

# newsletter

History  
OF WA  
Council

## History in the Pub

*History Council member Sue Hart has kindly provided this account of the recent History Council event:*

The first ever 'History in the Pub' night, held at the Hyde Park Hotel in North Perth on Friday evening, 30 March 2007, was an extremely successful event. At subsequent events people have been heard to ask, 'When is the next one?'

The History Council organised the evening in the spirit of its creative approach to involving as many people as possible in learning about Western Australian history. About 60 people gathered in the St James Room at the hotel to listen to three wonderful speakers and to catch up with like-minded friends and acquaintances.

The title of the event, 'Entertaining History', says it all. Speakers covered aspects of Western Australia's artistic heritage, and did so in an entertaining manner that had the audience enthralled. They laughed, they asked questions, they reminisced.

Everyone was welcome, there was no door charge, and even the chance to take home a raffle prize, which three lucky people did. Because it was a pub, not a theatre or lecture room, the atmosphere was relaxed and convivial. Counter meals were available for those who wished, and the nearby bar helped the evening to get off to a spirited start.

Dr Grant Stone amused and enlightened with his *Quirks in Australian Comic Books*. Dr Toby Burrows gave a lively talk on *The History or Rock Music in Western Australia* and Ivan King presented a most theatrical account of *The History of the Maj Collection*.

Associate Professor Jenny Gregory, the President of the History Council of Western Australia, chaired this rollicking programme.

*(continued on page 2)*

## History Matters

The History Council and the Northbridge History Project recently joined together to present the inaugural Northbridge History Studies Day. In format and aims it echoed both the Fremantle and the New Norcia Studies Days, which each focus on the history of their community and have now been run annually for a number of years. History Studies Days, such as these, attract great local interest and play a valuable role for the people of that community.

Yet some people think that the history of their own community is unimportant. Perhaps they are influenced by the cultural cringe, which makes the history of an obscure village in Europe seem fascinating, but the history of their own communities in Australia boring. Perhaps it is a function of age, with the young keen to experience far away places, while the old cherish the sense of place that their own community offers. And certainly, as they get older, most individuals have a powerful need to preserve their history for the future, to make sure that it is passed on to the next generation.

The history of communities is a fundamental element of all history. In the sweep of national histories, we sometimes forget that what underlies and explains national history takes place in local communities. Aspects may seem mundane, but from community history comes a broader sense of the history of our culture, nuanced by the peculiarities and unique attributes of each community and contributing to the composition of the whole.

Jenny Gregory  
President



Left to right: Dr Grant Stone, one of the presenters at 'History in the Pub', speaking with History Council Committee members Mary Anne Jebb and Margaret Hamilton.

## CONTACT US

Executive Officer  
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[www.historycouncilwa.org.au](http://www.historycouncilwa.org.au)  
or write to:  
PO Box 1619, West Perth 6872

**Deadline for next issue:**  
**1<sup>st</sup> August 2007**

Please send contributions to the Editor, Jenny Edgecombe, at the email or postal address above.

## Meetings of the Committee

The Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May included the following business items where the Committee:

- Approved in principle the suggestion that the History Council should recognise a person or persons in the community who is not necessarily a historian, but who has made a significant contribution to history. The idea to be further investigated and a report made at the next Committee Meeting.
- Considered co-sponsoring an event to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum in May, but decided to celebrate the event in October, as initially envisaged.
- Endorsed a motion that 'The History Council of WA is not a publisher and does not circulate or promote unsolicited research papers'.
- Decided that membership renewals should be sent out in June with a notice of the AGM and nomination forms.
- Approved suggestions put forward by the Communications Sub-Committee for a high profile speaker at the AGM and a change of venue for the meeting.
- Heard from the Treasurer reported the History Council was not in danger of being under any immediate financial crisis and that the Executive intends to pursue the WAHF grant.
- Heard that Bill Leadbetter has been appointed Policy Officer (Heritage) to the Hon M. Roberts Minister for Employment Protection; Housing and Works; Indigenous Affairs; Heritage; Land Information.
- Decided to monitor the Albany Waterfront development.

## History Council of WA Committee and Secretariat

### Executive

Associate Professor Jenny Gregory (President)  
Dr Sue Graham-Taylor (Vice-President)  
Dr Bobbie Oliver (Secretary)  
Robert Mitchell (Treasurer)

### Councillors

Glen Bennett	Ruth Marchant James
Jennie Carter	Moira Mulligan
Dr Jean Chetkovich	Felicity More-EdnieBrown
Jenny Edgecombe	Maureen Perkins
Margaret Hamilton	Glen Stasiuk
Dr Mary Anne Jebb	Lise Summers
Blaze Kwaymullina	

### Executive Officer

Julia Wallis

## History Council Nominations

Nomination forms for History Council of WA Office-Bearers and Committee members for 2007-2008 will be distributed during June.

Please support your History Council by considering joining this vital and active Committee.



Dr Toby Burrows (above) and Ivan King (below), addressing the audience at the 'History in the Pub' evening

## History in the Pub (cont from p.1)

Grant Stone is a reference librarian at Murdoch University, an authority on science fiction, fantasy and children's literature, a long-time radio broadcaster and currently a regular panelist on the new weekly TV show, 'Can We Help?'

He described his efforts to discover and document the work of Paul Rigby and Eric Jolliffe. Grant's discussion of the social commentary to be drawn from popular cartoonists and comic books provoked some thought on the concept of a historical record.

Dr Toby Burrows, Principal Librarian of the Scholars' Centre at the University of Western Australia, expert in digital approaches to making cultural heritage collections available, and self-confessed Beatles Obsessive, piqued the interest of the numerous Baby Boomers present with an account of his exploration of the history of rock music in WA, bringing back fond memories of past bands, tours and long-lost venues for many of those present.

Ivan King is a theatre historian, founder of the Museum of Performing Arts, 'Downstairs at the Maj', a columnist and acquirer.

Ivan's dramatic account of the building of the collection now held at His Majesty's Theatre was thoroughly enjoyable. He commented how very little has been written in WA History about entertainers, and his plea for 'cultural tourism' students to acquire at least a passing acquaintance with the arts ('They had no idea who Nellie Melba was!') gave pause for thought.

The success of the night has encouraged the History Council to consider holding similar events in the future. Our thanks must go to the Events Working Party whose members carried out the organisation for the evening.

## Archivist in Iraq: A Difficult Job

Have you ever thought about how a country's archives and libraries fare during wars and times of civil unrest? Can you imagine maintaining a collection and providing public access in the face of power and water cuts, bombs and general disturbance?

The Iraq National Library and Archive in Baghdad suffered from burning and looting at the end of the Saddam regime in 2005.

Dr Saad Eskander, the Director of this institution, has been rebuilding the collection with the assistance of the British Library. He has kept a diary about life in Iraq and the daily issues he faces in keeping the National Library and Archives of Iraq functioning. Parts of this fascinating and moving diary can be read on the British Library's website at

<http://www.bl.uk/iraqdiary.html>

**Please note** that while website addresses are published for the information of the membership, material on the sites does not necessarily reflect the views of the History Council.

## Call for Expressions of Interest

### Ethics and Professional Standards publication:

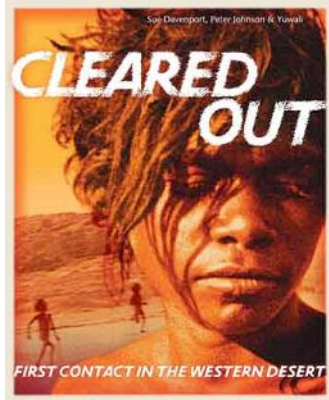
Cathie Clement is to edit a volume of *Studies in Western Australian History* tentatively titled 'Ethics and professional standards in the practice of history'.

Cathie would like to hear from people who are interested in submitting an article for consideration and/or would be interested in presenting a seminar paper if a seminar is held prior to the compilation of the volume.

### Further Information:

Dr Cathie Clement, OAM MPHA  
Historian and Heritage Consultant  
Phone (08) 9272 3308  
Fax (08) 9272 2087 E-mail  
[clement@q-net.net.au](mailto:clement@q-net.net.au)

## Sundowner Celebrates WA Premier's History Book Award



*History Council members were recently invited to a Sundowner and a presentation by two of the writers of last year's winning book, 'Cleared Out: First contact in the Western Desert'. The History Council lobbied strongly for the establishment of this award, so members take a particular interest in the outcome. Thank you to our new contributors, Trish and Leith Robinson, (Mother and daughter), for taking the time to provide their account of the evening. Both have particular interests in Western Australian history, through business or study, and Trish also found it intriguing to hear more about a book covering a period when she lived in this state.*

The gracious surrounds of the National Trust's Old Observatory in West Perth formed the backdrop for the History Council's mid-summer event. It was a hot Friday night, and participants gratefully partook of the refreshments offered upon arrival. Members strolled through the building or relaxed on the verandah before moving inside, where audiovisual equipment and a large table and chairs had been set up.

The evening commenced with a welcome from History Council President Jenny Gregory, and a brief overview of the award's judging criteria by panel member Ed Jaggard. He noted in particular the book's levels of context (local, state, national and international), which made it stand out.

The authors Peter Johnson and Sue Davenport then summarised the story of Yuwali: In 1964 officials chased her and the other women of her Martu Aborigine tribe through the desert in order to clear the district for rocket testing at Woomera.

However, the presentation offered more than a re-telling, as Peter and Sue went on to provide a fascinating behind-the-scenes account of the book's gestation. They discussed the methodology they employed, including the capturing of the oral history, their field trips, interviews with key players such as patrol officers and a literature review (especially of archival material). Sue mentioned the challenges they faced, such as the constant need for translation, and of her serious car accident, which put the project on hold for five years.

Both writers were sustained by their powerful motivation: Sue emphasised the unusualness of the accuracy and sequencing of the story, and that the issues remained topical; Peter felt the government should not repeat its policy mistakes. He explained the division of labour in their writing partnership, whereby mainly Sue researched and he constructed the text. The efforts of the editing and layout team at the publishing house were praised, (Aboriginal Studies Press, [www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au).)

Peter and Sue said that they were humbled to receive the award. They are continuing their work in the north of the state.

The book is available at most stores (RRP \$45.00).

This was another successful event in the wide range of activities offered by the History Council.



Left to right: Yuwali, Sue Davenport and Peter Johnson, authors of 'Clearing Out'.

## Northbridge History Studies Day

The History Council of WA recently co-sponsored the Northbridge History Studies Day with the Northbridge History Project. The event, held at the State Library Theatre on 12 May 2007, was a resounding success. Not only did well over 150 persons attend, but it was obvious that, when the program ran over the scheduled time, members of the audience were so engrossed that most chose to stay on.

While Northbridge is not what it was fifty years ago, it still retains much of its history; a history that can be found within its buildings and within the people who have lived and worked in the area.

The Northbridge History Studies Day brought together different views of Northbridge, where this significant part of our inner city Perth, with its cafes and restaurants, played more than just the part of the 'nightlife-place-to-be' locality of our city but one of a much greater importance as many people from all walks of life have and continue to shape the outlook of Perth with its multicultural amalgamation of ethnicities. The day aimed at rediscovering the hidden histories of this cultural hub of our city as well as proposing a new way of looking at the city of Perth in a different light, one which might be useful in the future.

The organisers selected a wide range of interesting speakers who presented papers on various aspects of Northbridge's rich history. Space does not permit us to list every speaker, but the following will illustrate the wonderfully varied offerings.

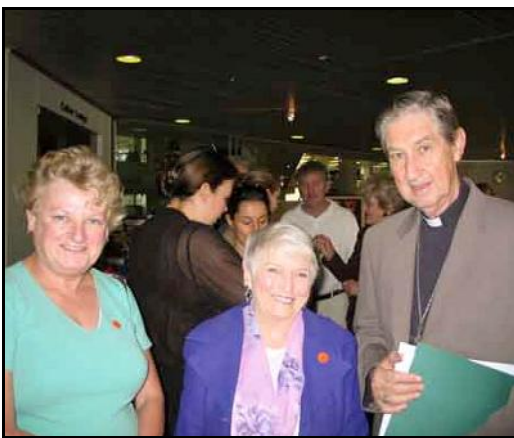
The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth, the Most Reverend Barry Hickey, related his many experiences as parish priest at St Brigid's Church in the 1950s and his involvement with the Irish and Italian migrants who settled north of the line. Kaylene Poon and Halina Szunejko detailed the arrival and impact of the Chinese and Polish communities respectively and Dr John Yiannakis introduced the history of the Greek settlement in Northbridge.

From another angle Dr Nonja Peters traced the transformation of the area through its various lives as 'Little Athens', 'Little Italy' and 'Little Saigon'. Dr Jenny Gregory's comparison of two similar districts, Carlton and Northbridge, and the establishment of Jewish and Italian communities also proved popular, as did Dr Susanna Iuliano's paper on 'Cappuccino Culture'.

Talented artist Emma Benichou presented a fascinating display of Northbridge viewed through the eyes of a 'Flaneur' and Emily Zhen shared her work experience with the Northbridge History Project.

The final speaker, Dr Felicity Morel-EdnieBrown, provided an enthralling description of the Northbridge swamps with emphasis on their influence on the topography of the area since the earliest town plan was published in 1933.

The afternoon also included opportunities for mingling over afternoon tea and the drinks that followed the presentations. The papers will be made available at a later date, and those who attended are already looking forward to next year's Northbridge History Project event.



Left to right:  
History Council Committee members Moira Mulligan and Ruth Marchant James with The Most Reverend Barry Hickey, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth, who was one of the speakers taking part in the recent Northbridge History Studies Day.

## Awards and Grants

### Lotterywest

#### Grant Information Seminars

Lotterywest holds both metropolitan and regional seminars.

For information on future seminars contact Marlene Walker:

[walkerm@lotterywest.wa.gov.au](mailto:walkerm@lotterywest.wa.gov.au)

### Lotterywest Grants

#### General Grants

(May be applied for by Museums and Historical Societies)

Lotterywest may consider proposals for capital works, equipment and planning or project costs involved in heritage-related activities in cases where these fall outside what might be supported under the program of Conservation, Interpretation or Community Histories grants. Use the Grants Finder on the website and follow the link to Historical Societies and Museums:

<http://www.lottery.wa.gov.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=390>

### Interpretation of Cultural Heritage

Closing 6 July 2007

### Community Histories

Advertised 7 July 2007

EOI 14 Sept 2007

Applications 15 February 2008

Further information:

<http://www.lottery.wa.gov.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=394>

or call: (Metro) (08) 9340 5270

(Country) 1800 655 270

### National Archives of Australia The Frederick Watson Fellowship

A grant of up to \$15,000 to assist established scholars in completing innovative and quality research projects which have significance for Australian audiences. The National Archives' extensive collection must be the core focus of research projects undertaken by successful Fellows.

Applications close 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

Further information:

NAA website

[http://www.naa.gov.au/About\\_Us/federick\\_watson.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/About_Us/federick_watson.html) or

Ph: (02) 6212 3600

Email: [grants@naa.gov.au](mailto:grants@naa.gov.au)

## Last calls for applications: JS Battye Fellowship

In the last issue, we reported on the establishment of the James Sykes Battye Memorial Fellowship, set up to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battye Library.

**Applications for this fellowship will close on Friday 15 June 2007.**

The Fellowship, up to the value of \$20,000, has been made possible through the Leah Jane Cohen Library Bequest.

The aims of the Fellowship are to:

- § Promote the Battye Library as a centre of original research and scholarship in Western Australia;
- § Encourage use of the unique collections of the Battye Library; and
- § Encourage research, publication, presentation and discussion based on them.

Applications are open to Australian residents who may be scholars, researchers or writers, who have a strong interest in research based on the State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library collections.

Research based on the Western Australian music collections is also eligible for a Fellowship, which must be taken up and completed within the period July 2007 - December 2008.

Applications can only be made on a printed copy of the form which is available online at <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/pdf/sykes.pdf>

For more information on eligibility, terms and conditions, see <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/fellowship.html> or contact:

Jennie Carter, Manager Subject Specialists and Battye Librarian  
State Library of Western Australia

Phone: 08 9427 3279

Email: [jennie.carter@slwa.wa.gov.au](mailto:jennie.carter@slwa.wa.gov.au)

## Winners of PACT Photographic Competition

The winners of the photographic competition established this year by the State Library in collaboration with Central TAFE were announced on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Photographers were invited to submit entries in several categories and any photograph submitted could be accepted into the Photographic Archive of Central TAFE (PACT), which is housed in the Battye Library's Pictorial Collection as an archive of contemporary images relevant to the history of this State.

The competition's aim was to encourage photographic enthusiasts, including student, amateur and professional photographers, to make a valuable contribution to our documentary history.

The competition attracted around 300 entries. The winner of each category was awarded \$1000 prize money, with a prize of \$1000 for the best overall photograph.

The Best Overall Photograph category was won by Steven Perkins, who also won the Cultural & sporting events/ social activities category.

Other winners were:

Landscape / Architecture - Brett Earl

Environmental portraiture - Derrick Hor

Photo Essay – Natana Mayer (14 years old!)

Best student photo – Oliver Cardona

An exhibition of the best photographs will be on display 2nd-24th June, and photographs will be catalogued and made available on the State Library's website. Given the success of the inaugural competition, it is planned to run this as an annual event.

## STOP PRESS! JULY FILM FESTIVAL

The Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre at Murdoch University, in association with The History Council, is presenting an Indigenous Film Festival during NAIDOC Week. It will highlight award-winning short films and documentaries from WA Indigenous filmmakers, including the Perth premiere of the new short documentary *Footprints in the Sand*.

**Bookings are Essential as seating is limited.**

**Details:**

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July, 4pm.

Kim Beasley Lecture Theatre, Bush Court, Murdoch University.

Finger food and refreshments provided.

RSVP to Brenda Hill on 9360 2128 or

[brenda.hill@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:brenda.hill@murdoch.edu.au)

by Thursday July 5 2007

**Further Information n:**

[http://www.naidocperth.org/n\\_kulbardi.htm](http://www.naidocperth.org/n_kulbardi.htm)

## Conferences

**W.A. BRANCH: ORAL HISTORY  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**

**ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE**

*Vocal To Visual : Future Directions*

20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> October 2007

State Library of Western Australia

Theatre, Alexander Library Building

Email: [jmccahon@vicpark.wa.gov.au](mailto:jmccahon@vicpark.wa.gov.au)

**AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF  
ARCHIVISTS INC.  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

*Initiatives, Ideas and Interaction,  
Sharing our Story.*

22-25 August, Alice Springs.

Further Information:

[http://www.archivists.org.au/events/2007\\_conf/ASA\\_2007\\_Conference\\_intro.htm](http://www.archivists.org.au/events/2007_conf/ASA_2007_Conference_intro.htm)

## Breaking News

Dr Rica Erickson shared top honours with the Town of Vincent and Shire of Beverley at this year's Heritage Council awards for her lifelong contribution to heritage in WA. Of course your Editor's excitement has nothing to do with the fact that this newsletter is being finalised at the rooms of the Toodyay Historical Society, whose Patron is none other than Dr Rica Erickson. Her varied career in the recording, preservation and publication of history has included a long association with the Toodyay-Bolgart area. Well done!

