkie



Together with constitutional recognition, consultation through a Voice to Parliament and treaty-making, the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart called for the establishment of a formal truth-telling process. The recently concluded Yoorrook Justice Commission process in Victoria has been a powerful truth-telling exercise. There are no current plans for anything

on the same scale in Western Australia despite the government's policy of support for the significance of truth-telling. Roland See explicitly locates his study in the context of truth-telling and his book primarily evaluates the 'settler-Australian' impacts on the Balardong people of York.

The great contribution of Roland See's book is to describe in detail how government policies of protection and assimilation played out in the history of just one town and in the lives of Indigenous families, both locals and through-travellers. Government policies and local actions affected every aspect of Indigenous life from housing, access to water and hygienic rubbish disposal, travel, shopping and entertainment, education, sporting and leisure activities, health care and, of course, marriage and family life. See traces the history of York's treatment of its Balardong residents and visitors throughout the 51-year existence of the York Aboriginal Reserve (1923-74) principally through official files and newspaper reports.

See's material demonstrates that the policy of protecting Aboriginal people from destruction and exploitation found its most potent expression in their segregation from settler-Australian towns except to the extent their labour or spending power could benefit settler employers and businesses. When the policy of assimilation was adopted, it too was visited on Aboriginal people themselves. They must change to become suitable for inclusion in white society. Those who failed to do so were denied services, penalised and threatened with forcible removal of their children or of their entire family to a locked 'native settlement' such as Moore River (which is what happened to the entire population of the nearby Northam Aboriginal Reserve in 1933).

See's extensive and fine-grained material is organised

into chapters by decade. Within each chapter, numbered sections deal with particular topics: reserve housing, access to public toilets, medical and hospital treatment, curfew and prohibited area regulations and so on.

The complex history of exempting certain people from the reach of the legislation and of authorities, and of granting conditional citizenship, is dealt with in a separate chapter. This history supports the conclusion of one official that the result was 'a farcical legal tangle' (p159).

See's scope is limited by his focus on departmental records so that broader State, national and international developments as they impacted local attitudes and practices are largely, though not entirely, absent from his analysis. The influence of civil society organisations from the Women's Service Guilds to the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, and of international lobbies such as the London-based Anti-Slavery Society, is not explored. It would be unreasonable to expect it of him. Too often, though, See attributes disreputable motives to named local authorities without providing evidence and there are several occasions when a wider lens may have assisted. More to the point, perhaps, this tendency to supply a motivation – as 'not appearing unlikely' – is unwarranted in a work explicitly claiming to be an exercise in truth-telling. It quickly becomes challenging to untangle what is supported by evidence from what is alleged without any.

Even settler-Australians of goodwill are disparaged. Their motives appear laudable but, we are warned, are not unlikely to have been self-serving, a pretext or at best ham-fisted. The impact and power of See's material is also somewhat undermined by the repeated use of the descriptor 'racist'. This is at times unnecessary, since by its very nature the Aboriginal-specific legislation was limited to one 'race' and denied fundamental common law rights. At other times it comes close to a 'finding' of racial discrimination which is arguably anachronistic. In 1997 the Australian Human Rights Commission declined to condemn forcible child removal as racially discriminatory if it occurred before the end of 1945 when the UN Charter was adopted (*Bringing Them Home*, p266).

See's book is at its most interesting and insightful when exposing the routine interactions – and power plays – among the ruling officials: York police, town council, district road board, Chief Protector/Commissioner of Native Affairs, local Member and Minister. The sorry tale of local settler efforts to reintroduce segregation of Aboriginal mothers at York's maternity hospital (1950-53) is particularly well described (pp190-200). The way in which the authorities managed to avoid either adding new houses to the reserve or moving the entire reserve population to Moore River despite the Premier's direct instruction is also evocatively told (pp175-184). Even apart from the nitty-gritty, day-to-day operations of bureaucracy in WA will find much fodder to graze upon here.

New Norcia Benedictine Community Unearthing our Stories: Role of libraries in preserving local history

Friday, 17 October

featuring papers by Gareth Dixon
(Manager Libraries and Heritage, City of Armadale),
Janet Megarrity (Librarian, Victoria Park Public
Library), Sue Lefroy (Local History Coordinator,
City of Albany), Marta Perez-Rey (Lecturer,
University of WA)

& Ken Spillman (Australian writer).
Geoffrey Coad's (retired lawyer, historian) book
on Abbot Torres will be launched as well as other
book launches & *NN Studies Journal* for 2025

Day concludes with concert by
Fr Robert Nixon & Allegra Giagu

Ticket \$100 for adults & \$85 for concession holder.

Morning/afternoon teas & lunch included.

For further information, see —

[https://shop.newnorcia.com.au/products/
library-lecture-day](https://shop.newnorcia.com.au/products/library-lecture-day)

Affiliates Newsletter

If you would like to read about
Affiliates' activities, please visit

<https://histwest.org.au/affiliates-news/>

'Australian Encounters' Symposium

A one-day workshop facilitated by *Global Encounters and First Nations Peoples: 1000 Years of Australian History* (Monash University, ARC Laureate) and *Mobilising Dutch East India Company Collections for new Global Stories* (UWA, ARC Linkage) with the Western Australian Museum.

**Monday 1 December 2025, 9am-4.30pm,
WA Maritime Museum Theatre, Fremantle**

Cost: \$50

How to book:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/1502068069029>

This symposium brings together multi-disciplinary research and cross-cultural perspectives to explore the deep and diverse histories of encounter across Australasia. It challenges dominant colonial narratives by privileging Indigenous and Asian knowledge systems and adopting a longer temporal lens. Central to this approach is the reinterpretation of historical and archaeological evidence—particularly archival records and shipwreck collections—through non-European Indigenous frameworks. Rather than viewing these materials solely as traces of European exploration, the symposium asks how they reflect ongoing Indigenous relationships with Country. Themes of ecology, topography, and Country are examined alongside European records to highlight contrasting worldviews and emphasise the importance of place-based research led by First Nations scholars and communities. The event also explores new modes of communicating these encounters through digital media, mapping, art and film.

Community Officer: Lesley Burnett
Editor *History West*: Dr Lenore Layman

Opinions expressed in *History West* are not necessarily those of the Royal WA Historical Society (Inc.).

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