

Affiliated Societies

of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society

Newsletter

February 2026

2026-25

Army Museum of WA

ARMY MUSEUM OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BLAST from the PAST

at Artillery Barracks

28 MARCH 2026

6:00PM - 8:30PM



Come and party to the music you love, performed by the Australian Army Band Perth. Bring your dancing shoes and BYO drinks and food.

Adults \$20, Concession \$15, Kids \$5, Family \$45

trybooking.com/DHUNV

More info:

armymuseumwa.com.au

SCAN ME



Telling our story

Next Affiliates Committee

Meeting will be held in

March 2026

Did you know the RWAHS Book Shop have more WA History books for sale, than any other Book Shop.

Open Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm, situated at 109 Stirling Hwy (corner Baird St), Nedlands. WA 6010.

www.histwest.org.au under services, History West Shop or for any queries please see the contact details below.

If you have a book or know of a book that you would like the Book Shop to stock please contact the Book Shop - bookshop@histwest.org.au or 9386 3841.

Please send all queries and submissions relating to the newsletter to Rosie Stroud at the Eastern Goldfields Historical Society. eo@kalgoorliehistory.org.au or

Army Museum of WA - Come dance to the music you love, ABBA, Neil Diamond, John Frnham and more.

Please note limited street parking please use John Curtin College in Finnerty St (fee/donation applies). The Museum's galleries won't be open for this event. Coffee van available BYO food and drinks. Bookings of 10 or more, once booked please email: marketing@armymuseumwa.com.au and we will reserve a table for your group.

Your Committee Members

An Affiliated Societies Committee is elected each year at the Annual State History Conference of Affiliated Societies. This Committee acts in the interests of Affiliated Societies and is represented on the Society's Council of management. Representatives for 2025-26 are below:

- Nick Drew – **Convenor** (RWAHS- Council Rep) - nickdrew@bigpond.com
- Fiona Bush - Minute Secretary (Mundaring & Hills) - fiona.bush@icloud.com
- Ashleigh Murch (Denmark) - ashleigh.murch@gmail.com
- Marilyn Gazeley (Cervantes) - cervantes50th@hotmail.com
- Lyn O'Hara (South Perth) - lynn@eon.net.au
- Rosie Stroud (Eastern Goldfields) - eo@kalgoorliehistory.org.au
- Richard Offen (President RWAHS) - richardooffen@outlook.com
- Jacqui Huntley (Wanneroo & Districts) - huntleyjacqui@gmail.com
- Natalie Evans (Collections WA) - natalie.evans@amaga.org.au
- Trish Parker (Irwin Districts Historical Society) - Trishpark@bigpond.com
- Wendy Garstone (Bayswater Historical Society) - wendygarstone@gmail.com

Please feel free to contact anyone on the committee if you have a query or concern.

DISCLAIMER

Accuracy of facts or the opinions expressed in any of the articles of this newsletter, are not necessarily those of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society and the Society cannot accept responsibility of any action taken as a result of statements contained within.



Swan River Pioneers 1829-1838

'Save the Date" - WA Day Breakfast with our Patrons, His Excellency, the Hon Governor Chris Dawson AC APM and Mrs Darrilyn Dawson, at the Parmelia Hilton Hotel. Saturday 6th June 2026. **Tickets \$65**, bookings available in April.

Luncheon and Speaker at Moore and Moore Cafe in the Historical precinct of Fremantle on the 21st March 2026. **1.30pm - 3.30pm**. Cost and further details will be provided soon on our website at www.swanriverpioneers.com Please reserve your bookings by email, including the names and phone numbers of attendees to info@swanriverpioneers.com

Submitted by Kim Edwards (Secretary)

2029 Marks the Western Australian Bicentenary

The 2029 Western Australian Bicentenary will mark 200 years since the 1829 establishment of the Swan River Colony. Planning is underway, or is it? Has your Society started thinking about what they will be doing and planning for any events? This year might be the year to start having those discussions, putting plans into place and looking for funding - there is sure to be some about.

Grants

The National Library of Australia, Community Heritage Grant is due to open on the 3rd of March. For more information please check <https://www.library.gov.au/services/grants/community-heritage-grants>

Welcome to the Society's Centennial Year 1926-2026

In this special year we plan to celebrate our past and make some significant changes to our naming and visibility in order to strengthen our future.

We look back with pride on a century of voluntary work to preserve, research and present Western Australian history. We move forward into a next century to continue this work effectively by incorporating new ideas and approaches to ensure we remain a lively part of Western Australia's 21st century society.

<p>A new logo</p> 	<p>A new trading name</p> <p>HISTORY WEST ESTD — 1926</p>	<p>A new home</p> <p>THE HISTORY WEST CENTRE</p> 
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Our new logo, trading name and premises are modern and streamlined. They will serve us well as we reach out to engage with everyone interested in Western Australia's past. We seek to build on our past work and expand our reach by acknowledging that we are continually changing as is Western Australian society.

<p>THE ROYAL WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ESTD — 1926</p>	<p>We began in September 1926 as the Western Australian Historical Society and were granted the Royal title in 1963. The name represents a past of which we are proud. It has done good service and remains our legal name.</p>
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 	<p>The Society's original logo was a coat of arms adopted in 1931. In pride of place along with the kangaroos are black swans, Western Australia's most notable emblem which has been highlighted in our new modern design.</p> <p>The motto 'Seek the Light of History' remains a worthy goal although we might no longer use Latin to express it. Other aspects of the old coat of arms – Hartog, Dampier and Stirling – remain significant in our history although they are now only part of a longer story which reaches back to WA's original Aboriginal societies and forward to the amazing transformation of our State in the 20th and 21st centuries. We seek to explore this long and rich history together.</p>
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Northampton Historical Society

Waggle they think of next? We were looking for activities to increase local engagement at Chiverton House as well as teach about some of the hardships that our early settlers endured.

We decided that making a Wagga would be fun way to include a lot of people, be relatively cheap and encourage intergenerational knowledge exchange. Ideally, we wanted some old hessian sugar bags or wool packs, so that each participant could have their own panel to decorate. Our president Carole has the amazing knack of procuring the impossible and from places unknown she produced a box of very old, very dirty hessian bags that were perfect for the project.

We successfully applied for a grant with the Shire of Northampton for funding to get set up for the first session of sewing and provide meals for the day.

Of course, our little project quickly got out of hand and before long we were contacting former and current residents of Northampton for their stories about sewing and the art of making do, and then after chatting to a few international friends we realized that sewing was an integral part of every girl's life and so we included their stories as well. It seems sewing and textiles that was a bond between people from different countries and backgrounds. Now we had stories, lots of pictures, lots of donations of early needle work made from early last century and a wonderful collection of school samplers from over 60 years ago. Our little project was growing and with lots of local advertising the word was getting about. The name alone raised a lot of interest, and just the idea of having a free day, chatting and hand sewing appealed to many.



Our project was really coming together when we realized that we hadn't included anything about our first nations people and as very few examples of early skin clothing exists, we resorted to the internet and were lucky enough to get permission from some of the prominent sites to use their images of grass spinning and decorated skin clothing in our display. And of course, we contacted the National Wool Museum and were able to copy some of their images.



It was a big job laminating the sheets and putting them up on display. We sent out invites to Irwin and Greenough Museums, did lots of local advertising and of course word of mouth inviting people. The local high school also brought one of their classes down to have a look and learn about the early days and how essential sewing was for everyone. Interestingly only two of the girls had ever sewn anything before. We had set up some hessian, old bag needles, and wool for the students to have a try; most enjoyed the experience.

Two of our lovely ladies were aged in the 90s' Gwen 93 and Ena 96, after a while they realized that they had gone to school together, both could still sew and teach the rest of us a few things. One of the best things was all the stories

Northampton Historical Society continued

that came out as we sat and stitched and talked. Stories about how their family had made all the kids clothes out of hessian, or how clothes were cut up and re-purposed until they eventually disintegrated.

We had about 35 come and sew for the day and approximately 20 come and go during the day, some just dropped in for a cuppa and others for a chat and some just to see what the fuss was about. Just like people each panel in the Wagga is different. Each panel made from textile scraps, a wonderful way to show the art of making do.

What started as a bit of fun turned out to be a wonderful project that actually took two sessions and a bit extra to finish just in time to display at the Northampton District Agricultural Show. It is hoped that we will put all the stories into a little book for sale at the museum. One girl told the story of how the teacher asked her to go and finish writing up her project and she would finish the sewing because she couldn't bear to watch the student making such a mess of it anymore.

The display was removed at the beginning of December making the space ready for our 2026 display of sheep and wool in our district.



Above - FIFO TO DISCO

Above - Community Wagga



Western Australian Police Historical Society

Taken from the WAPHS Peeler Gazette Ed 1/ 2026

The Committee would like to wish all financial members and affiliates a Happy New Year.

The Annual General Meeting will be held a week earlier than normal at 1 0AM Tuesday March 3,2026. We are committed to providing a presentation and tour for Gold Squad Recruits on Tuesday March 10, 2026.

Immediately Post AGM the WA Police Force Museum Team led by Senior Curator Emma Mroz will take over the management of the Highgate Hill Police Historical Display Precinct after a 75 gap from when the James Street Perth Museum closed in 1950. The WA Police Historical Society will remain at Highgate but will now concentrate on the objects of our constitution regarding WA Police History research plus the Graves Project.

In the meantime, retired police officer committee volunteers will still conduct presentations and tours to Recruit and Transitional Officer Squads, Scheduled for February 3 Two Squads, February 24, March 10, March 27, March 31 and May 29,2026. Approximately 175 officers.

Not sure what happens after June 2026 at least three WAPHS volunteers are required to provide the presentations, that should ideally be performed by either experienced serving or retired sworn officers. We hope that not too many artefacts are taken away for restoration by the Museum Team otherwise the officers will not have anything interesting to view and learn about when they attend.

Those serving police officers who access From the Line will be kept in touch about the progress of planned WAPF Police Museum that is currently earmarked for the old decommissioned East Perth Lock Up in Hay Street. Interesting, I would have thought the current facility at Highgate offered the best opportunity for expansion with easy access, free parking for visitors and ready-made approved WAPF plans from 2009.

We will send out the details of the AGM 2026 early February 2026. Hope to see as many financial members as possible, Patron Commissioner Col Blanch normally attends and will be able to take questions on the new museum project.

Regards

David Lampard

President

City of South Perth Historical Society

The City of South Perth Historical Society is showing the WA Women's Hall of Fame 'Roll of Honour' panels of 69 remarkable women who have been inducted after their deaths. Our patron, Mayor Greg Milner, launched this exhibition which will continue until 22 March. A celebration of International Women's Day on 8 March includes a talk by Lynn O'Hara on the famous South Perth author and artist, May Gibbs.

We are working on the next display for the National Trust Heritage Festival with the theme of 'Change in South Perth'. The greatest change in living memory must be the Narrows Bridge and Kwinana Freeway that destroyed the resort of Como Beach and changed Perth forever.

A new event 'Nutting About with May' is being offered to groups for a donation. We'll spend an hour talking about the tram, the artworks in Windsor Park and May Gibbs. So far it is very popular. We celebrated May's 149th birthday with a meal at The Station, the old Police Station.

Submitted by Anthea Harris (President)



Mayor Greg Milner

Just who is doing the work and how?

Just who is doing the work? Collecting Community Heritage in Western Australia. Are you a committee member of a community based historical society? Are you an active volunteer/member in that society? (more than one volunteer from any organisation can complete the volunteer section of the survey). Do you represent a local government that has a heritage collection and/or supports community heritage collecting organisations?

Are you willing to participate in a confidential online survey?

We want to develop an up-to-date picture of the community based/LGA supported historical collecting sector in Western Australia?

We really want to know all about your organisation and your perspectives on what you do! The survey is confidential and depending on the level of detail may take about an hour to complete.

If you are responding as a member or volunteer – it won't take so long!

You can get stuck right into the survey now: [Survey Link](#)

If you would like more information, please email Sally Paulin at s.paulin@murdoch.edu.au

Please share this survey invitation with other colleagues and collecting organisations in WA who you think might be interested in being involved.

Bridgetown Historical Society

Opening of Orchardring Museum, Bridgetown -

Today, Wednesday 4th February 2026, marks the finality of the journey we, BHS, took in 2018 to create not only a contemporary policing museum in Bridgetown (completed in 2018), but also an orcharding museum, on the same site, that honours the work done over the past 160-odd years since orcharding first started in Bridgetown. John Allnutt, and his amazing wife Kate, were the first to put in an orchard, starting in 1863. John led the way in developing orchards in this region, selling canned fruit, dehydrating fruit and so much more, and the industry was extremely successful for nearly 150 years until problems started in the 1960s. These included pests (Codling moth was the main pest), new varieties of fruit that were unsuitable for Bridgetown's soil, rising salinity in the Blackwood (Goorbilyup) River that prevented using the water for irrigation, fluctuating fruit prices and increasing competition from other fruit growing areas like Donnybrook and Manjimup.

By the late 1970s, most orchardists had pulled their trees and left the district. Now only two orchards are left in Bridgetown: Edenvale and Astley.

Bridgetown Historical Society has, over the years, been given many items pertaining to orcharding and we have now created an orcharding museum to display these artefacts. It was made possible by a grant from the Native Forests Transition Plan 2024.

So today it was with great pleasure that we invited all our members, local historical societies and the Shire to attend the opening event. The museums are open on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays (and on special request for groups) between 10 – 2 pm.

If you want to bring a group, please contact me, Mary Elgar (Chairperson Bridgetown Historical Society) by email

info@bridgetownhistoricalsociety.org.au and we'll see your group soon.





CENTENARY CELEBRATION: Members of the Donnybrook Historical Society with the 1925 Buick.

A BELATED 100th birthday was part of the open day at the Donnybrook Museum on Saturday 22 November to celebrate its 1925 Buick's 100th birthday.

Initially organised by the Donnybrook Historical Society (DHS) for October, the open day was postponed due to poor weather.

DHS president Shaun Nelson spoke about the Trevena family who purchased the Buick new in 1925, and Denis Leech had the honour of cutting the birthday cake.

The Buick's original owner Edwin Trevena, was born in Collingwood, Victoria, in 1872, and he came to Western Australia around the 1900s and purchased land in the Preston Valley district.

Edwin developed his farm 'Strathnairn', and married Sarah Gardiner, from Ferguson Valley, in 1902. They had two children, Doris Reta Trevena in 1903 and Reginald (Reg) Edwin Trevena in 1905.

When Edwin decided to purchase a car, he needed

something that was able to go up the steep hill to his property, so he bought the brand new six-cylinder standard model 25x25 Buick Touring car on 2 October 1925, from Dalgety and Company in Perth, paying £420.

With its flashing Brewster green colonial duco body, licence number PE70 it was a familiar sight around the Preston Valley.

When Edwin and Sarah died in 1941, Doris and Reg inherited the property and the treasured Buick, which was still used by Reg and Doris for their weekly trips into Donnybrook.

Reg and Doris never married, and when Reg died in 1983, his will stated that the Buick was to go to a car club, so the South West branch of the Veteran Car Club of WA was given custodianship of the Buick for many years.

Bill Whistlecroft undertook restoring the Buick, and it took two vehicles to restore it to its present condition, then the club decided to return custodianship of the Buick to Donnybrook.

On 26 January 2012, after the Australia Day breakfast and ceremonies, the Buick was handed over to members of the Donnybrook Historical Society, and it remains at the Donnybrook Museum to this day, where it takes pride of place in the museum.



WHEEL HISTORY: Several cars from the South West Veteran Car Club on display at the Donnybrook Museum open day.

Kalamunda & Districts Historical Society

Invitation to Share Your Favourite Recipe

We were recently donated a cookbook compiled by the Walliston Primary School P&C in 1990, which included this recipe for Camel Stew.

The Walliston Primary had a group called the Walliston Wanderers, who were a select group of students, chosen to “go bush” each year and got up to all sorts of activities, including camp cooking each night. We believe this recipe was inspired by this group.

We are now inviting all our members to contribute their favourite recipe for our upcoming (possibly Christmas) cookbook.

Whether it’s a family classic passed down through generations, a dish you discovered on your travels, or something you whipped up in the kitchen on a lazy Sunday arvo, we want to hear from you!

How to Contribute

Choose your favourite recipe—sweet or savoury, entrée, main, or dessert.

Write down the ingredients and step-by-step instructions.

Include any tips, stories, or memories that make the recipe special to you.

If you have a photo of the finished dish, feel free to include it!

Submission Details

Please send your recipe by email to kdhs@outlook.com.au or drop it into the office at Kalamunda History Village. Don’t forget to include your name (or let us know if you’d prefer to remain anonymous).

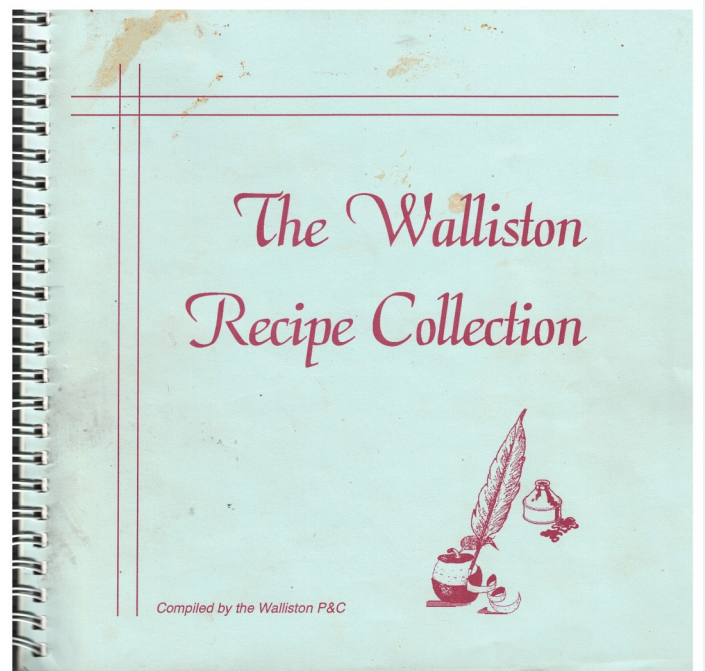
Why Participate?

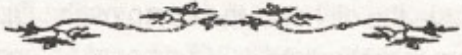
Share your culinary talents and family favourites with others.

Discover new dishes and cooking styles from fellow members.

Be a part of something special that celebrates our diverse tastes and stories.

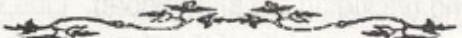
We can’t wait to try your legendary lasagne, secret pavlova, or whatever dish you love most. Let’s get cooking and make this project a true community treasure!





<p>3 medium sized camels 1 ton pepper 200 bushels carrots 2 small rabbits</p>	<p>1 ton salt 500 bushels potatoes 3000 sprigs parsley</p>	<p>CAMEL STEW <i>Buxton Family</i></p>
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Cut camels into bite size pieces (this should take about 2 months)
Cut vegetables into cubes. Place meat in pan and cover with 1000 gallons of brown gravy.
Simmer for 4 weeks. Shovel in salt and pepper to taste. When meat is tender, add vegetables.
Simmer slowly for 4 weeks. Garnish with parsley. Will serve 3800 people. If more are expected, add two rabbits.



Submitted by Paula Wilkins (Secretary K&DHS)

WA Historical Cycle Club

Between Christmas and New Year club committee members conducted an inventory of the club collection. The collection, a mixture of purchased and donated items relevant to our aims, is quite the treasure trove. We are currently caring for 155 objects; mostly scrapbooks, documents, trophies, clothing, medallions, photographs and photo albums, with many more items yet to be formally accessioned.

In 2018 Westcycle made a donation of material relating to Jack Gerke, a notable WA racer from the 1930's. Jack was born in Claremont. He started in competitive cycling in 1934, winning the Pinjarra 100 that year. During his racing career he was a track and road scratchman (in handicap race starts the fastest riders, who were last to cross the start line, were said to be 'riding off scratch'. The second fastest bunch were riding off the minute mark, and so on). He represented WA in the Colac to Melbourne road race on three occasions, winning the fastest interstate rider prize twice.

Jack joined the army as a private in the Infantry Battalion and rose to the rank of Captain, serving in the Middle East, New Guinea, Borneo and the Pacific Islands. Discharged in 1948, he was recalled to serve in Korea in 1950 and promoted to the rank of Major. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. Following an injury in 1954 he was again discharged, and became an official of the WA Amateur Cycling Union, joining the executive in 1956. He stayed on the executive for 9 years, during which time he was WA State Team Manager, Timekeeper, Official Starter, State and National Selector. Amongst others he trained Geoff Glasson, Henk Vogels and Phil Bristow-Stagg.

Included in the club collection are a large trophy inscribed WDACC 100 Mile J. Gerke Fastest Time 4:37:25 13.8.33, a scrapbook covering the years 1934-6, and a records book, the cover of which is inscribed; "Please do not destroy these records they may be of interest to others". There are two studio portraits of Jack, the one included here featuring a Special Moon bike. Several group photos of cycling teams are next, including the one at left of WA state representatives to the Colac race visiting a horse - the organisers made sure the visitors were shown all the sights!



Ray Felton, another member of that party, is also represented in our collection; Ray's daughter Danelle Markwart donated his photographs and ephemera relating to the 1951 Jubilee Courier ride at the time of our Nullarbor Crossings exhibition in 2023.

The Colac party travelled by ship - The Katoomba - to Melbourne for the race. On their return Ray was interviewed by the New Call and Bailey's Weekly; "When asked about the machines used in the East and how they compared with our own bicycles in this State, Ray said that our cycles were constructed as well as any he saw and in many cases better, the only difference being in certain

WA Historical Cycle Club continued

Continental equipment such as handlebars, extensions and brakes which were made of aluminium, while the variable gears were of various types and several of the Continental gears were being used with great success as they were lighter. "The Wednesday before the race we were getting very excited about it as we were in good condition and both Jack Gerke and Eric Miller were displaying wonderful form and I thought that both of these two had a fine chance of victory," said Ray. "On the Thursday before the event we set out from Melbourne at an early hour for the long ride to Colac, the starting point.

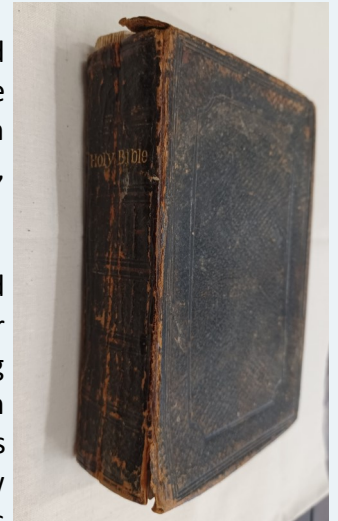


After an easy day's pedalling, we arrived at this fine country town, which is in the rich Western district of Victoria. Everyone was trying to make us feel at home in Colac. By the time that Friday night arrived I was amazed at the multitude of cyclists who seemed to be pouring into the town; they were coming from all directions and by all means of conveyances, and I wondered where all these riders and their followers were going to be accommodated, but soon they were in various homes and other places. We had a good night's sleep — and at last Saturday morning had arrived and the event we had travelled so far to compete in was about to take place!" - Submitted by Robert Firth (Chairperson)

Busselton Historical Society cont...

THE CLIFTON SISTERS - In 1841, Marshall Waller Clifton and his large family embarked on a transformative journey aboard the ship *Parkfield*, which sailed from France to the United Kingdom before reaching the shores of Western Australia. Upon their arrival in Port Leschenault, they played a vital role in founding the new settlement of Australind, located in the picturesque south-west corner of Australia.

Three of Clifton's daughters, Louisa, Elinor and Mary, were passionate about art and found inspiration in the stunning Australian landscapes that surrounded them. Their shared love for painting flourished as they sketched the vibrant flora and the emerging settlement. They often worked side by side, capturing their environment with remarkable detail. One of Mary's pencil sketches, titled "View of the Commissioner's Cottage in Koombana Gardens" (dated 1841), offers a glimpse into the life of the new settlement, showcasing the huts and tents nestled among lush trees, while Louisa's pencil sketch, titled "View of Leschenault Bay", shows the trees and scrub on the shoreline with boats in the distance. These artworks are held by the Art Gallery of Western Australia, serving as a testament to their artistic talent.



Mary also compiled a scrapbook which included many watercolour paintings, pencil sketches, and examples of other people's art for inspiration. She also included cutouts of her favourite places in the world. The scrapbook was donated to the Busselton Historical Society by the great-great-granddaughter of Mary Clifton and forms an important part of the Society's collection.

Members of our Collections Team recently came across another artefact with a direct relationship to the scrapbook - a Holy Bible belonging to Mary's sister, Elinor, which was donated by her great-great-grandniece. On the inside of the Bible casing is handwritten "Elinor Katharine Clifton. 4th September 1884".

Elinor was also an avid artist like her sisters, and she studied art in France. It was known that Louisa, Elinor and Mary had very similar drawing techniques. Sometimes, it was difficult to distinguish which of the three sisters had drawn or painted which painting, as not only were their artworks similar, but they very rarely signed their works.

Together, the artworks and personal artefacts allow us to appreciate the cultural and artistic contributions of the Clifton sisters in documenting the beauty and challenges of life in the Leschenault area.

[Scrapbook Album - owned by Mary Johnston \(nee Clifton\) | Collections WA](#)

[Holy Bible - owned by Elinor Katharine Clifton | Collections WA](#)

Submitted by Elizabeth Craigie, Secretary .

Mundaring & Hills Historical Society

The Mundaring & Hills Historical Society (MHHS) is hoping someone in the community can assist in solving the following mystery. Some weeks ago, members of the Mundaring Community Men's Shed (MCMS) were removing rubbish from their old shed in Jacoby Street, Mundaring when in a pile of wood, they found a timber beam with post supports at each end. There are numbers stamped into the timber beam interpreted to be Latitude and Longitude. Although the numbers have faded over many years, the figures were determined to be $31^{\circ} 54' 5.27''$ S, and $116^{\circ} 9' 58.66''$ E.

Max, a member of both the MCMS and MHHS, also a retired surveyor, delivered the structure to the MHHS Station Master's House where Jeff, the Office Manager and qualified Cartographer, set out to determine its original location using geographicals.

Community local knowledge recalled seeing horses tethered to the now presumed post and rail under a large ficus tree near the Mundaring Hotel. Using Google Earth the geographicals identified a present-day location at the rear of the present-Salvation Army store on the north side of Great Eastern Highway, Mundaring. Surveyor advice is that Continental Drift of the Australian landmass has Australia moving at 7cm per year in a northerly direction towards the equator, so today's determination is only approximate to its original location. As yet no date has been determined for the age of the marked beam. Locating the original site is very difficult without this indicator.

The Perth GPO is considered the centre of Perth, so thoughts are that perhaps this timber structure marked Mundaring's first Post Office. The first Post Office was built in 1898 at the corner of Jacoby and Hodgson Streets. This is considered to be too far away for the site. A new Post Office was built in 1926 in York Road. This is now THE Mundaring Arts Centre. This site is also unlikely to be the original location of the marked timber beam as it is 42m. from the present reading!

The MHHS welcomes any information which may enable the Society to not only identify the original location of this piece of Mundaring history but also identify what its original purpose was. Was it actually a horse rail or something more worthy of imprinting geographical coordinates into timber? To discuss this further contact Jeff the Office Manager by email mhhs@mundaringhistory.org or call 08 9295 0540 during 9.30am to 4pm on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday.

Submitted Jeff Murray



History West 1926 Almanac

January:

The pantomime, 'Puss in Boots', with "juvenile cast and orchestra" played at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Murray every afternoon during the first week of January.

On 20th January, a cyclone hit Broome causing extensive damage and a bill of over £5,000.

The Great Southern Roller Flour Mills Limited opened a new mill in Narrogin on 28th January. This was the company who went on to build a mill in North Fremantle and give it the brand name 'Dingo Flour Mill.

Reconstruction of the Cottesloe jetty was discussed at the Cottesloe Municipal Council meeting.

February:

The Main Roads Board was established in February 1926, with Edward Tindale as Chairman.

Due to a demarcation dispute, engine crews refused to uncouple engines from their carriages or trucks. The Railways Commissioner asked them to show cause why they should not be punished for having willfully disobeyed the regulations.

East Claremont defeated Cottesloe in a cricket match.

March:

9 March, the Regent Theatre, Guildford (now the Natural History Museum) opened. The 700-seater cinema was commissioned by George Hall as a low budget operation during a time of relative economic hardship.

On 10 March, plans were announced for the construction of Point Heathcote Reception Centre. The new facility was needed because Claremont Lunatic Asylum was over-crowded and the enclosed surroundings rendered Claremont unsuitable for many cases of mental ill-health.

Replacement of the Fremantle and Canning bridges was advocated.

April:

In a speech by E.A. Evans (Chief Mechanical Engineer at Midland Railway Works) at Midland Junction Technical School in 1926 parents were warned not to give their boys too much pocket money which they might spend at the local entertainments.

The scheme for a new Sanctuary and east end for St Mary's Catholic Cathedral was approved in 1924, and the foundation stone laid on 25th April 1926.

South Fremantle FC defeated East Fremantle FC by a goal.

In April 1926, Inspector John Walsh and Sergeant Alexander Pitman of the Gold Stealing Detective Squad were murdered while investigating gold theft.

May:

Group Settler Herbert John 'Jack' Limmer established a tobacco plantation at Dixvale, Manjimup, where the first tobacco curing kiln in the State was built.

Quarter acre blocks in Nedlands sold for between £65 and £100.

June:

The Main Roads Bill was assented to on 31st December 1925 and came into force on 7th June 1926.

A train was derailed near Wongan Hills.

July:

In July 1926, there was major flooding of the Swan River. This caused the Fremantle Railway Bridge to collapse just after a train had passed over it. The Upper Swan Bridge was also damaged by the flood.

The floods also seriously affected in Northam, Guildford, Perth, and Collie

Hotel Australia reopened its doors after being rebuilt, its predecessor having been condemned because of its dilapidated condition. Designed by William Wolf the new hotel of four floors boasted saloon, public and lounge bars, 54 bedrooms, all with hot and cold running water!

Ministerial tour of the Kimberleys, led by Minister for Works Alex McCallum

August:

Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, who had toured Australia and New Zealand in 1926, stayed at the Esplanade Hotel, arriving on 9th August.

A Secession League was formed in Perth. At the inaugural meeting on 3rd August, Mr. J. McCallum Smith, MLA, said "the time was ripe for secession. Politicians in the Eastern States are making rods for their own backs. A referendum involving little cost to the State could be taken in conjunction with the next elections."

The Perth Male Voice Choir gave its first public performance in Fremantle Town Hall on 14th August.

September:

The Governor General visited Government House in September 1926.

The inaugural luncheon of the Perth Rotary Club was held at the King Edward Hotel on Wednesday 1 September.

Following completion of an initial land classification survey of the Lake King district 230,000 acres were graded as suitable for settlement. The area was surveyed and access roads built during 1927. The land was then released in 1928 at prices from 4/6 to 16/- per acre.

Cottesloe Pictures screened: "If Four Walls Told" and "Marry Me".

October:

The Rialto Cinema Gardens opened on Newcastle Street, Leederville. It closed two years later.

Seven earthquakes in 24 hours centred around Indonesian area were felt in Perth according to the WA Government Astronomer.

A tram line between Perth Zoo and mends Street jetty opened.

November:

On 6th November, the Mirror newspaper reported that a bonfire and fireworks display had taken place in Karrakatta Cemetery. Not unnaturally the paper had a good old rant about such a "gross disrespect" for the residents of that place.

Construction of the Kent Street Weir commenced on 10 November 1926 and was completed by 26th March 1927. The weir was built to stop saltwater pushing upstream on the Canning River to protect the freshwater plants and animals.

After years of operating from a makeshift station, the North Perth Fire Brigade moved into its new purpose-built fire station on View Street, which opened on 16 November.

City of Perth Act Amendment Act passed, 19 November. "AN ACT to confer on the City of Perth additional powers relating to the opening, diverting, altering, or increasing the width of streets."

The Trinity Buildings on Hay Street (now part of Trinity Arcade) were completed during November.

December:

The City of Perth's coat of arms was formally granted on 2 December.

The Metropolitan Markets Act was passed in the State Parliament on 16th December 1926. As a result, the Metropolitan Markets were built on the site where Harbour Town now is.

As a result, the Metropolitan Markets were built on the site where Harbour Town now is.

The new north wing of Kirkman House, RPH, to provide accommodation for the Commonwealth nurses who worked in the Soldiers Ward was opened by the Governor on Christmas Eve.

The "Overlanders Ride" was a 1926 journey by members of the WA Harley Club from Perth to Sydney, which was an arduous expedition across unsealed roads and vast, waterless desert areas. The ride, completed by a group of 16 riders on Harley-Davidson sidecars, set a new intercity record, though the route was challenging and the riders faced many obstacles along the way. The Overlanders set out on 4 December, 1926, arriving in Sydney in February, 1927.

On Christmas Day (yes there were papers on Christmas Day!) The West Australian announced that £150,000 had been set aside to build the Hackett on its new campus in Crawley and that an architectural competition was to be run to find a design for the building.

History West

Bartletto's Photographic Studio was the first business to be opened in the new Trinity Buildings, Hay Steet. It was opened by the Mayor of Perth on 23 December.

1926 Perth Weather Extremes		
Highest temperature	40.9 °C	January 17
Lowest temperature	4.0 °C	August 30
Highest daily low	24.3 °C	January 20
Lowest daily high	13.3 °C	July 15
Most daily precipitation	4.7 cm	May 18
Total annual precipitation	125.1 cm	-

Items published in 1926 and held in RWAHS library:

Cattle Chosen: the story of the first group settlement in Western Australia 1829 to 1841 / by E.O.G. Shann.

The history of the development of education in Western Australia 1829 - 1923 / Donald Hamilton Rankin

Science in Western Australia: a handbook and a review / AAAS

City Commercial College: Annual Report and Prize List 1926. [Document]

Break your journey at Australia's western gate. [Document]

Tenancy agreement, L.G. Lee Steere to W.D. Hopson, 017, Forrest St. Peppermint Grove [Document]

Boulder Townsite [Map]

Northwest Division [Map]

Railway map of Western Australia 1926 [Map]

Buildings Constructed in 1926

- Pagoda, Como (1926): A unique, octagon-shaped building with a three-tiered roof, designed as a recreational, social, and entertainment venue.
- Sheffield House (1925–1926): Located at 713-721 Hay Street, this building was designed for the Levinson family (city jewellers) by architects George Temple Poole and C.T. Mouritzen.
- The Trinity Buildings (1926): Situated in the Trinity Church Group complex on St. George's Terrace/Hay Street, representing early 20th-century urban development.
- W.D & H.O Wills Warehouse (1926-27): Designed by Oldham Boas and Ednie-Brown, featuring early modern industrial techniques like mushroom-shaped columns.

Compiled by Richard Often , President, RWAHS (and at his request) to contact him richardoffen@outlook.com if you have more events to add for 1926



WILLIAMS / LEE STEERE PUBLICATION PRIZE PRIZE

\$1000

ENTRY FORM / COVER SHEET

The Society is offering a prize for a publication on Western Australian history published between June 2024 and June 2026. Entries must be publications over 20,000 words in length. Topics could be a biography of a West Australian, a family history, a local or community history, or any aspect of WA history the author chooses. Self-published entries are welcome, however non-fiction entries only are acceptable. Those which clearly belong to historical fiction are not eligible. Two copies of each entry must be submitted. Ebook entries are also welcome and while no printout is required for these, two USB carrying the book must be provided.

Closing date **last Friday in June 2026.**

The winner will be announced at the Society's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 21 October 2026.

Entries must be submitted to the Society office: 109

Stirling Hwy Nedlands WA 6009

Tel (08) 9386 3841

Email: admin@histwest.org.au

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Title of entry

Name: Address:

Email:

Phone:

